

## **AVS Notes 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

### **New Junior Cert Talk March 29<sup>th</sup>**

A talk takes place in the school on 29<sup>th</sup> March on the New Junior Cert Programme. This talk is open to all interested parents. Ms. Jacqui Dillon Director of the Donegal Education Centre, Ms. Geraldine Diver Principal and JCT School Coordinator, Mr. Shane O'Neill will deliver the talk. The talk will address areas such as to why this change came about, how this will impact upon your son/daughter and the changes in curriculum assessment and teachings that are happening.

### **Talk from Dr. Fergus Heffernan on Family Dynamics and Wellbeing March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Dr. Fergus Heffernan will deliver a talk on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7.00pm in the AVS. People travel the length and breadth of the country to hear this very special speaker. We are honored to have Dr. Fergus Heffernan visit us here in the Abbey Vocational School. Known for his inspirational talks, Dr. Heffernan holds qualifications as a psychologist, a psychotherapist, a family therapist, a scientist and a biologist.

He delivers his audience plenty of material for ongoing reflection for family dynamics and emotional well-being. This is an evening presentation of about two hour's duration, which is suitable for any community or organisation with an interest in family. All welcome.

Our Leaving Cert students will have a presentation from Dr Heffernan in the afternoon and the staff will also attend a workshop after school on the same day.

### **Internet Safety Talk for Parents**

An Internet safety talk for parents will start in the Adult Education Centre, Donegal Town on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March from 7.00-9.00pm and will run over the course of 4 weeks. The course will cover staying safe online, threats and risks as well as social media and terminology. Minimum of 8 people required for the course to run. Free of charge to eligible participants. Contact Adele on 0868207338 to register or for more information.

### **Dates for incoming First Years**

#### **Induction Day for 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils**

Induction day for incoming 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March (Approx. 9.30 am to 2.30 pm). This process gives our incoming students a chance to experience a day in the life of the Abbey Vocational School. Students will attend classes in various subjects throughout the day.

This will follow with an **Information Evening for 6<sup>th</sup> class parents** on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March (7.00pm – 8.00pm)

### **Jigs and Reels March 24<sup>th</sup>**

The Abbey Vocational School will host its very own dance competition, Jigs 'N' Reels, on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Show starts at 7:30 pm sharp with doors opening at 7pm.

Students from all years will compete in their version of Strictly Come Dancing with a refreshing twist in the Abbey Hotel. Thirteen couples take to the dance floor to showcase their intense rehearsal efforts over the past few months. Each couple is made up of an accomplished Irish dancer paired with a novice Irish dancer and are directed to perform their very own unique Irish dance. The practice group dance is coming along well and the dancers are collaborating tremendously hard to perfect it.

Make sure you get your tickets early and join us for a fantastic night. On the night, you can vote for your favourite couple, there will be fierce competition on the dance floor on the night with MC Noel Cunningham and three special guest judges; it's sure to be a fun filled night! Tickets are priced €10 Adult or €7 Students and are available at the School office. Tickets can be purchased in the assembly area at lunchtime also.

We are also running a competition on our Facebook page where you can be in with a chance to win two tickets to the event. For more information, visit the 'AVS presents Jigs and Reels' Facebook page by searching @avsjigsandreels. Videos of our couples are available to view also on the Facebook page. Good luck to all our couples!

**The couples involved are:** Lisa Gallagher and Aidan Mc Hugh, Caitlin Norrby and Caelan Boyle, Karla Kelly and John Relihan, Gerard Byrne and Aoife Breslin. Jack Myers and Abbie Chambers, Amy McInern and Danny Burke, Kara Meehan and Patrick Harley, Laura Mc Goldrick and James McNamara. Aoife Joyce and Shaun Campbell, Jenny Burns and Richard O'Rourke. Bronagh Boyle and Mark Jordan, Clara Bustard and Dermot McGuckin, Ailbhe Loughney and Aaron Pearson.

### **Seachtain na Gaeilge**

Seachtain na Gaeilge takes place all over the country from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> Márta. The Irish Department are holding events to celebrate this week from 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> March. This will include a St. Patrick's Day card competition for 1<sup>st</sup> years. All entries are due in by Monday at the latest. In addition, all Irish classes will be completing quizzes, bingo and other games in class to celebrate the week. Clement Gallagher who completed a successful number of Céili dancing classes with our TY's will be putting our 5<sup>th</sup> years through their paces to mark the occasion.

### **Staff Meeting**

A staff meeting took place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March. Various aspects of the new JCT were explored in particular the areas of wellbeing and the new level two programme.

