



Trócaire Lenten Fundraising

Thank you to all our students and staff that contributed to our 'Wear the Colours' event in anticipation for the Ulster final between Derry and Donegal. It was wonderful to see all the vibrant colours throughout the school as well as the many posters and wall displays created by our students.

Well done to both teams on a great match and of course Derry on securing the Ulster Senior title!

Our thanks go to Mr L. Morgan for co-ordinating the event and all the students and staff who helped to raise over £150 in our loose change appeal, this will be donated to the Foyle Hospice.



Miss M. O'Hara – Celebrating 50 Years in Thornhill College



We are delighted to acknowledge and celebrate 50 years of service by Miss Margaret O'Hara to the Thornhill College family this year.

Miss O'Hara, a stalwart member of our school community began her career at Thornhill College as a Music Teacher in 1972 and today plays an integral role as our school archivist.

On her 50th year of service to our school community, she shares with us some of her memories during this time.



A Reflection by Miss O'Hara

I started in Thornhill in 1972 as a Music teacher. Later I also taught History and R.E. One of the first things I noticed when I came to Thornhill was that the staff and pupils were very friendly and polite. That has not changed over the years.

Early in my career I taught Touch Typing as part of the 6B Development Programme. Imagine me going around the offices in school borrowing typewriters to take to a classroom to teach this.

One of my responsibilities was ensuring the uniform was always worn properly. It is so important that girls always present themselves well.

One special memory I have is conducting the choir at a Christmas Concert in St. Columb's Cathedral.

I loved travelling with teachers of French and girls to Paris four times. We stayed in various hostels and schools. On one of the trips the guide spoke only in French, and I was chuffed that I was able to understand what she was saying (well, most of the time). One unusual school trip I went on was to the Volvo Factory in Sweden with girls who won a competition along with teachers and pupils from other schools. Absolutely terrifying was the time I went on the Roller Coaster at the Lisberg amusement park. This trip was unique because we stayed in the Novotel Hotel in Gothenburg and each teacher had their own hotel room.

One of my classrooms in the old school was Music Room 3 which looked out on the front avenue. Class was always disrupted when girls paraded up the avenue to the convent for their retreat carrying their Teddy Bears.

When the formals were held in school I supervised the girls who served the meal in the Canteen.

The "Our News" newsletter which I produced every week was my way of getting information on what was happening in school. This provided some of the information I needed for the twelve Year Books that I edited. It was ironic that the role of the girls in the Year Book Committee was to check on and correct my homework. There was a supposed rivalry between the Year Book and The Habit magazine which was an informal magazine produced by pupils. Not many people realised I supplied some of the photograph for the Habit magazines.

After Derry won the all-Ireland Gaelic Football Senior Championship in 1993, some members of the football team came to Thornhill to meet the girls and show off the Sam Maguire Trophy. This was a great occasion for me as I had supported Derry for years.

I was there for the big occasions in school - the 50th 60th 70th and 80th Anniversary celebrations which involved present and past pupils and staff. The 70th anniversary was the occasion of the launch of the book by Dr. Jefferies "Sisters of Mercy and Thornhill College". My name is on the cover of the book even though I did not do very much work for it. For the 80th Anniversary there was a Gala Concert in the Millennium Forum. The highlight for me, of course, was accompanying the choir on stage and the past pupils in the auditorium for a rendition of the School Song.

Not many schools have a school song. Contrary to widespread belief I did not write the song but I have taught it to hundreds of girls. My schedule includes accompanying the School Song when it is sung at School Masses and Reunions. Recently a few past pupils got together to make a video of the School Song. That was great fun!

One of the main changes I experienced in Thornhill was when the school moved to the new building in 2003 and I landed in Music Room 2 and taught there for five years. One big occasion with the Official Opening of the new school in 2004, a big day for pupils, staff and guests. This was followed by an Open Day for past pupils to visit the new building, meet up with friends and look at old photographs. I enjoyed chatting with the past pupils on these occasions.

