

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 7th January 2009	The Term Commences at 8.45am
Wednesday 7th January 2009	Science Week Begins
Thursday /Friday 8th & 9th January	1st yr & Transition Year Students visit the RDS Young Scientist Exhibition
Tuesday 13th	January Individual Education Plan Day
Thursday 15th January	3rd Year Parent Teacher Meeting 1.45 pm – 3.45 pm
Tuesday 20th January	5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting 4.15 pm – 6.45pm
Thursday 22nd January	5th Year Retreat
Monday 2nd February	1st Year Parent Teacher Meeting 1.45 pm – 3.45 pm
Monday 9th February	1st Year Retreat
Wednesday 11th February	Mock Examinations Commence 3rd & 6th Year Students
Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 10th 11th 12th February	Transition Year/ Musical



2009

SPORTS FIXTURES (PROVISIONAL)

JCT V Wesley College at Greystones Rugby Club - 12th January at 2.30 pm.

Senior Cup Team V Belvedere College 28th January at Tempelville Road at 2.30 pm

Senior Hockey Team has been drawn against Notre Dame College in the Senior Cup in St Gerard's School on 14th January at 2.30 p.m.

Junior & Minor Hockey Cup Teams have received byes in the first round of the cup draw

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ST. GERARD'S SENIOR SCHOOL

LETTER FROM THE HEADMASTER

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CHRISTMAS 2008



Dear Parents,

September, October, November and December have, as always, been extremely busy with curricular and extra curricular activities for students of all year groups taking place every day of the week. I thank you the parents, the staff and the students of the school for your continued commitment, support, enthusiasm for all activities in St Gerard's.

This Newsletter gives you a sample taste of life here in St Gerard's School since September. Our students, staff and parents continue with their commitments to charitable works in a genuine caring Christian way which fully endorses our Mission Statement and substantiates the caring ethos of our students in an inspiring and heartening manner. May I take this opportunity to wish all of the students, staff and their families a Christmas and New Year filled with peace, love and joy.

Síocháin Dé go raibh inár measc.

Tom Geraghty
Headmaster.

BUILDINGS UPDATE

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we are within one month of completing the full Building Programme which has taken place in the school over the last five years. Recent months have seen the conclusion of the Pavilion (formerly the H-Block) which now houses more changing rooms for the girls, office, store rooms and a large new studio. The School Chapel is now fully refurbished and complete and will continue to be the spiritual home from January 2009. September saw the completion and opening of the excellent pottery room facility and drawing area. The Art Room was also reopened in September following a complete refurbishment. Work continues to both entrances of the school and to our front walls. The completion of this project will be at the end of January. I will be in contact with you in January regarding arrangements for the use of both entrances.



UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Many congratulations to Lyda Borgsteijn, Thomas De Jong, Daire Kennedy and Gareth Crotty who were awarded Entrance Scholarships to UCD and to Josephine Doyle who received an Exhibition Award to Trinity College. Lyda Borgsteijn and Candice Pearce were also recipients of the Higher Achiever Award in UCD. Once again these rewards reflect most positively on the academic programme within the school and on the Leaving Certificate Class of 2008.

LEAVING CERTIFICATE RESULTS 2008

Many congratulations once again to the excellence of the Leaving Certificate class 2008. The class average, 409 points per student, was once again outstanding and this is reflected with in excess of 85% of the students attaining a degree course at Third Level and 100% of the students attending third level in Ireland, USA, England and Northern Ireland. Once again, the students continue to inspire and one cannot be but impressed with the range of courses and career opportunities which the students have chosen to follow. Our current Sixth Year group are most focused and we look forward to another excellent result pattern from the Leaving Certificate of 2009.

NEW STAFF

The school are delighted to welcome the following teachers to the Senior School staff in August: Ms. Niamh Alymer, who is teaching Physical Education, Chemistry and Science. Mr. David Kelly, who is teaching Business Studies, Economics and Business. Mr. Dermot Mulholland, who is teaching History. Ms. Ruth Fox, who is teaching Religion, Physical Education and Learning Support.

