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2022

# Sion Hill Newsletter

APRIL 2022

*Dominican College Sion Hill aims to help each student achieve their full potential academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially in a happy secure environment.*

## Welcome

The end of another busy term in Sion Hill offers us an opportunity to pause and reflect of the challenges and triumphs that the last few months have offered.

This term saw a significant easing of public health restrictions. While we continue to learn to live 'with' Covid, there is no doubt that this easing of restrictions has had a positive effect in our school. For the first time since March 2020, we have been able to seat students in groups during class, making group work easier to co-ordinate and offering a better learning climate for our pupils. Face masks, while still advised in crowded environments, are no longer mandatory. Most importantly, we are delighted that we can, once again, welcome parents and families to our school buildings.

Our Transition Year students staged an outstanding production of Disney's "The Little Mermaid" over three nights in March. This event was the culmination of several months of preparation by the entire team. The uplifting performances, music, costumes and staging were the perfect way to welcome music back to our school and we thank the many staff who gave so generously of their time to make this show such a success. We also thank the numerous non-transition year students who generously helped with costumes, lights and sound.

Although the Easter break has started, the school is still very busy. Our third and sixth years are availing of supervised study in the library as they prepare for state examinations in June. The Leaving Certificate candidates have oral and practical examinations taking place in school over the Easter break and we wish them every success in this process.

As you read this Newsletter, I hope that it gives you a sense of the wide range of opportunities available to all Sion Hill students. On your behalf, I thank our dedicated staff for their significant commitment to delivering such a broad curriculum. In particular, I want to thank our Deputy Principal, Gerry Killion, who earlier this term announced his intention to retire at the end of this academic year. Gerry's many years of dedication, commitment and vision have made an enormous difference in the lives of countless students and we all wish him every happiness in his well-deserved retirement.

Wishing all of our school community a safe and joy filled Easter.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Orla Condren'.

Orla Condren  
Principal



# From the Student Council

The Student Council has had a very busy term, packed with events and behind-the-scenes work! Firstly, we finished our review of the school's Anti-bullying and Wellbeing policies. Our thoughts were then shared with the staff to recognise student voice in development and later reassessments of these policies.

We were then thrilled to learn our application to the ISSU (Irish Second-level Students' Union. "Led by students for students") was accepted! This is a huge step for the student voice in Sion Hill as we will now be represented at national level. The student council has been trying to join the ISSU for several years, so this is brilliant news! We look forward to being represented at the Annual ISSU Assembly in the coming weeks.

Prachi Agrawal (one of our 4th year reps) spoke on RTÉ Radio 1's 'Good Morning Ireland', as a delegate of Dáil na nÓg about their agenda of equality and how it applies to young people today. Both Prachi and Caoimhe Devlin (1st year) also continue to actively participate in Comhairle na nÓg, which gives young people a voice in relation to local policies and services.

The Student Council has also been preparing educational resources for the tutor classes to raise awareness for current issues. So far these include presentations on "Misinformation in the Media" and "Inspirational Women in Society". We will continue to provide these on more topics as the year progresses.

Lastly, we helped organise a very successful International Lunch, where students of all diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds in our school could wear traditional dress, perform songs or dances and bring in foods from their community. This was a fantastic opportunity for everyone to learn about various cultures whilst enjoying delicious customary foods!

Many thanks to all involved in our projects & have a lovely Easter break!

# From the Sports Committee

## From the first years:

The First Years are really enjoying all the sports on offer such as basketball, hockey, multi-sports and yoga. They have played sports from dodgeball to rounders, snatch the bacon and many more. Matches have been played and tournaments enjoyed. The first years would like to thank all the teachers and coaches for giving up their time and making it possible. Congratulations to Abril Allende who is the fastest in Ireland at Breaststroke, Under 14. A huge congratulations also to Isobel Ruby Nolan who has made the Under 25 National team in Lawn Bowls.

## From the second years:

The second years have been enjoying getting back to sport this year with no interruptions or restrictions. Everyone is enjoying their sport after school whether it be basketball, hockey, multi-sport or Zumba. They've also been loving the use of pitch at lunch to run around with friends and enjoy the nice weather we are getting.

## From the third years:

Every Friday 3rd year have use of the pitch. Students usually take out footballs, yoga balls and more and play matches, kick the ball around with their friends etc. This has been a really great activity for something different to do at lunch time. The sports committee has also been holding Sport of The Month which 3rd year really enjoyed. The junior hockey team also recently won a match against Ardgillan. Well done!