For twenty-two years I was responsible for Communication and Public Relations. Arranging photographs for the press was made easy by the co-operation of the photographers I worked with.

I have great memories of the Christmas Shows. They enabled girls on stage to perform to a bigger audience than they would have on stage in any of the local theatres.

I finished teaching in 2008. Then I became the Archivist for Thornhill. My office is the repository for old photographs and documents. My work involves promoting the archives and doing research on the History of Thornhill. I keep in contact with past pupils, mainly through the Facebook group "Thornhill College Past Pupils" which was started by a past pupil and now has over 4,600 members. The group has its own Past Pupil Hoodies and Past Pupil Beanies. One of the highlights for the group was the first time a video of the choir of over one hundred girls singing "Oh Holy Night" at the Christmas Carol Service was posted and there were many comments from past pupils round the world. That is why I use the slogan "Thornhill Is Global".

Recently past pupils from different year groups have organised their own reunions. I was able to attend most of them. It is great to meet those I knew as pupils. Many are now mothers, and most of them have interesting careers and some continue their studies to further advance their career or change their job.

I was lucky to be able to attend concerts and competitions whenever the Senior Choir Chamber performed in competitions and concerts in Derry, Dungannon, Belfast, Armagh and Dublin. Of course, the highlight of these trips was when the Choir won the "BBC Choir of the Year Competition 2019".

Over the years I have met some great pupils in class, form classes, the Year Book Committee, the Archive Monitors and girls in the school choirs.

Another dramatic change in Thornhill since I started in Thornhill in 1972 was the departure of the Sisters of Mercy. and their presence is greatly missed.

I have made some great friends among the present and former staff. With friends I have gone on a boat cruise on the Shannon, gone on holidays to Italy and visited the Holy Land.

These are only a few of my memories. Come September, I will be looking to starting my 51st year in Thornhill.

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TBUC - Together Building A United Community

TBUC is a cross community youth group funded by the executive office and Education Authority which stands for together building a united community.

My TBUC journey started in 2018 whenever my local youth leader invited me to join a TBUC Camp project which would bring together young people from 5 different areas with the aim to eliminate stereotypes and build relationships.

At the start of 2020 I decided to apply for the TBUC Ambassadors programme which would consist of 20 young people from NI. I remember my youth leader telling me about all the opportunities this programme could bring me including an opportunity to represent the young people of NI in Croatia. But I thought that me a 15 year old girl from a small village could never get into a programme like that but much to my surprise I got the text in February that I had been selected for a place on the programme. I then got selected to stay on in 2021 where I completed an OCN in uniting communities through leadership, taken part in the Washington Ireland programme, went on a residential to the Glenavon and the Hilton hotels, planted trees at Stormont with TBUC Trees, delivered good relations week activity night, planned and delivered a virtual camps in the community in 2021 and in person event in 2022 to over 100 young people, participated in consultation meeting with the TEO and EA and this summer we are travelling to Croatia.

Being a part of TBUC has been a life changing experience for me. It has brought me so many opportunities and skills that I use in my day to day life. Without TBUC I can confidently say I wouldn't be the person I am today. I have been so many lifelong friends from this programme.

Due to TBUC I am now a youth leader at my local youth club and work at their summer schemes and teen discos.

However, this is not the end of my TBUC journey as I am staying on for another year in the ambassador programme as a peer mentor.

The advice I would give to anyone thinking of joining a TBUC programme is to give it a go and trust the process as you never know where it could take you.

Jessica Nicholl
Year 13 Student



Congratulations & Good Luck! - Dearbhla & Kymirin

Our congratulations go to two of our Year 13 students, Dearbhla McCaul and Kymirin Downey who have both been nominated for North West Young Business Person of The Year at the North West Business Awards 2022. They have been nominated as a result of the hard work and success of their Young Enterprise Company, Safe Sippin'.

The North West Business Awards are being held at the City Hotel, on Friday 17th June 2022 at 7pm. We wish both girls the very best of luck!



Adios Candela!

