



Christmas Blessing

It is hard to believe that the Christmas holidays are upon us, and we are finishing our first term of the school year. It has been a busy and productive semester for our entire school community and the personal, spiritual and academic growth of our student body, as always, has remained our key priority.

As we close out the calendar year, we have celebrated the preparation of Christmas as a school family acknowledging the gratitude we have for each other and the blessings that we have received. We physically gathered together as a community, for the first time in 3 years, for the celebration of our beautiful Christmas Liturgies under the direction and talents of Mrs Collins and Miss Lynch in the RE Department and Mrs Quigley and Mr Healy in the Music Department. From the reflections of hope and joy by our Senior Prefect Team, to our Year 8's reading of 'A Night Before Christmas', our talented musicians and our Junior and Senior Choirs and soloists truly stunning rendition of carols such as O' Holy Night, we have been immersed in the true meaning and spirit of Christmas.

We enjoyed the culinary skills of our canteen staff's lovingly prepared Christmas dinner for all our students, the good humour of Christmas Jumper Day, and the tremendous and gracious efforts of all of those who contributed to our Shoe Box Appeal and Hands Hamper Appeal. I hope our students enjoy our final Christmas celebration on Wednesday with the welcomed return of our annual Christmas Show.

May I take this opportunity to thank our students and staff for all their hard work and endeavours this term and indeed the continued support of their families. I hope you all enjoy a well-earned break and rest over the holiday season.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, a joyful New Year and every blessing for 2023. May God bless you.

Ms Sharon Mallett (Principal)



Congratulations Tieghan & Laura

Congratulations to Tieghan and Laura in Year 11 who were invited to the Mayor's Parlour on Tuesday 6th December to celebrate their contribution to Black North Productions anti-bullying film, "Summary Justice". The cast had the opportunity to speak with the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council, Sandra Duffy about their experience of shooting the film and the reaction it has had since the premier in November. The cast came to the celebration in their costumes from the production and had an enjoyable evening with representatives from their own schools.



Work Experience Placements at the Millennium Forum

Our thanks go to the Millennium Forum for the wonderful opportunity they afforded a number of our Year 13 Performing Arts students during their work experience placement with them! The girls enjoyed the opportunity to get hands on experience in a wide array of areas including the work of a Theatre Lighting Technician and Directing and Stage Management during their Panto tech week.



WORK PLACEMENT
Theatre Lighting
Technician
Shadowing Placement
During Panto Tech Week



WORK PLACEMENT
Directing & Stage
Management
Shadowing Placement
During Panto Tech Week



Netball Success

Congratulations to the PE Department and the recent fantastic success of our netball teams.

Year 10 beat Cookstown High School 20-5
Year 11/12 beat Cookstown High School 15-5
Year 13/14 beat Cookstown High School 23-3



Year 8 played in the first NI Schools Year 8 Netball tournament in Magherafelt High School. A superb display of netball from our Year 8 netballers. They won every match to get to the final. They were narrowly beaten in the final by St Ronan's College.



Pope John Paul II Award

Well-done to our Year 13 Pope John Paul II Award students for the extremely thoughtful and generous Christmas packs they recently created for the residents of Owen Mor Care Home.





Quelques semaines occupées en français!

Our Yr9 French Language Ambassadors recently received their badges and were quick to begin their work! Their first task was to judge our French Christmas Decorations Competition, an enjoyable although difficult job to complete.

Félicitations aux gagnants!

1st: Maddison 8G

2nd: Farah 8G and Jodie 9H

3rd: Kate and Zara 9H



We also had a busy number of weeks preparing more letters and Christmas cards for our French penpals. 8A, 8G, 9B, 9H, 10D, 10E and 11A French classes all have 'un correspondant français' and have thoroughly enjoyed writing their letters and finding out about their new contacts. A great way to see our language learning in action for a 'real-life' purpose!

We are very fortunate to have many fantastic students in our French Department and each month their efforts are rewarded with the 'STAR du français' award. Here are some of our most recent recipients. Bravo à tous!



We also celebrated Claire, our French assistant's birthday this month. She is from Rennes in Brittany and works primarily with our A-level students but also with Yr8-12 classes helping pupils to grow in confidence when speaking French.