### **Leaving Cert Debrief day**

Well done to our very busy Leaving Cert students who have completed their Mock Exams and returned to school this week to take part in a debrief day. They attended a post Mock Examination talk with Michael Bond our visiting expert on study and examination technique. Michael discussed timing, marking schemes and various other very important skills for examinations. The students completed some surveys on the exams and on the new mentoring system that is in place to support each of the students in Leaving Cert. The purpose being to inform our team here in the school on how we can best support our students during this pressured time. The students were then bussed out to the Drimmarone Centre where they had a fantastic bonding day with a variety of team building and fun activities. Thanks to our staff who organised this day for the students.

### **Evening Study**

Evening study has commenced again. Forms are available from the office for any student interested in the After-School Study.

### **TY Interviews**

Sean Mc Gee interviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> year students interested in completing the TY programme for 2017-2018 this week on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March. The process is based on the students TY

application form and applicants were interviewed for 10 minutes to determine their suitability.

### **Countdown**

Countdown continues again this term. This is a math-based task. All students can participate in the challenge. A mathematical sum will be placed on TV monitors throughout the assembly area each week giving students an opportunity to solve the problem. All solutions must be placed in the box at the office. This will run for the next couple of weeks until the Easter holidays when a final will take place to crown a Countdown Champion.

### **Art Competition**

Jigsaw Donegal are hosting an art competition open to TY, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students to promote positive mental health. The theme of the competition is "*sometimes we need to take time to appreciate the beauty in the world around us*". The deadline for entries is Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March. Students should see Mr Daly or Mrs Mc Callig for further details. 1st prize is a: Samsung Galaxy Tablet, 2<sup>nd</sup>: €50 One for All voucher and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize: a €30 One for All voucher.

### **Couch to 5k**

Our Couch to 5k events for Healthy School promotion continued this Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March on the track at lunchtime. We are encouraging everyone who signed up to stay involved and push themselves to keep participating in scheduled events.

### **EU Business Debate**

Ms. McCafferty's senior Business class attended a debate in Dublin Castle on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March. 3 participants represented the AVS on the day and the remainder of the class supported on the day. The students represented the EU member state Hungary in the debate; the theme was 'International Trade Agreement'. The representatives discussed whether they thought international trade would be beneficial for European trade and business. Results of the task will follow in next week's newsletter.

### **Spanish Club**

Ms. Mc Nulty will be running a Spanish club for 1<sup>st</sup> year students every Thursday in room 1 during the second half of lunchtime from 1:00 – 1:20 pm. Students can participate in fun and lively activities that will assist them in learning the modern language. This week students completed an emoji worksheet, which helped them describe different emotions using Spanish adjectives.

### **Book Club**

A meeting will take place Monday 13<sup>th</sup> in the reading room at 1:30 pm. Members after completion of 'The Hobbit' by J.R. Tolkien will review the text.

### **Chess Club**

TY interclass competitions continue this week to select this year's TY Chess Champion. Chess club continues in room 3 every Wednesday at 12.45 pm for 1st-3rd years. Beginners are welcome. In addition, a competition is now on-going to select the Junior Class Champion for the year.

## **Careers Expo**

5<sup>th</sup> years attended a ‘Careers Expo’ in the Villa Rose hotel in Ballybofey on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March. Exhibitors from different universities, members from the Garda Síochána and Irish Army plus various stalls were present on the day. Students were invited to ask any questions they had on the day about specific courses or apprenticeships

## **Transition Year:**

### ***Alan Devine Public Speaking Workshop***

Alan Devine completed two workshops this week on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The last two TY groups will complete the workshop on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> and Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Alan Devine is an actor who has performed in “Glenroe, King Arthur, Hamlet, Veronica Guerin, The Tudors, Vikings and Fair City, Alan has over twenty years’ experience working as an actor in Ireland”. ([www.dramaclub.ie](http://www.dramaclub.ie))

The workshops held this week were enjoyable and partakers learnt how to find confidence in their abilities and voice. Alan played fun games with participants in the workshop; students were asked to read jokes out to their audience focusing on extending their voice, being confident and using positive body language to engage their audience. He presented two speeches to students one was dull, lacked confidence whereas the other was enthusiastic and enjoyable, participants were asked to describe the differences in the two. He encouraged students to smile, speak and stand confidently when speaking to an audience.