In May we said goodbye to our brilliant language assistant, Candela. Originally from Zaragoza, Spain, Candela came to our school in October to work as a language assistant.

This year Candela has been a great help to us, the A-Level Spanish students. She has helped us to improve our speaking skills and confidence in Spanish as well as being incredibly supportive during exams. We could not have asked for a better support system from the Spanish department during what we consider to be our hardest year in Thornhill.

Candela always went above and beyond to ensure that we believed in ourselves and remind us of what we are capable of. She dedicated most of her time to making sure we were improving our oral skills and perfecting our spoken Spanish for the oral exam.

We are extremely grateful to have been able to work with her and be able to call her our friend. We will all miss her very much. We wish her all the best for the future! ¡Suerte, Candela!

Bébhinn O'Hara, Sophie Rogers, Rhiannon Thomas, Maeve Mooney, Grace Cavanagh, Caoimhe Lees & Ellen McGlinchey



My First Year

I will never forget the special moment when I found out I was to be a Thornhill Girl.' I was so nervous as my mum and I were waiting on the laptop to see if I was accepted. We could not have been more delighted when we saw that I was! As the days went on I found out more information like my class, timetable and what the uniform was. Everything was happening so fast!

On my first day of Thornhill I walked to school and I was excited but also nervous. Everyone in Year 8 was so friendly and the fact that the other girls were also nervous made me feel better. Our form teacher broke the ice by playing ice-breakers games and we were already finding out so much about each other.

All of my teachers were so understanding. I had figured out how to get about this huge school with the help of friendly senior students and also how to organise myself for each day which helped me avoid my schoolbag becoming too heavy! Homework was also manageable because teachers were aware that you were still settling in. By the end of the first few weeks I had made friends and it felt like I had been at Thornhill forever.

Year 8 has been such an exciting year with many highlights including making new friends, going to the canteen, learning two new languages, completing Science experiments, attending birthday parties and going to clubs inside and outside of school.

I am now excited for what lies ahead. I hope to continue my adventures with my friends and I am looking forward to learning many more things at Thornhill College.

*Aoife Quigley
Year 8 Student*



Fantastic Achievements in Athletics

District and Ulster Schools' Athletics Championships

Athletics season is back in full swing this year after a two year break due to Covid. Twenty five students represented Thornhill in the District Athletics Championships on Wednesday 4th May in the Antrim Forum. It was a very successful day with many athletes placing in the top 3 to qualify for the Ulster Championships, which took place on Saturday 21st May. We had another successful day at the Ulster Championships where Cara Laverty, Sophie Parlour, Hannah Wade and the Year 9 relay team all placed in the top 2 in their events to qualify for the All Ireland Schools' Championships which take place in Tullamore on Saturday 4th June.

District Results

Eireann Dunne - 1st in the 100m and 2nd in long jump

Grace Callaghan - 3rd in 200m

Veronica O'Neill - 1st in 80m hurdles and 300m hurdles

Sophie Parlour - 1st in 100m and 200m

All 4 relay teams qualified for the Ulsters. The Year 8 team came 1st, the Year 9 and Intermediate team came 2nd the Year 10 team came 3rd.

Ulster Schools' Results

All Ireland qualifiers

Sophie Parlour Gold in 100m, 3rd in 200m

Cara Laverty: Gold in 800m

Hannah Wade: Silver in 3000m

Year 9 team: Silver in 4 x 100m relay (Ava Curran, Cara Phillips, Molly McCullagh & Leonelle Atoge)

Other results

Year 10 team: 8th in 4 x 100m relay (Sarah Hunter, Catherine Gallen Wilcocks, Corinna Kennedy & Grace Callaghan)

Grace Callaghan: 4th in 200m

Eireann Dunne: 2nd in Long Jump and 2nd in 100m

Laura McGeedy: 4th in 100m

Isabelle Scott: 8th in high jump

Laura McGeedy - 2nd in the 100m

Isabelle Scott - 3rd in high jump

Hannah Wade - 1st in 3000m



Miss Elaine Gillespie (PE Teacher)