BT YOUNG SCIENTIST EXHIBITION

Congratulations to three Transition Year students, Aran Maguire, Colin Hassell and Ian Byrne who have been selected to participate in the BT Young Scientist Exhibition taking place in the RDS in January. The title

of their project is 'Diet – The Physical Edge?'. Their project hopes to identify the impact that increased protein intake has on muscle mass development and recovery. Another eight students have undertaken to participate in the study. We wish the boys every success in January

ANÚNA

Many congratulations to Andrew Hozier Byrne of Sixth Year, who has been invited to join the international singing group, Anúna. Eabha McMahon, sixth year, is also with the group, as is Rebecca Winkworth of the class of 2007. We wish them every success



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The Christmas Bazaar was yet again another wonderful success and received tremendous support from the whole school community. A true team effort of staff and students with a great number of stands and stalls selling items as well as raising € 24,000 for local and national charities. Congratulations to Mr. Gabriel Dooley and Mr. Victor Drummy for a most entertaining auction, which at the same time raising almost €10,000. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the parents who provided items for the auction and also for the other stalls run by the students and staff. Without the generous support of the students, staff and parents, the Christmas Bazaar could not be the ongoing success that it is.

ST. GERARD'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

Last year we had 27 excellent acts and in 2008 we had 35 acts which created a wonderful atmosphere and yet again set a new standard of musical attainment in the school. Many congratulations to the prize winners who were in the Instrumental Section Sarah-Kate Fenelon, in the Vocalists Section Eabha McMahon and Andrew Hozier-Byrne and in the Band Sections 'Band 2' Tom Cullen, Jack Brennan and Rory LaHart. Many thanks to Ms Ciara O'Connell, Ms Diane Owen Ms Paula Hillman and Mr Cyrille Laurens for organising this great event.



GEOGRAPHY FIELD TRIP TO ICELAND

A large group of forty 5th and 6th year's students travelled to Iceland during their Halloween Break to complete field studies and relevant geography related course work. The tour proved to be a very unique experience and we thank Ms Avril Herriott, Ms Linda Waters, Mr Dermot Mulholland and Mr Jason Emery for accompanying the group and to Mr Adrian Dungan for his time in organising the tour for the students.

SENIOR HOCKEY TOUR TO BARCELONA

The Senior Hockey Tour travelled to Barcelona for a mid-term tour. This most worthwhile venture culminated in some excellent training opportunities and fixtures aligned with the opportunity to train in a warmer climate. Many thanks to Ms Sarah Scott for organising the tour and to Ms Ciara Broe, Ms Eimer O'Reagan and for Ms Cathy Molloy for accompanying the group.

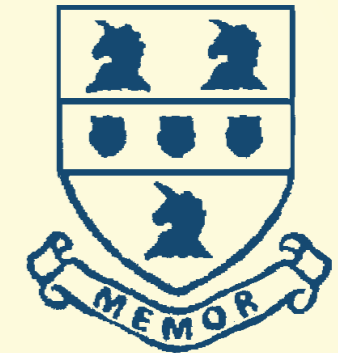


MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Ben Blunnie of 5th Year represented St Gerard's School and Ireland at the Model European Parliament held in Bratislava, Slovakia in November 2008. He was a member of the committee on Justice Civil Liberties and Home Affairs, which discussed the question of the Roma people in the EU. He gave a speech defending the resolution in General Assembly, held in the Parliament Chamber. MEP sessions were very successful at encouraging European Cultural Links and Friendships. It was a unique, very beneficial and very positive experience and one which will no doubt stand in good stead in the future.

MUSIC

Congratulations to Milo Delaney who has been awarded TSB High Achiever Award from Royal Irish Academy of Music for outstanding results in Grade 5 in his theory exam.



