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TY TIMES

The Davitt College Official Transition Year Newspaper



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TY MUSICAL CLEANS UP

In November 2025, Davitt College cranked the volume all the way up with Rock of Ages – a sold-out, full-throttle musical that celebrated 40 years of school shows in serious style. With over 120 students on stage and behind the scenes, the school auditorium was transformed into a proper theatre, complete with a set designed and built in-house and performances that had the crowd eating out of their hands. And then came the national stage awards – where Davitt College brought home seven national awards, including honours for directing, set design, ensemble, and standout acting and vocals. Want the behind-the-scenes chaos, the big moments, and the people who made it happen?

Read the full story on page 7!



LEARNING LIFE-SAVING SKILLS

by Grace Butler & Niamh Bennett

We recently took part in a first aid demonstration that gave us practical knowledge and greater confidence in how to respond in emergency situations. The session was both informative and hands-on, covering several scenarios we could come across in everyday life, including dealing with an unconscious person, using a defibrillator, treating injuries such as sprains or fractures, and helping someone who is choking.

One of the most important lessons we learned was what to do if someone becomes unconscious. The instructor explained that the first step is always to check for ABC – airways, breathing, and circulation. We were then shown how to check for a response by gently shaking the person and speaking to them. If there is no response, we practised checking for breathing and placing the person in the recovery position, which helps keep the airway open and prevents choking. We learned that, if the person is breathing normally, you should kneel beside them, place the nearest arm at a right angle, pull the far knee up, and carefully roll them onto their side while supporting the head. If they are not breathing, it is vital to call the emergency services immediately and begin CPR.

Another key part of the day was learning how to use a defibrillator, or AED. Before the session, many of us thought defibrillators were complicated, but we discovered that they are designed to be simple and user-friendly. The device gives clear voice instructions to guide the user step by step. We practised placing the pads correctly on a mannequin and learned that the AED will only deliver a shock if it detects a life-threatening heart rhythm. This made us feel much more confident about using one in a real emergency.

We also learned how to deal with injuries such as broken or sprained limbs. The instructor showed us how to recognise the signs of a fracture, including severe pain, swelling, and difficulty moving the injured area. For both fractures and sprains, we were told to keep the limb still and supported, often using a sling or padding to reduce movement. Applying a cold compress can help reduce swelling in the case of a sprain, while more serious injuries require medical attention as soon as possible.

Finally, we covered what to do if someone is choking, which is a situation that requires immediate action. We were taught to encourage the person to cough if they are able, as this may clear the blockage. If that does not work, we practised giving back blows to help dislodge the object. The demonstration made it clear how quickly choking can become life-threatening, but also how effective the correct response can be.

Overall, the first aid demonstration was an extremely valuable experience. It not only taught us essential life-saving skills, but also helped us understand the importance of staying calm and acting quickly in an emergency. Knowing what to do in these situations can make a critical difference, and this session has prepared us to respond with greater confidence and responsibility.



Road Safety Awareness for TY Students

BY FIACHRA O'MORAIN

In December 2025, a Garda officer gave the TY students a workshop on drink driving and its extreme dangers, speaking in a frank but truthful way. At the beginning of the workshop, he explained what it would focus on. Once he had outlined the background, he showed the year group a video filmed from a camera mounted on a motorcyclist's helmet. In the video, the man was travelling too fast on the road and crashed into a car that was turning right. He was thrown high into the air and killed on impact. Although the video did not show any gore, it continued filming after the crash, and we could hear his final breath.

Throughout the workshop, he showed us other videos in a similar vein. Some were staged road safety advertisements, while others were just as disturbing as the first. One showed a woman holding a photograph in front of her face to show what she looked like before her car crash. When she removed the picture, it revealed the severe facial injuries she had suffered as a result of the collision.

Another part of the workshop that I found particularly striking was when the Garda explained what happens when he, or another officer, has to inform a family that a loved one has died. He said that the first thing they must clearly state is that the person is dead. It may sound cold or lacking in empathy, but the reason is to avoid giving the family any false hope, which could make the situation even more devastating when the truth becomes clear.