May Altar

During the month of May, the Oratory has been beautifully decorated to venerate Our Lady, the Mother of God. Mary holds a special place in our Christian faith and so during the month of May, we remember her discipleship. As our mother she is an example of a committed "Yes" to the will of God. Due to this, many people ask her for help in the most difficult moments of their life, as any child does with their mother. Pope Francis has often described Mary as his own mother as she has *"A sweet and reassuring presence. In her discreet style, she gives everyone peace and hope, both in the happy and sad moments of life."*

The month of May symbolises the beginning of growth in nature and new life. It is the season when spring is at the height of its beauty with the awakening of flowers and plethora of bluebells that grow. These are symbols of hope and renewal in which each of us can revitalise our own spiritually in and help us to grow in faith. For our Mary altar, pupils from 8E and 10H were invited to bring in their own contributions of flowers to adorn the altar. The flowers chosen show the hope of this season and resonate with our own school community, as these are symbols of the school's wild flower garden that is coming into bloom. RE classes have been coming to the Oratory during this month to pray a decade of the Rosary and to pray for the needs of others by lighting a candle in our new votive candle display. These special, quiet moments of contemplation have enabled our pupils to connect with Mary in a very real way. Erin Bradley and Anna Gormley from 8E, have reflected on their own experiences during this month.

Mrs Ciara Collins
Liturgy Co-ordinator



"To me, Mary is someone that we can look up to when in need of help or advice. Mary gives us a sense of comfort and security when we need it most. Mary also guides us to live our best lives. I have really enjoyed coming to the Oratory this year. It is a quiet place anyone can go and offer a prayer. It has beautiful stained glass window which helps me to think of God. The May Altar has been set up and adds so much to this already stunning scene. The flowers can brighten up anyone's day so I recommend paying a visit and offering a prayer."

Erin Bradley

"Mary is special because she is called the mother of Jesus and was chosen specially by God. Mary can help us in our daily lives by saying the following prayers in a quiet moment each day: Hail Mary and the Hail Holy Queen. The Oratory is a special place of worship for our school. It is a quiet place for you to say your prayers and reflect. While you are there, you will see our beautiful May Altar. We have decorated this special place with flowers from our form class."

Anna Gormley



Amelia Earhart STEM Competition

Our The Technology and Design Department would like to pass on a HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to our Year 9 students that participated in the Amelia Earhart STEM Competition. This was part of the 90th Anniversary for Amelia Earhart landing unexpectedly in Derry and close to our school site.

A large number of Year 9 students submitted an entry to be part of this special day, however, only one team of 5 could participate. On Friday 21st of May 2022 Emma Doherty, Niamh Donnelly Aimee Kerr, Ella-Jane McChrystal and Mia Bo Cheung attend the STEM Event at Magee University.

The students had to participate in many activities against 16 other schools from the area, activities included model airplane building and design, poster presentation, and formal interview.

Our students hard work and enthusiasm did not go unnoticed and our group received over all winners of the STEM Challenge for 2022. A super result! Well done! The students will be enjoying a Helicopter ride on Monday 13th June from the City Airport as part of the winning prize.

The Amelia Earhart STEM Challenge and our amazing Thornhill students made the Royal Academy of Engineering news site. This article can be accessed here:

<https://www.raeng.org.uk/news/news-releases/2022/may/connecting-stem-teachers-network-celebrates-the-90>

Emma Doherty was also interviewed by BBC Newsline and Newsround. Her interview story can be view by scanning this QR CODE.

Mrs Elaine Rooney (Head of Technology & Design)



Junior School Reward Steps

Congratulations to the pupils in Years 8 and 9 who have reached 10 points or more and 20 points or more in the Junior School Reward Steps during May. These points were rewarded for the students' positive contribution to the life of the school. Congratulations to all of you and keep up the good work!