Claire also runs a 'Club-F' for our Year 8 students at lunch time giving them a chance to enjoy even more French and find out more about those who speak the language they are learning. Merci beaucoup à Claire.



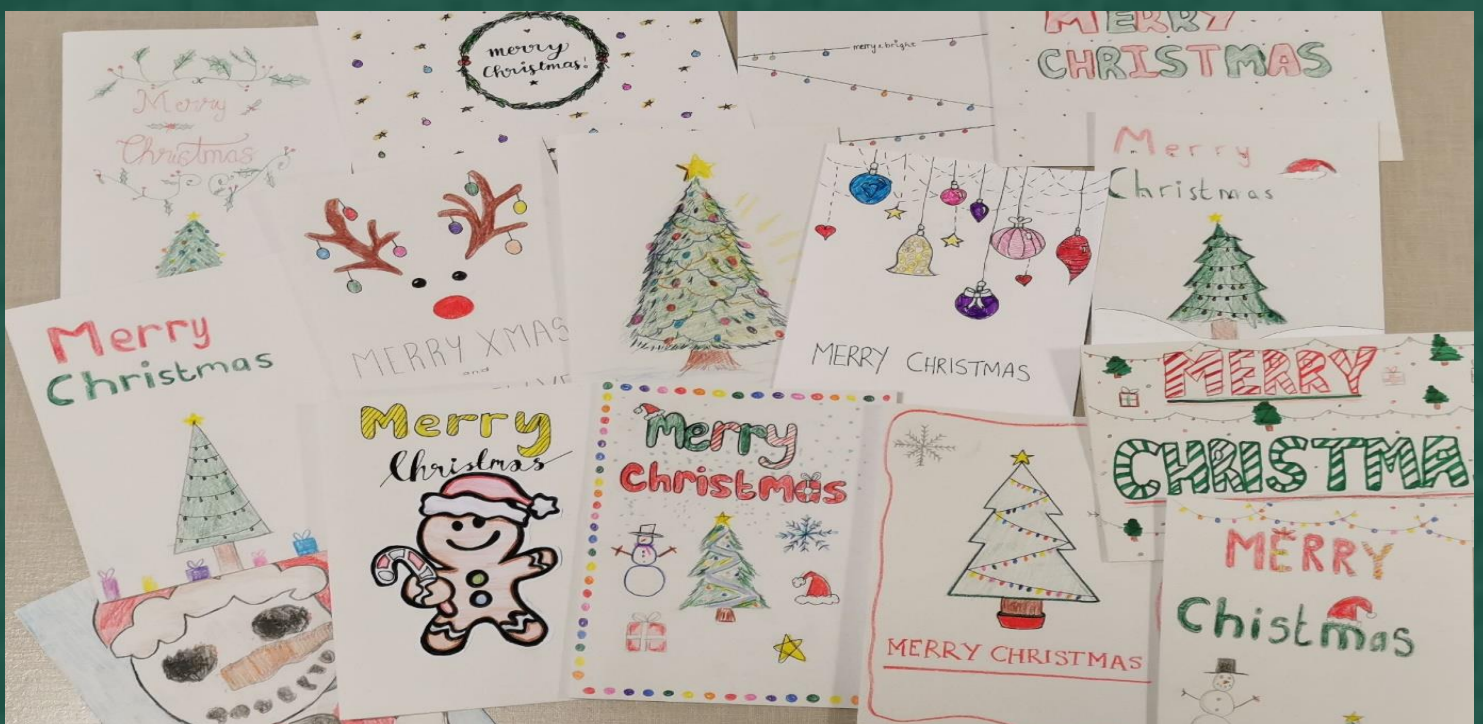
So, as can be seen, we are having a lot of fun studying French and we look forward to the new term for some new adventures! All that remains is to wish everyone a **'Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année!'**

Joyeux Noël



Well-Done 11A!

The girls in 11A and Miss Casey have been spreading some Christmas cheer with their handmade Christmas cards. These cards were made during form period. They will be delivered to Maybrook Adult Training Centre, to put a smile on someone's face this Christmas.