When the workshop ended, one question was left hanging in the air – was the graphic detail necessary? I would argue that it was, because at this age we, as TY students, need to understand the reality of drink driving and the life-changing trauma it causes, not only for the victims, but also for their families and friends.



An Garda Síochána

Ireland's National Police & Security Service

SHOPPING AND SHOWSTOPPERS IN DUBLIN

BY RHIANNON BROSAN & ABIGAIL LANE

Rhiannon

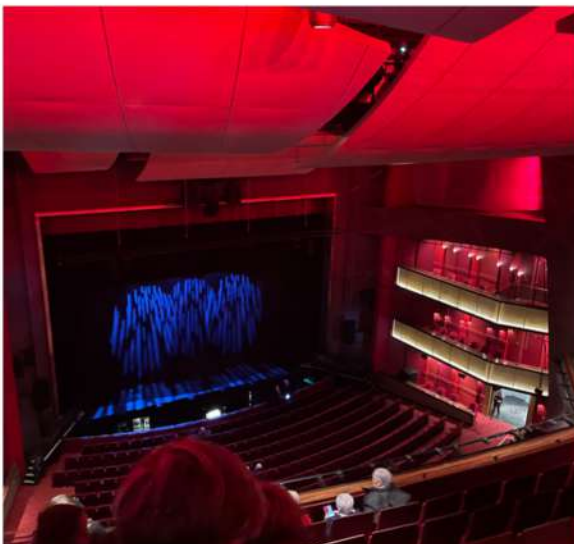
On 25th February, the Transition Year students and the choir who supported us during the musical travelled to Dublin for a trip to Liffey Valley and the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre to see the musical Blood Brothers.

We all met at the school at 7.00 a.m. and got on the bus. The journey took about three hours, but we stopped at Liffey Valley first so that we could have lunch before the show. We had two hours to shop, eat, and look around, and by the end of it we were definitely worn out!

After shopping, we all gathered back at the bus and made our way to the Bord Gáis. We were excited to see professional musical performers on stage and to compare the production to our own school musical, Rock of Ages. We were seated in the highest tier, which gave us a great view of the stage and the full theatre experience.

Once the show began, we were completely drawn in. The acting, singing, and overall performance were amazing to watch, and we were all blown away by the talent on stage. Not knowing exactly what to expect made it even better. At the end, we gave the cast a standing ovation before heading back to the bus.

We arrived home at around midnight, and I think it is safe to say that everyone had an unforgettable day.





Abigail

On 25th February 2026, a group of our teachers took the TY year on a trip to Dublin. During the day, we experienced two main events – a visit to Liffey Valley Shopping Centre and a trip to the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre.

Our first stop was Liffey Valley, where students explored the shops and spent to their hearts' content. A mix of freedom and responsibility filled the air as bags from stores like Flying Tiger, Zara, and JD Sports quickly filled the bus.

Back on the road, we made our way to the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre to see a production of Blood Brothers, the powerful musical written by Willy Russell and starring Rebecca Storm. The theatre was full of excited students, some of whom had never seen a musical before. By the end, everyone was moved by the talent and emotion of what we had just watched on stage.

The journey home was filled with tired but happy students, still in awe of everything we had experienced throughout the day.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL STAGE AWARDS

BY DAISY FINNERTY & RHIANNON BROSANAN

Daisy

The Rock of Ages musical, performed by this year's Transition Year students last November, was undoubtedly an exceptional and unforgettable production. It felt only natural for the producers to enter the show into The Best of Ireland Secondary School Stage Awards. When the cast heard the news, we were all absolutely buzzing. The thought that some of us could be nominated – and maybe even win – was something none of us could quite believe.

Everyone in the cast was glued to the awards' social media pages. The nominees were announced little by little, which definitely tested our patience! In the end, we received an amazing seventeen nominations in total. A few of us – Myles, Bella, Ben, and I – were also nominated individually, which made it all even more exciting.

The day before the awards ceremony, the excitement was already through the roof. The tan, the hair, the make-up, and the outfits made it feel like something out of a film montage. On the morning of the awards, everyone was so fired up for the day ahead. We were all amazed by how incredible everybody looked – the boys in their suits and the girls in their dresses and heels.