On behalf of the school, the parents and the students may I take this opportunity to thank all of the dedicated staff of the school who give generously of their time and knowledge to create the vast opportunities for your son(s) and daughter (s) as highlighted in both newsletters this Christmas. "Ní Neart Gur Chur Le Chéile".

I wish you and your family a happy and peaceful Christmas Season, and together we look forward with confidence to the New Year and all the good that it will hold.

Síocháin Dé Go Raibh Inár Measc

Tom Geraghty
Headmaster

to name but a few.

The TY Rugby team have a potentially excellent Senior Cup Team for the future following on from their quarter final appearance last year. This season they have beaten Blackrock, CUS and Campbell College.

The Junior Cup Team have had a solid league campaign with important victories over The High School and Wesley. We are all looking forward to the first round of the Father Godfrey Cup in January when they will play Wesley.

The under 14 team are progressing well. This team has the potential to be a very good JCT Cup Team and the back line is scoring some fantastic tries due to the great pace they have on the wings.

The under 13 squad are a very enthusiastic one with large numbers turning out for training and they are continuing to progress throughout the season. Looking forward to their 7's tournament which will be held in the Oratory School in March.



Minor 2 had a fantastic 4-0 win over Cross & Passion Kilcullen, lost narrowly to Mount Anville & drawing 0-0 with Tullamore

First Year A team got off to a great start beating Newpark 2-0 losing to Wesley 3-1, drawing 0-0 with Kings Hospital and beating Loreto Stephens Green 2-1. First Year B lost to Alex and Loreto Beaufort and drew 0-0 with East Glendalough.



GOLF

Congratulations to both our Senior and Junior Golf Teams who qualified for the ALL Ireland quarter finals. This is a major achievement as the two teams came through Leinster qualifiers where over 92 teams were competing in each section.

Congratulations to Michael Magee (6th Year) on his selection to the Leinster under 18 panels and to Nicholas O'Loughlin (3rd year) on his selection to the Leinster under 16 panel.

TENNIS

Alan Gleeson of 3rd Year continues to progress in his tennis career and is now the official highest ranked player in Ireland for his age. He recently travelled to Sweden where he put in fantastic performances against some of the world's top Junior tennis players.

Friday tennis squad training with Mr Drummy will resume after the Christmas holidays.

MARTIAL ARTS

Congratulations to Daniel Morgan (3rd Year) on his fourth place in the recent World Kick Boxing Championships held in Naples, Italy. His achievement went beyond all expectations and he will now be a major medal contender at the next World Championships in two years time.

ST GERARD'S CROSS COUNTRY

Well done to all the athletes that took part in the St Gerard's Cross Country Race. The U14 & U17 girls and U15 boys teams won. With outstanding performances on the day from Claire Foley, Cormac Tierney, Ross Taylor, Declan Keaney, Darah Callan, Brigid McKeown, Zoe O'Shaughnessy, Sophie O'Connor, Sheenagh Walker, Maedhbh Delahunt and Steve Toal-Lennon.

PHYSICS SUBJECT INSPECTION

The Department of Education and Science completed their Physics Inspection and presented their report in November. This is our fifth subject inspection in three years, having received excellent reports in History, Science, Irish, English and Physics to date.

TRANSITION YEAR

This is an excellent Transition Year group and they are settling into their transition year role with enthusiasm. Following the Junior Certificate results the full 75 students travelled to Glenmalur on their annual camping trip. Unfortunately this year the weather was not kind to them. We thank Mr E. Carr, Ms K. Magee, Ms D Brady, and Ms J Halford who accompanied the



students. In October all the Transition Year pupils took part in the Kairos Media Days in Maynooth, where they made a short television programme.

Transition Year Community Service is always a very rewarding aspect of the TY programme. From Enniskerry Tidy Towns to Charity Shops, Hospitals, The Simon Community and Nursing Home Work, our pupils have given to the community and broadened their awareness of the world of volunteering and the continued excellent work of others every day.