#### **From the Transition Years:**

Since the end of December, our TY group have been involved in sports such as tag rugby and we will be taking part in a tournament against other schools in UCD on the 6th of April. Every student in TY has also been involved in various workshops like skipping and have had a former student of our school to come in and do Boot Camp with us. Lastly, Ms.Reid has organised a hike in Glendalough for our year as part of our Gaisce and anyone who wants to take part may do so.

#### **From the Seniors:**

There is a great group of students in fifth year who are part of a very successful hockey team in the school. We have students representing both the senior B team and the Senior A team. Fifth years have also taken the opportunity to try new sports and activities every week and make the most of their P.E time.

A big congratulations to our Senior A hockey team who won their Dublin South Central League. They played both St Raphaelas and St Killians. They beat St.Raphaelas 1-0 in their first match. A fantastic goal from Aoife McNicholas Roche during the last thirty seconds against St.Killians, secured them the title. Special shout out to Sinéad Cullen who is the only TY on the senior A hockey team this year. The Senior As are playing their final match of the season on Tuesday the 5th April in a tournament hosted by St.Killians.

Our Senior B hockey team had a terrific season and finished off strongly. They really enjoyed playing hockey competitively again and are looking forward to next season.



The sports committee this year has held its annual fun run again after 3 years! This year's run was a fundraiser for Women's Aid. Every class had to run a total of 40 laps of the hockey pitch and all students participated even the teachers!! Each year had a designated colour to wear with sixth years pulling off best dressed in their mamma Mia costumes, and a well-choreographed dance by Kate Hernon to top it off!!

The winners of the run and the fastest class to complete the forty laps was 3 Opal! Well done to everyone involved and thank you to all the teachers on the sports committee who helped make the first whole school event after a long 2 years possible again.

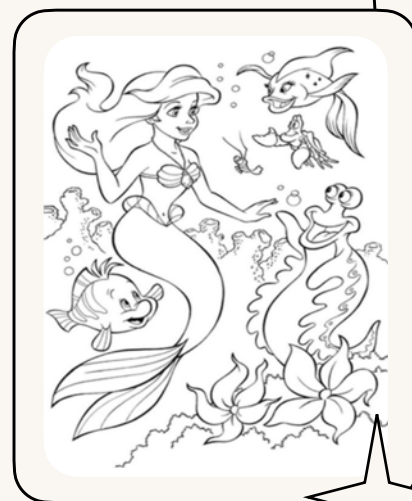
## From the Arts Committee

The Arts Committee has been especially busy this term with several creative events hosted within the past weeks. Together, the committee hosted a collection of experiences across the school during lunchtimes and break to bring attention to the spectacular main occasion of this term — The TY Musical Production of the wonderful Little Mermaid! The musical ran for an amazing three nights and was incredibly enjoyable for all who attended the fun.

In the lead up to the Musical, the Arts Committee held three events for the whole school to enjoy and participate in, the first of which being the Little Mermaid colouring in the library during lunchtime. The colouring proved to be wildly popular, and everyone had a FINTabulous time!

Secondly, in alliance with the Mind Body and Soul Committee, the two committees collaborated to host “PosiTOOvitea”. This event was held in the atrium where students could bring their own mugs and help themselves to a cup of tea.

Lastly, our first year Arts Committee reps organised and created an amazing “Little Mermaid Kahoot” which proved to be one of the highlights with a lot of good sport and great prizes. The Arts Committee wishes everyone a great Easter and is excited to plan more events in the coming months!



## From the Library Committee

During the month of December, Library Committee members wrapped some of the books from the library with wrapping paper as a mean to hide the name and cover of the book. By doing this, students picked books “blindly” as a way to not only discover new authors and book series, but also to not judge a book by its cover.

DiversiTea 2 was also held in December, with students discussing the topic of 'Racism in today's World'.

At the beginning of March, the Library Committee organised a book cover competition where students designed their own cover for their favourite book. Many beautiful and creative covers were designed, both physical and digital.

Finally, the fantastic swap shop that occurred in March was not only organised by the Environment Committee but also by the Library Committee. During this successful event, students brought their own books and donated them, while others got the chance to exchange books for new ones to bring home. It was a wonderful event that attracted lots of students as well as teachers.

In the next term we have much planned, a baking competition where students get to make book-themed submissions for a big prize and a treasure hunt with each tutor class. Keep an eye out for our next events!





## From the STEM Committee

The STEM committee has had a very busy term. For Black History month which was in February, all the stem members made posters to celebrate Black women in science and we stuck them around the school!

To celebrate engineering week (February 20th-26th), we held an event at lunch time where two guest speakers joined us via Zoom who talked about their jobs in engineering. It was very interesting!