The trip up to Dublin was great fun, with excitement building the whole way. We stopped at a restaurant on the journey and had what was possibly the nicest roast beef of our lives. Once we arrived, we were all surprised – and maybe a little intimidated – by how many schools were there and how professional everything looked.

Before the ceremony started, there was time to find our seats, get settled, and grab some food and drinks. Once it began, the atmosphere in the room was electric. The roaring and cheering were deafening, and as each category was announced, the excitement only grew. By the end of the night, we had won seven out of our seventeen nominations – an incredible achievement.

Our awards were: Best Male Vocal Co-Star for Ben O'Brien, Best Female Actress for Daisy Finnerty, Best Male Actor for Myles Girling-Moore, Best Acting Ensemble for the cast, Best Female Comedy for Isabella Kearney, Best Set Design for the design team, and Best Director for Damien Gallagher. We were all so hyper, proud, and emotional – it was honestly one of the most brilliant evenings imaginable.

The bus journey home was just as memorable. Everyone changed into their pyjamas and piled into a well-deserved Supermac's stop on the way back. We arrived home at crazy o'clock, already wishing the day wasn't over and that we could do it all again.



Rhiannon

I woke up at the crack of dawn to start getting ready for the night ahead. It took me a good five hours to get ready, and by the time we arrived at school, we looked like we had taken a wrong turn on the way to the Met Gala. We headed up to the library to meet the rest of the cast and everyone else attending. Everyone looked amazing, and the effort people put in made the night even more memorable.

After taking some photos outside the school, we got on the bus and set off for Dublin. We stopped in Feerick's for dinner on the way, and I got the roast beef, which was honestly one of the nicest meals I've ever had. Then it was back on the road again.

We arrived at the Bonnington Hotel, where the Best of Ireland Secondary School Awards were being held. Once we got our wristbands, we had our photos taken on the 'red carpet' before heading inside. We were seated at three tables beside each other, and the excitement really started to build as the ceremony began.

It was such a brilliant experience to be there together as a cast, all dressed up and celebrating the success of Rock of Ages. Hearing Davitt College called out throughout the night was an incredible feeling, and the atmosphere at our tables was full of excitement and pride.

To finish off the night, we stopped at Supermac's on the way home, which was definitely well deserved. It was a long but unforgettable day, and one I'll remember for a very long time.



DAVITT COLLEGE SHINES AT THE MUSICAL AWARDS

BY BRIAN MAHLANGU, KACPER MILEWSKI AND MYLES GIRLING-MOORE

The TY Musical Awards were a truly unforgettable experience and a night that meant so much to everyone involved. We all got ready that morning ahead of our 12.00 p.m. bus to Dublin, and the excitement was unreal. Before we left, we took photos with our group of around 30 people. Everyone was dressed up in suits and dresses and ready for the red-carpet photos. On the way to Dublin, we stopped off to get some food before the big night.

Once we were fed and back on the road, it was not long before we arrived in Dublin. After getting off the bus, we walked to the hotel, where the excitement was mixed with a few nerves. When we saw the other schools there, we realised the competition was going to be tough.

After a short wait, we were led to our seats, which felt fancier than anything we had ever seen before. Soon afterwards, the ceremony began. The atmosphere was electric, with everyone eagerly waiting for the first award to be announced. When the Main Male and Main Female Vocal awards were called and we did not win, there was a brief moment of disappointment.

That quickly changed when Ben O'Brien won Best Male Vocal Co-Star. As soon as his name was announced, everyone from Davitt College jumped out of their seats in excitement. The cheering was unbelievable, and the whole room could probably hear us.

From there, the wins kept coming. Daisy Finnerty won Best Female Actress, Isabella Kearney won Best Female Acting Co-Star, and Myles Girling-Moore won Best Male Actor. We also won Best Acting Ensemble and Best Set Design, which was an incredible achievement. Then came Mr Gallagher's big moment, when he won Best Director. At that stage, the atmosphere at our tables was absolutely amazing. It was such a proud and emotional night for everyone involved, and the award winners made Davitt College proud.