YEAR 8 (10 Points +)

8C: Terri McConomy

8D: Lily Corns, Ava Deehan, Aoibheann Doherty & Cait McNulty

8E: Enya Harkin, Carley Hutton, Katelyn McLaughlin, Maria McMullan, Erin O'Neill & Kasey Whelan

8F: Kayla Barnfield & Shannon Doherty

8H: Laura Flanagan, Olivia Horton, Tadhgan Maguire, Ava McDermott & Teresa Smith



YEAR 8 (20 Points +)

8C: Faye Craig & Cara Offordile-Anderson,

8G: Jovita Biju, Charlotte Walsh, Eadaoin Molloy, Ella Hickey, Lauren McKeegan

YEAR 9 (10 Points +)

9C: Nia Cooke, Maebh Coyle, Niamh Deane, Sofi Donnelly, Eireann Furey, Ella-Jane McChrystal, Teaghan McGettigan, Saoirse McLaughlin, Sadhbh McNulty, Sarah Meenan, Nicole Porteous, Dearbhla Walls & Aine Ward

9H: Myla Doherty, Ava McConnell & Cara Phillips

YEAR 9 (20 Points +)

9B: Erin Doherty, Grace Logue & Katelyn Quigley

9E: Emma Doherty & Ava Curran

9G: Emily Barr, Olivia Crossan, Mary-Cait Keenan, Kayla Lynch, Grace McBride, Meghan McDaid, Sophie Nash & Ava Kerlin





Congratulations

Well done to Mr Michael McCloskey (Head of KS3 Science) who has received a £300 grant from the Royal Society of Chemistry to further Thornhill's STEM outreach programme to our surrounding primary schools. We look forward to welcoming some of our local primary schools into Thornhill in September to take part in a range of exciting science experiments.