Technology & Design

Year 8 students have produced some fantastic outcomes with their Lamp Project. This project has introduced the students to many new skills in Technology and Design such as Electronics, Computer Aided Design and practical activities in the school workshop. Brilliant outcomes Year 8.



CyberFirst Girls Security Competition

Congratulations to our Year 9 CyberFirst Security Team! The team consisted of students from 9A (Maya, Bethany, Riley and Grace) who completed a week-long online challenge, working through Cryptography, Cyber Security, Logic and Coding activities, Networking and many other tasks. The students have qualified for the final of the CyberFirst Girls Competition which will be held in February 2023. Well-done to everyone involved! Good Luck in the finals!



The
MAGIC OF
CHRISTMAS
NEVER ENDS
ITS GREATEST
GIFT ARE
family & friends

Year 10 'Bring IT On'

This term our Year 10 students had the opportunity to participate in workshops related to the IT Sector. Thank you to Sentinus for allowing our students to partake in the 'Bring it On' programme, these workshops enabled to students to become aware of the opportunities within the IT sector in Northern Ireland.



Year 9 Micro:bit

Our Year 9 students have been busy using Micro:bit this term as part of an introduction to their coding skills in block coding. The students have been able to work along-side the outreach programme at University of Ulster and have received a certificate of achievement for the great work that they have carried out.

Congratulations!

Our huge congratulations go to Hannah Drinnan (10C) who was selected to play for the Derry Camogie team and Orlaith Mc Laughlin (10D) who has been selected to represent her club and NI at gymnastic competitions in England and America. Fantastic achievements ladies – very well-done and well deserved!



SistersIN

Our Year 13 SistersIN Enrichment group spent the morning at AXA, Derry learning about the Project Management Process used there and the potential pitfalls to be avoided. They had the amazing opportunity to interview the new CEO of AXA Ireland, Mrs Marguerite Brosnan, who happens to be the first female to hold this position.

This truly was an inspirational morning, prompting the students to explore how they can become better leaders and think about leadership in a new way. Thank you to Ciara Cauley for organising this event and for the advice and support she has provided to our students thus far. We look forward to developing this fruitful partnership with AXA.



Young Enterprise Success

Congratulations to our Year 13 Young Enterprise Team, 'To My Younger Self'. These girls have been recently announced as the winners of the Young Enterprise Brand4Success22 Competition. The judges for this competition were representatives from Colgate UK, Palmolive UK and Sanex UK. The team have won £100 to invest in the continued work of their original project. A particular note of congratulations goes to Ellen McDevitt for creating the team logo.

£100 PRIZE



Judges feedback: The objective of this brand/enterprise is very purpose driven and the way that they have reflected this within their logo is excellently done. It is distinct, shows emotion, warmth, and usage of a silhouette is really striking as it can represent all women. Amazing job!!



youngenterpriseuk Thank you to everyone who submitted entries as part of our #YEBrand4Success22 competition.

We're delighted to announce that @tomyyoungerself__ are the lucky winners and will receive £100 to kickstart their student company! The two runners up are @wisteria_box and @gripsoles and will receive £50 each.

A huge thank you to @colgateuk, @palmoliveuk and @sanexuk for judging the competition!



Has your team just won £100?

#YEBrand4Success22

Judged by representatives from @colgateuk, @palmoliveuk and @sanexuk



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Year 13 Wellness Ambassadors

This year, we have been working alongside Action Mental Health to educate ourselves and others on the importance of mental health awareness in order to break the stigma surrounding these issues and stereotypes. We completed a six-week course, making us qualified mental health ambassadors, alongside a three-hour course from SafeTALK, which focused on suicide alertness training. We learned about the warning signs surrounding the early stages of suicidal thoughts, how to discuss the hard and sensitive subject of suicide, and to get other people to seek out help when needed. Emma took us through the six-week course, while Hugh took us for our SafeTALK course. They were incredibly helpful in educating us in mental health issues and awareness.

We learned how to look after our own mental health, the importance of self-care, and how to help others and spot the signs of deteriorating mental health. We learned how mental health can affect daily life, and we plan to implement these lessons into our daily lives as well as into Thornhill. We learned a lot about self-care methods, and these gave us some bright ideas as to what we would like to see in our school for our students.