When the event ended, we took some photos before heading home. The journey back was a long one. We were all exhausted by the end of the day, but also so happy and proud of everything we had achieved. It was a night none of us will ever forget.

BOIA SECONDARY STAGE AWARDS



BOIA SECONDARY STAGE AWARDS



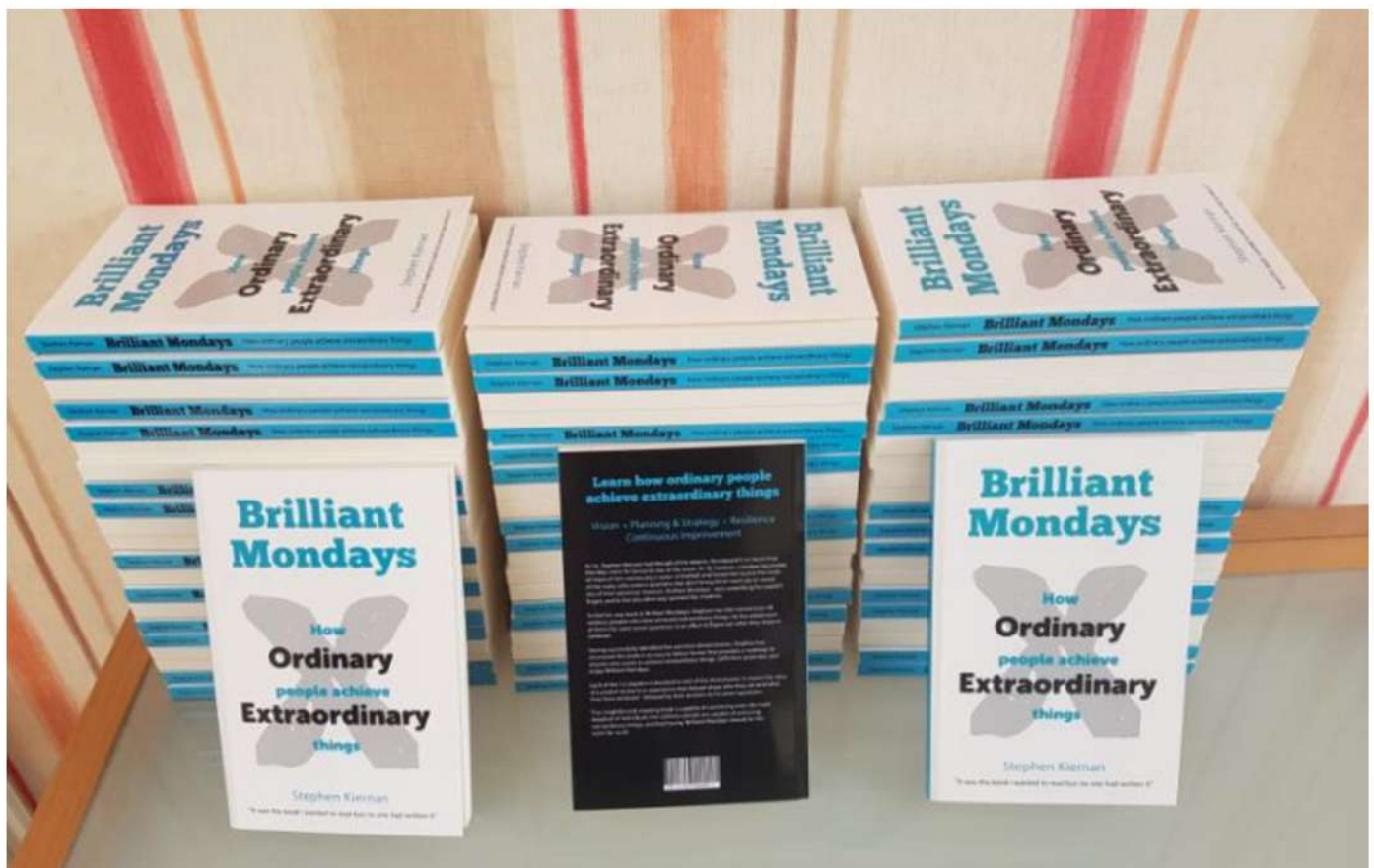
STEPHEN KIERNAN — PLAN, STRATEGY, ACTION, ACHIEVE

BY ISABELLE MCHUGH

Stephen Kiernan's talk was both inspiring and practical, and it gave us a fresh way of thinking about success and personal goals. As the author of *Brilliant Mondays*, he spoke about how success is not just for a lucky few, but something anyone can work towards with the right attitude and effort.

One of the main ideas in his talk was the importance of breaking big goals into short-term, medium-term, and long-term steps. He explained that large ambitions can seem overwhelming at first, but they become much more achievable when broken down into smaller targets. He also introduced the idea of a 'breakthrough goal' – a smaller success that can build confidence and motivate you to aim even higher.

A key message from the talk was his four-step approach: Plan, Strategy, Action, Achieve. This reminded us that success does not happen all at once – it takes clear goals, steady effort, and the confidence to keep going. Overall, it was a very worthwhile talk and one that left many of us thinking more positively about our own goals for the future.





DRIVING DAY AT PALLAS

BY CONN FITZGERALD & BRIAN O'DONNELL

We went driving in Galway at Pallas Driving School, where we got a taste of what it's like to be behind the wheel. The day began with a theory test – and to be honest, most of us failed! After that, we headed out to the cars, where the instructors showed us the different parts of the vehicle and explained how everything worked.

We were then split into groups of four and took turns getting into the car, handing our phones over to the instructor before starting. Ryan Reilly was first up. He stalled the car at the start, got going again, and then stalled it a few more times after that. We all had a great laugh – it was good fun, to be fair.

Next up was Brian, who was very impressive. He drove really well, stayed calm, and the instructor seemed very pleased with him. Connor was also a strong driver, although he had one little mishap when he drove off the track and nearly crashed. Apart from that, he did very well.

Last into the driver's seat was Conn, who was unbelievably talented. He drove with real confidence and made no mistakes at all. The instructor was clearly impressed with his skills.