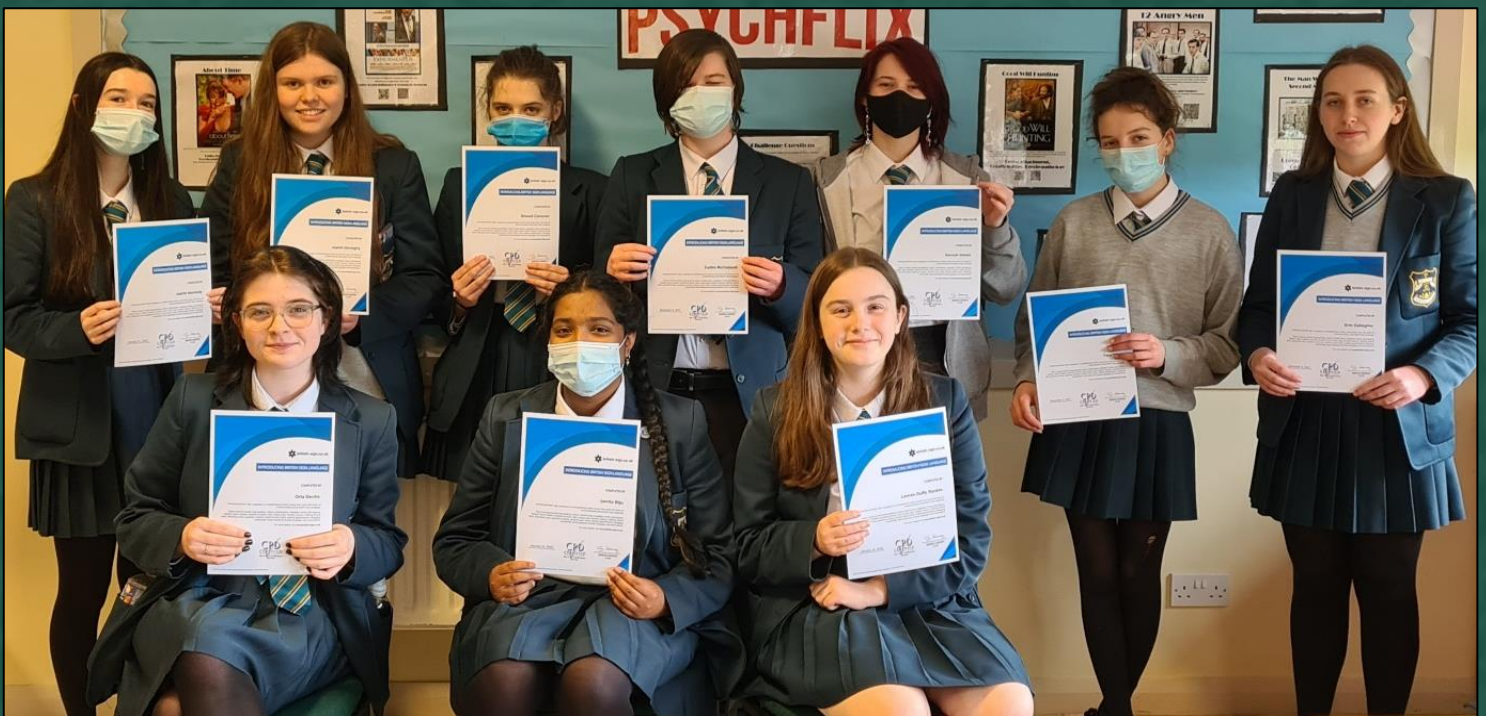


Well done to Mrs Elaine Rooney (Head of Technology & Design) and Mr Michael McCloskey (Head of Key Stage 3 Science) who have been awarded a £1000 bursary as part of the 'Big Bang STEM @ School'. This award is sponsored by Sentinus to enhance research based STEM projects in Technology and Engineering.