As student representatives, we see our role as being ambassadors for the wellbeing of our student body. We are planning on setting up a Lunch Club, where students can come free of judgement to eat lunch and have someone to sit with and talk to. We have many more ideas that we simply cannot wait to share.

We feel that mental health is becoming less stigmatised, but there is still a long way to go, and we hope to change this through the Mental Health Ambassadors Programme.

Aislinn Jackson & Emma O'Connor (Year 13 Wellness Ambassadors)



Spanish Department

Congratulations to the winners of the recent Spanish Department competition and well done to everyone who participated!





Derry F.C. Visit!

There was great excitement in the school when we were privileged to host players from Derry City F.C. with the FAI Cup Trophy they lifted in their stunning victory over Shelbourne. Huge congratulations to all the players and management on their fantastic achievement! #Candystripes



Donate BOYS CLOTHES

Can you help a family in need?

We urgently need boys clothes for families in need due to domestic abuse

For ages 6-9 months and 9-12 months

If you can help please leave them at 24 Pump Street Derry BT48 6JG
Or call our offices on 02871416800



PARENTS GUIDE TO Gifting Tech

Whether it's a gaming console, a mobile phone, a tablet, streaming services on a TV or notifications on their watch, all devices can have safeguarding risks. So, over the 12 Days of Christmas this year, here's 12 ways to keep your child or young person safer on their new devices.

Online Safety Shareable by **SAFER SCHOOLS NI** safer-schools-ni.co.uk

Version: 1.0.0 - Published 16/12/22

At any one time approximately 750,000 individuals are looking to connect with children online for sexual purposes.

1

Money Matters

Loot boxes, game prices, streaming services, film downloads, in-game currencies and DLC (extra downloadable content) are just a few of the financial elements that your child will encounter online. Teach them about the real-world value and the importance of asking permission before making purchases (and if your bank account details are linked, make sure to set up a PIN!)

2

Online friendship

Young people making new friends online is not unusual in today's digital world. Talk to them about the importance of keeping their information safe, including their location and school name; never sharing inappropriate photos; and to always come to you if an adult interacts with them online.

3

Personal information

As a family, get into the habit of always double checking what you're about to post or share online to make sure it isn't giving away personal information. Check the settings for who can view posts and interact with your child on the games and apps they want to play.

4

Filter safe search

Make sure you've turned safe search on wherever possible. Not only do search engines like Google have this option but your internet provider itself will likely have this feature.

5

Be Kind

Talk to your child about the important of being kind and mindful of other people's feelings online. Make sure your child knows it's important to report bullying behaviour, even when it's directed at other people.

6

Talk it through

Conversations with your children are key to keeping them safer online. Remember, it's not a tick box exercise to get over and done with! These initial conversations are just the beginning. Keep online safeguarding and device safety regular topics of conversation in your household.

7

Passwords & passcodes

As well as using PINs to protect your pay from being spent on Minecraft skins, set up passwords and passcodes on devices. You might want to use a code to protect your child from downloading a game without your permission or to set screen time schedules.



P.S. Parents, remember to be good role models and follow the screen time rules too!



8

Time limits and breaks

Before handing over a new device, discuss and agree on time limits. Be firm but fair and -most importantly- realistic. Some devices will let you set this by game, app, platform, or device so you can let technology help monitor them but keep a watchful eye for yourself. Regular screen breaks are important, too.

9

Review age ratings

Follow PEGI age ratings when deciding about the suitability of games for the child or young person in your care. Bear in mind that you know your child best; if a game doesn't seem like it would suit them, then give it a miss and find one that's a better fit.

10

Enable parental controls and family settings

Make sure you use the tools that are at your disposal! Check with your broadband providers, on devices, games, apps etc., for parental control and family setting options.

11

Safety Settings

As with the above, utilise the existing features fully. It's easy to forget about using safety settings or think, 'I'll do this later' but right now is much better than an inevitable never!

18+ ADULTS ONLY



You can learn more about how to use safety settings at oursafetycentre.co.uk.

12

Finally - stay alert!

Safeguarding your child online is not a one-off task. Check in regularly and keep an eye out for changes in mood and behaviour, including secrecy or obsessive behaviour linked to their device. And remember, you're aiming for an open, parental relationship, not a surveillance state!