The students have recently visited Newgrange and Croke Park and this week the students have worked tirelessly with St. Vincent de Paul in preparing, packing and delivering 230 hampers for the Little Bray Conference of St. Vincent de Paul.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE

A group of Fourth and Fifth year students, have set up a Conference for St. Vincent de Paul and are working in close association with the local parish of St. Peter's Parish in Bray. Once again we are delighted the Transition Year students will work with St. Peter's Parish Conference of St. Vincent de Paul in organising,

packing and delivering in excess of 230 hampers. The school are delighted to be associated with this hamper appeal once again. The cost of the hampers was funded directly from the proceeds of St. Gerard's School Golf Outing last May in Powerscourt Golf Club. A sincere word of thanks to all the Junior School students and their parents who donated beautiful toys and presents which will accompany the hampers to many families. We look forward to the development of this group over the coming months.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Fifth and sixth year students, under Ms. Jennifer Halford, have set up a society of Amnesty International here in the school. The students have invited a number of speakers to address them, and continue to meet on a weekly basis to develop their society. In September a group of dedicated 5th & 6th Year students set up the St Gerard's Amnesty International Club. As this year marks the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the club celebrated international Human Rights day on the 10th December with the school community.



5th Year Students carried out Human Rights workshops with 1st and 2nd Year students to raise awareness of the importance of this issue. Also Kathleen Forde an Amnesty Volunteer of 23 years gave an insightful talk to the TY students about Amnesty's important work.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Congratulations to the students and Mr. John Reidy, who have now registered with An Taisce Green Schools Programme, which will be in operation in the new year. The students will complete an environmental review and audit of the school grounds in the new year. A number of students continue to participate from Transition Year with the Bird Watch Ireland Garden Bird Survey here on the grounds and another group of Transition Year students continue to develop their recycling drive.





CAREERS EVENTS

Making career decisions is often a slow and arduous task for students. The more time given to reflection and research, the easier the decision will be in the end. In a career, one wants to be capable, happy, adaptable, interested and realistic.

The annual Careers Workshops which provided an opportunity for our students to talk to people who are experts in their chosen field. The evening was extremely successful with speakers represented in the following sectors: Engineering, Banking, Stock Broker, Accountant, Interior Designer, Public Relations, Marketing, Film/TV, Journalism, IT, Law (barrister solicitor), Medicine, Design/Art. Sixth year students attended the Higher Options Exhibition at the RDS and also the UCD and TCD open days. Fifth year students visited UCD and were given a tour of the campus and a very informative presentation on courses available to them.

SOCIAL AWARENESS LECTURE PROGRAMME

The Social Awareness Programme is intended to confront our students with issues that are often outside of their experience and to challenge them to think about these subjects and how they affect them and the world around them. The senior students were given presentations from "The Rock of Joy" group who travelled to Uganda last summer, UNICEF, St Vincent De Paul and lastly the hard hitting presentation from Alcoholics Anonymous has made our students acutely aware of the need for awareness around our drinking culture.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Our current sixth year students will have the opportunity to travel to Rwanda and Uganda in July of 2009 to participate in their Outreach Programme. The students themselves will forfeit their 'sun holiday' and use the money that might otherwise have been used in such a holiday towards covering their costs. It is intended that approx 20 of our final year students and a number of staff members will participate..



ST. GERARD'S DAY

Many thanks to the 420 senior school students who participated in the race this year. Through the Envelope Appeal, in excess of €9,000 was raised for Temple Street Children's Hospital and this money has purchased two Monitoring Units in the A&E Department.



THE ST. GERARD'S BALL

The Ritz Carlton Hotel in Enniskerry hosted St. Gerard's Ball once again. An amazing €50,000 was raised during the evening and the 320 parents, staff and friends of St. Gerard's School had a wonderful evening of entertainment. As always, a special word of thanks to the main organising committee of Fiona Farrar, Rosemary Wright, Pamela Madigan, Cathy Pearce, Carol Mulcahy, Alison Stanley, Amanda Cathal.