Overall, it was a brilliant day out and a great experience for everyone. Even with the stalls, near misses, and plenty of laughs, we all learned something and got a real taste of driving for the first time.





MONEY SMARTS AND THE SCHOOL BANK

By Aisling Forkan & Clodagh Keane

Aisling

The Money Smarts Programme, offered by the Bank of Ireland, helps secondary school students understand the importance of financial wellbeing. As part of the programme, Castlebar's Bank of Ireland Youth Coordinator, Amy Dowling, delivered two presentations on topics such as spending, borrowing, earning money, and the importance of becoming financially independent at our age.

Another opportunity the programme offered was the School Bank. Its aim was to encourage students in Davitt College to open their own bank accounts and promote financial independence. The School Bank offered seven different roles: Bank Manager, Assistant Manager, two Digital Advisors, two Marketing Managers, and an Operations and Audit Specialist. TY students were able to apply for any role they were interested in and were then interviewed by Amy Dowling.

Two school bank teams were set up – Cash Me If You Can and Cash Royale. Both teams competed using different methods to attract students, including incentives such as raffles and bake sales, catchy slogans, and announcements over the intercom. The winning team received a €100 Kennedy's voucher. This year's School Bank was a great success, with many students opening accounts through one of the two teams.



Personally, I would definitely recommend this programme to next year's TY students. Working with the School Bank helped develop lots of valuable skills, including teamwork, creativity, organisation, and communication. It was both a beneficial and enjoyable experience, especially with the competition between the two banks.

On behalf of everyone involved in both bank teams, we would like to thank everyone who opened a bank account through us. We would also like to thank Amy Dowling and Mr McGrath for all of their help and support – we really appreciate the work they put into making the School Bank such a success.

Clodagh

As part of our TY programme, some students got involved in setting up a School Bank in collaboration with the Bank of Ireland. As part of the process, each student took part in an interview with Amy Dowling, a current employee of Bank of Ireland and a past pupil of Davitt College. Due to the large number of students who wanted to get involved, two teams were formed, with seven members on each team. Each member was given a different role to help run the bank.