Our most recent event was for Pi day (March 14th), we held a competition during lunchtime where everyone had to list off as many numbers of pi as they could. The winner received a grand prize of a delicious apple pie.

The Chess club continues to meet weekly which is proving very popular and many students have been involved in online competitions.

The Bebras challenge introduces computational thinking to students by allowing them to solve interactive tasks online. This year, over 8000 students participated and two students from Sion Hill, Avishi Singhal and Gosia Dolata, college reached the final 300. Avishi came third in the final in the 12-14 age group. Huge congratulations to Avishi and Gosia.

Thank you so much to everyone who participated in our events throughout the year!



## From the Mind, Body and Soul Committee

In January the Mind, Body and Soul Committee organised a week to celebrate Catholic Schools week. Many reflections and events were held throughout the week. Some of the highlights were celebrating grandparents and older people who have made an impact in our lives. To acknowledge the role the Dominican sisters, play in our education, a card and bunch of flowers was presented to them in the convent and the students were delighted when the sisters performed for them.

The MBS committee also helped to organise 'PosiTOOvitea' to join in the fun of musical week. Students could enjoy a relaxed cup of tea and chat with friends.

Yoga continues each Thursday for students and is a great way to unwind, relax and be mindful.



## From the Social Awareness Committee



raising €810 thanks to everyone's generous donations.

Recently the Social Awareness committee has been getting up to lots of fun activities. We held our annual Walk4Water and it was a huge success. Many of the 6th years and members of Alive took part and thankfully we had some lovely weather. We are also hosting a fair trade Easter Egg hunt this Friday with many different fair trade goodies to be found. We will have a stand at the International Lunch with lots of fair trade goodies as well. There was a bake sale on Wednesday and the whole school participated. All of the money raised will be going to the Red Cross in order to aid the current crisis in Ukraine. We ended up



## From the Environment Committee

This year the Environment Committee is aiming to secure a green flag for the GlobalCitizenship Travel Award over two years.

At the beginning of the year the committee was formed, and wardens assigned duties. New posters were made to inform students about what goes into the various bins and compost bins were distributed to the eating areas.

Committee members have organised the COW/ WOW Day (Cycle/Walk on Wednesday), conducted a travel survey, a Mapping Travel Survey, participated in the Globe air quality monitoring programme (Samples were sent for analysis on 31st March) and organised a bicycle maintenance workshop with Sarah Mc Ellistrem from Green Schools.

Cycle Right training has also been organised and we would encourage as many students as possible to take part.

A highlight was the submission of videos for a competition run by Saffron Travel to win 20 bicycles for the school. One of our entries has been selected to join the four other finalists nationwide. The selected video was made by Ella Caraher, Ruby Dwyer, Grace Zande and Laura Górnik in 1st year.

Meanwhile our five #andshecycles ambassadors have been working hard on their individual projects, attending regular meetings and training sessions with Green Schools and working closely with the Environment Committee. Among other things they organised cycle buddies, got Hi-vis vests from DLR, and received a traffic monitoring camera and air quality device from UCD and participated in the bicycle maintenance workshop.

The environment committee joined the library committee in organising a clothes and book Swap Shop. This was a great success and raised €132.50 for Ukraine.



## Transition Year

What an exciting term for TY . So many events to talk about so we will focus on two big ones! The long awaited musical and our trip to Delphi.

On the 14th, 15th, and 16th of March we joined our Transition Years on a trip under the sea in their production of 'The Little Mermaid'. All three nights were a great success with fantastic feedback from the crowd. It made Transition Year even more special for all students. The entire school community was delighted to welcome back a live audience after such a long time.

The TY's along with their tutors spent two amazing nights and three fabulous days in Delphi. We tried everything from zip lining to bog walking and many other activities to push us out of our comfort zone and exhilarate us. The sun shone throughout and it was an amazing way to bond as a year and make memories.



## Albertus Magnus



One of the highlights of the school calendar is The Albertus Magnus Public Speaking competition. The standard as always was so high, six wonderful speakers from 6<sup>th</sup> year spoke passionately about a range of topics and had the audience captivated. It was a difficult decision for judges Ms Ciara Morris, Ms Lynda Farrell and past pupil and last year's winner of the competition to come to but in the end the 2022 winner of the Albertus Magnus was Kate Heron who spoke about 'Leadership'. Congratulations to all involved.

## Dancing in the Convent

To celebrate Saint Patrick's week our fabulous Irish dancers performed for the Dominican sister in the convent. It was a wonderful event and enjoyed by all involved.