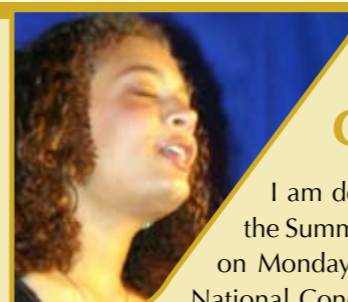


IN HOUSE COMMITTEE

A sincere word of thanks to the In House Committee under Maureen Berine for their organisation of the social occasions for parents since September. A special word of thanks to the committee for their wonderful work at the Christmas Bazaar as always and we thanks them in advance for the busy months of January to May here in the school and for their assistance with all school events.

DEBATING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

During the course of this term the students of St Gerard's School have participated in many Public Speaking and Debating competitions. Ben Blunnie and Karl Brennan have progressed in to the second round of the Denny Leinster Schools Debating Competition. Jordan De Courcy progressed into the second round of the Junior Schools L & H competition. We look forward to seeing their progress in the New Year. Upcoming Events include the Model United Nations at which St Gerard's will be representing both the countries of Canada and Singapore. The AIB Phil speaks, the UCD WGA debating competition, the Bray Lions Debating Competition and the L & H Schools Mace Competition. Also there will be a series of In House Debates. Best of luck to all of the participants.



SUMMER CONCERT

I am delighted to announce that the Summer Concert will take place on Monday 4th May at 8 pm in the National Concert Hall. The programme will feature students from both the Senior and Junior Schools. Tickets will be available solely through the school and further details will follow in the New Year. We look forward to a wonderful evening of music and entertainment in the National Concert Hall.

MOTIVATIONAL LECTURE SERIES

The Motivational Lecture Series continues for 4th Year and 6th year students. On Thursday 4th December the school welcomed Chris de Burgh, who gave a talk to the 5th & 6th Year students as part of our Motivational Speaker Programme. Mr de Burgh gave the students a very interesting look at his own journey of this highly successful music career, as well as a very honest insight into the music industry.

SHOW JUMPING

The annual St. Gerard's Show Jumping Competition was held in the Boswell Equestrian Centre in September. In excess of 40 teams participated in the competition and the competition was won by Newtown School, Waterford, with St. Gerard's School

teams finishing third and sixth. A sincere word of thanks as always to Heather Gilmore and Rosemary Cross for the superb organisation of the event.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Many thanks to the outgoing committee, under chairperson Ms. Pamela Madigan, who completed their term in October. Congratulations to the newly elected members of the Parents Association who have taken up office for the next year. The Parents Association continue to go from strength to strength and work closely with the school. We look forward to working with Chairman Mr. Liam O'Brien and his new committee.



SPORT.....



SENIOR CUP RUGBY TEAM

Congratulations to the Senior Cup team on the tremendous record to date this term. There excellent league Championship has resulted in solid wins over St Andrews, High School and Kilkenny among others. One defeat to CBC Monkstown is their only blemish with most impressive wins over Campbell College and Armagh Grammar School

The Senior Cup Team defeated Newbridge College 10 - 5 in the semi-final of the Senior League and have once again qualified for the Leinster Senior Cup proper, where they will meet Belvedere College at the end of January. The SCT play CBC or Kings Hospital in the final in January. This is the first occasion St Gerard's have reached the Leinster Senior League Final.

The Senior Development Rugby tour to Canada has been of great benefit to this squad and we look forward to January with great confidence.

Congratulations to Steven Toal -Lennon (5th Year) on his selection to the Leinster under 19 Rugby Squad.

The Senior Seconds have had an excellent season so far with important victories over Kilkenny, Pres Bray, Campbell College and the Royal School of Armagh