The School Bank launched on 26th February in the school canteen during lunchtime. This gave students the opportunity to open a bank account free of charge without having to leave the school grounds. The School Bank was a great success and ran for four weeks during breaktimes, making it easily accessible to all students over the age of fourteen.



A FESTIVE DAY OUT IN GALWAY

By Grace Walsh & Lauren Allen

On 16th December, we went on a trip to Galway, where we went ice skating in Salthill and visited the Christmas markets. It was a really enjoyable day and a nice chance to spend time together before Christmas.

The bus journey up was good fun, and everyone was excited for the day ahead. When we arrived, we spent some time around Galway shopping before heading to the ice rink. Ice skating was one of the best parts of the trip. Some people were more confident than others, but everyone gave it a go. There were a few slips and falls, plenty of laughs, and overall it was a great experience on the ice.

After that, we visited the Christmas markets, where everyone had the chance to walk around, look at the stalls, and enjoy the festive atmosphere.

Overall, it was a brilliant trip, and everyone had a great time between the shopping, the ice skating, and the Christmas markets.







EXPLORING FUTURE PATHWAYS AT ATU SLIGO

by Isabelle Earls

On 24th March, we travelled to the Atlantic Technological University in Sligo. We arrived at 9.00 a.m. and received our wristbands for the classes we had booked. There were many lectures to choose from, including pharmaceutical science, engineering, architecture, accounting, and many more.

We attended two lectures, one from 10.00 to 11.00 and another from 11.00 to 12.00. In both sessions, a lecturer explained the course content, how the programme is structured, and what careers it could lead to. Speaking to the lecturers gave us a much better understanding of the subjects and the different job opportunities connected to them. Afterwards, when we spoke to our classmates, most of them said they had really enjoyed the experience.

After the lectures, we went to the canteen for lunch, where there was a wide selection of food to choose from. We had options such as hot food, açai bowls, and more, and we also had an hour to look around the campus.

We then made our way to reception, where we met up with everyone again before going on an informative tour of the campus. Finally, we headed back to the bus for the journey home.



CONOR'S WELLNESS PATH

By Kayla Gibbons

A few days ago, we welcomed Conor Harris to Davitt College, where he spoke to students about his past struggles with drug addiction and mental health. Conor shared his personal story and spoke honestly about the challenges he faced growing up and how these experiences led him down a difficult path.

During the talk, he gave us a powerful insight into his journey – from the day his father left, through his struggles with addiction, and eventually to his time in rehabilitation. Many students were deeply moved by his story, and his honesty left a strong impression on everyone listening.

Conor reminded us that recovery is possible for anyone, and that reaching out for help is the most important step, even though it can feel overwhelming or difficult. His message was one of hope and resilience. Today, Conor continues to share his story to support others who may be struggling with addiction or mental health challenges.

It was a powerful and inspiring talk, and one that many students will remember for a long time.



A MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE OF REMEMBRANCE AND SUPPORT

By Sarah Kennedy & Isabelle McHugh



Volunteering at the Child Remembrance Service in ATU was an experience that left a lasting impression on us, both emotionally and personally. The event was organised to honour the memories of children who had passed away, and it brought together families, students, and members of the community in a quiet and respectful space for reflection. Along with Conor, Isabella, Sarah, and Danielle, we were glad to take part after Ms Gibbons asked for volunteers for the service.

As volunteers, our role was to help prepare the setting and support the smooth running of the service. Chairs were arranged carefully, programmes were laid out, and candles were placed with great care and intention. During the ceremony, each of us also carried up a crocheted heart alongside someone bringing forward a candle in remembrance.

One of the most powerful moments of the evening was the candle-lighting ceremony. We helped distribute candles to those attending, with each one symbolising remembrance, love, and connection. When the time came, the room dimmed and the candles were lit one by one. Watching the soft glow spread throughout the space created a strong sense of unity and calm. It was a simple act, but one that was deeply moving. As the candles were placed together, they formed the word 'Hope', which made the moment even more meaningful. Each flame represented a life remembered and a story that continues to matter.