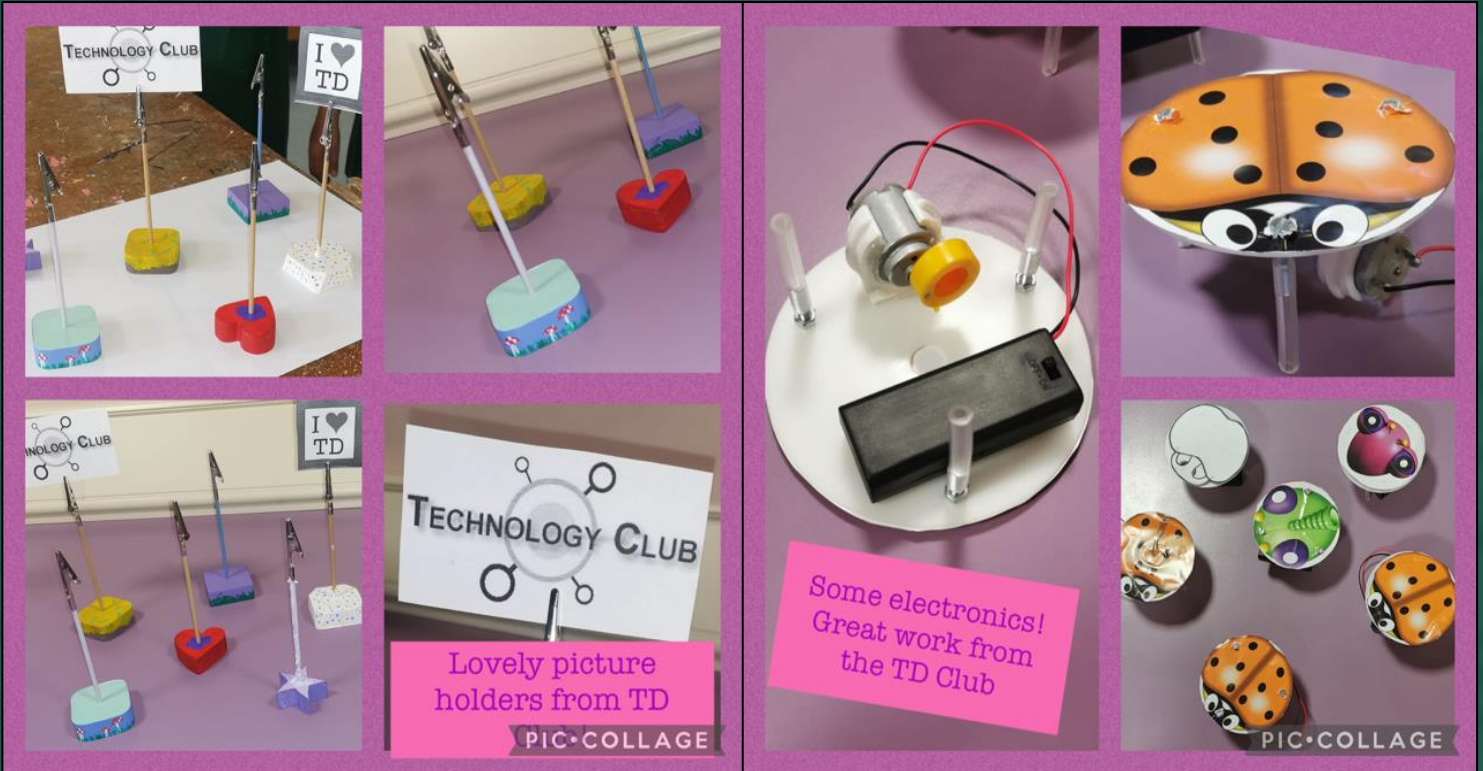
British Sign Language Course

Congratulations to our Year 13 students who recently completed their 'Introducing British Sign Language' course in their enrichment lessons and received their certificates.



Technology & Design Club

Our Year 8 Technology & Design Club have been very busy this month. This is a super club to carry out great mini projects. This month Year 8 have made some mini photo holders and carried out an electronics project to make a jitter bug. Well done!



National Youth Theatre Summer Scheme

Congratulations to Sarah Fox (Year 13) and Molly Phelan (Year 12) who have secured places in the National Youth Theatre Summer Scheme. They will be going to England for 2 weeks over the summer to participate in this wonderful opportunity.

Molly tells us all about the process: *"I auditioned for the National Youth Theatre a few months ago and heard back for my acceptance on the 11th of May. I was feeling quite doubtful, as NYT is quite competitive because they accept around 250 from auditioning numbers of people up to 5000 across the UK. I felt very happy and lucky, and I will be going to Northampton for two weeks in August with three of my friends who were also accepted. It will be two weeks of workshops and intensives with industry professionals at the Royal & Derngate Theatre, and I'm so excited!"*



Sarah Fox performing an extract from Enda Walsh's 'Sucking Dublin' playing Little Lamb



Molly Phelan performing an extract from Tennessee Williams' 'Streetcar Named Desire' playing Blanche

Lyra McKee Writing Competition

Congratulations to Aileen McCaul (Year 13) who was one of the recent winners of the Lyra McKee writing competition.

Aileen's achievement was recognised at a special gala event which took place in May. She was awarded her prize by Lyra's sister Nichola, Danny Quigley and Mayor Graham Warke.



Eco-Club

Well done to the KS3 Eco Club members who are pictured displaying their design entries for the NI Housing Executive Eco-Villain Competition.



FUN ECO-COMPETITION
Design an Eco-Villain!
KEY STAGES 1, 2 & 3

PRIZES! WHAT CAN YOU WIN?
5x Eco-Villains (Your ideas brought to life)
5x Winners get top Eco-Laptops
5x \$500 Cash for your School
5x Runners-up Win Fire Tablets

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WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

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OR
DRAW A PICTURE

NI SCHOOLS' ENERGY EFFICIENT AWARENESS PROGRAMME

Housing Executive

KEEP NORTHERN IRELAND BEAUTIFUL

ECO-SCHOOLS

School Uniform Recycling Initiative

As we approach the end of our current school year, we would appeal for families to support us in our uniform recycling initiative. If families have any Thornhill College school uniform blazers, skirts, jumpers, ties and PE kit that are no longer of use / students have outgrown, they can be donated to our cause by bringing these items into Form Teachers. We will then collate these donations in a central area to distribute to any families who should require them. We will make the arrangements for distribution of school uniform items later in June.



**DO YOUR BIT!
UNICYCLE IT!**