### ***TASTY Project***

The official launch of the project kicks off next Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March. The TASTY teams from this week on are due to start working once a week for the month of March on their new food product. 42 TY students are working with local hotels and restaurants on the next phase of the project to develop their product. The teams are now in the process of visiting their hotels and restaurants for initial meetings with the chefs and management. Discussions are underway for the direction of the product they are going to develop. The students are working in conjunction with hotels and restaurants in Donegal. These local establishments are: The Smuggler’s Inn, Harvey’s Point, Solís Hotel, The Mill Park, Chandpur and The Village Tavern.

The overall aim of the Donegal “TASTY” Project is to provide transition year students at the Abbey Vocation School (AVS), Donegal Town with a “TASTE” of the varied career paths and opportunities within the Tourism & Hospitality industry. During the course of the project, the TY students will be given the opportunity to work alongside tourism industry Professionals and learn “first-hand” about Food Origin and Sourcing, New Product Development, Culinary Arts, Food Packaging, Marketing, PR and Presentation Skills. The goal of each of the TY Tasty Teams, in conjunction with their assigned hotel or restaurant, is to develop a savory or sweet food product that can be sold in a take away format.

### ***Wellbeing Workshops***

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March a Workshop hosted by NET Ireland took place. The Net Ireland “Road Team travels across Ireland facilitating retreats for schools and parishes up to 5 days a week. Since 1981, NET teams have conducted over 30,000 retreats”. ([www.netministries.ie](http://www.netministries.ie)). The day will focus on well – being.

TY students were in the Central Hotel all day with mentors aged between 19 and 24 years of age. The mentors chose to take a year out to work with NET speaking to young people and

complete fundraising for the establishment. A team of 8-12 young people run the retreats; the mentors split the TY's into groups where they engaged in-group bonding activities, group discussions and learning activities. Students learned the qualities of being a good and effective leader through games.

### **TY Dublin Trip**

On Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March TY's will travel to Dublin. All students will visit the Croke Park grounds on this day where they will take part in a tour of the grounds museum and facilities. They will then visit Kilmainham Gaol and the Dáil. All are looking forward to this trip which is a wonderful educational experience for the students.

### **Irish Orals**

Junior Cert Irish Oral Exams took place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> and Friday 10<sup>th</sup>. The orals are worth 40% of the overall grade. Students have prepared for this through mock orals in class with their Irish teachers.

### **Art Mocks**

Leaving Cert Art mocks were held this week for students studying the subject. This was based on the practical element of their exam.

### **The Environmental Committee**

The Environmental Committee have submitted their action plan for the Young Environmentalist Award. The Committee chose to promote the value of exercising outside. They held a poster competition for First Year Students to raise awareness and have helped promote the Run for Fun. For their submission the Committee had to present the reasons they choose this topic, research to support their choice, outline how they have met the aims of the action plan, what new skills they developed and rate how effective their action plan was in raising awareness of exercising outside. They submitted a sample of the posters, videos, photographs and a presentation as evidence.

### **Sport:**

#### **U14 Boys Gaelic**

The U14 boys played Loreto, Milford in the County Semi Final before mid-term and won which now leaves them in the happy position of being in the County Final. The boys will play in the final against PCC Falcarragh. We await anxiously the news of the date as the boys are very excited about this event.

#### ***Athletics***

Well done to Mia Mc Calmont and Kitty McNulty who represented the school at the Ulster Schools Cross Country Final in Belfast during the midterm. Both girls competed a year out of their age group in the U17 race. Kitty finished 67th in a very competitive race. She only started cross-country this year and must be commended on a gutsy run. She is improving every week and showing great potential for the track season ahead. Mia who is a seasoned runner finished in 7th place to qualify for the All Ireland Final in Belfast on 11th March. This is a great achievement and opportunity to compete against the best from all over Ireland. Good luck to Mia.

Thank you to the 16 senior athletic coaches who officiated at the Primary School Sportshall Athletics Regional final hosted by Donegal Sports Partnership. There were 7 small schools in

the competition with the top three schools qualifying for the County Final. The qualifiers were Frosses NS, St Nauls NS and Bruckless NS.

Our athletes now look forward to a busy track and field season over the coming months.

Training times:

Tuesday: 4.00-5.15pm

Friday: Lunchtime

### ***Girls Basketball***

On Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>, our 1st year girls came up against a tough team, Ursuline College Sligo. The girls got off to a slow start but they never lost control of the game. The girls scored some fantastic baskets at the beginning of the third quarter to put them in the lead. The Ursuline girls never let up during the game making it a difficult game for the AVS girls. The Abbey girls pulled through resulting in a thoroughly deserved victory.

### ***Boys' Basketball***

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> the U14 boys played Crossmolina in Ballina, Mayo. The boys put up a good fight and played well but unfortunately, they did not pull through leading to a tough loss with a final score of 19-29.