Throughout the service, there was a quiet strength in the atmosphere. People supported one another through a shared understanding, even without words. As volunteers, we remained present and attentive, offering guidance where needed while also respecting the emotional nature of the event.

Being part of this service taught us the importance of compassion, sensitivity, and community. It reminded us that volunteering is not just about giving your time – it is about being there for others in moments that truly matter. The experience of helping to bring light, both literally and symbolically, is something we will carry with us for a long time. It also left us feeling deeply grateful for our own families and with even greater respect for those who have experienced such heartbreaking loss.

SING ALL
OUR
CARES
AWAY... *Damien
Dempsey.*

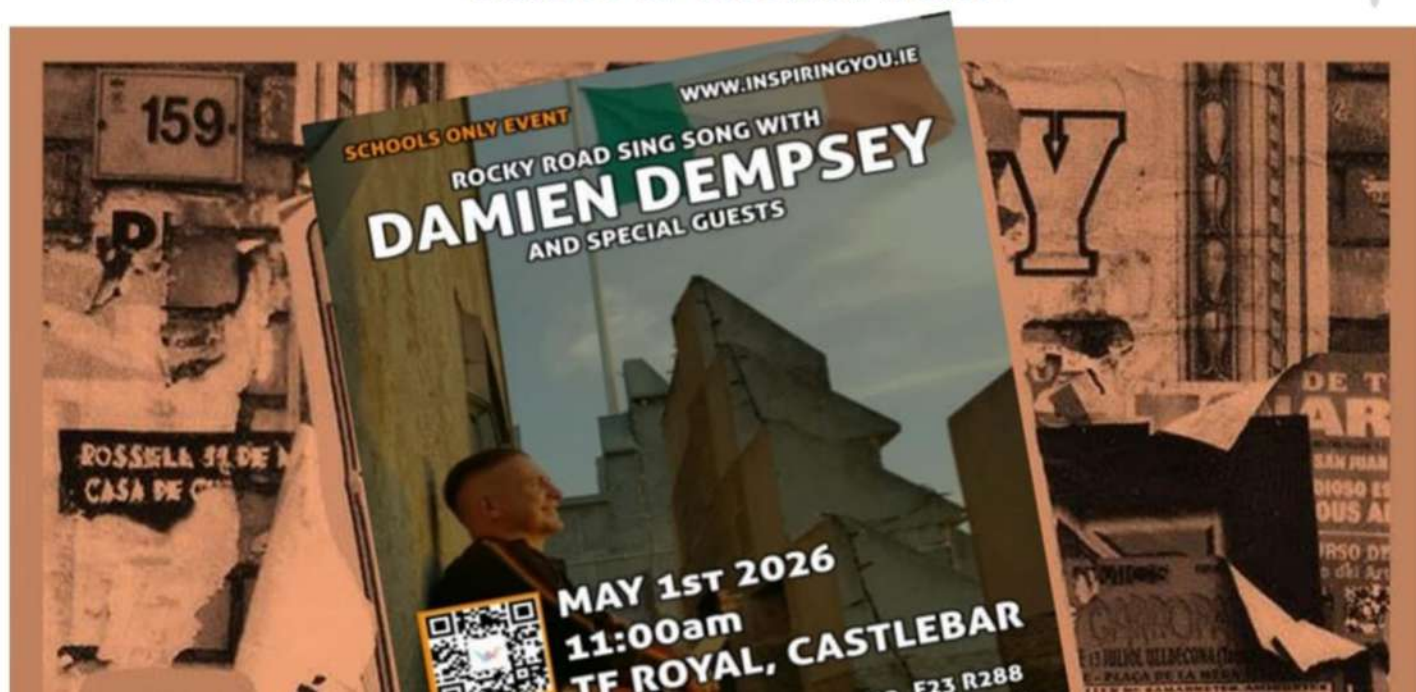
DAMIEN
DEMPSEY



Damien Dempsey - "The Rocky Road Sing Song"

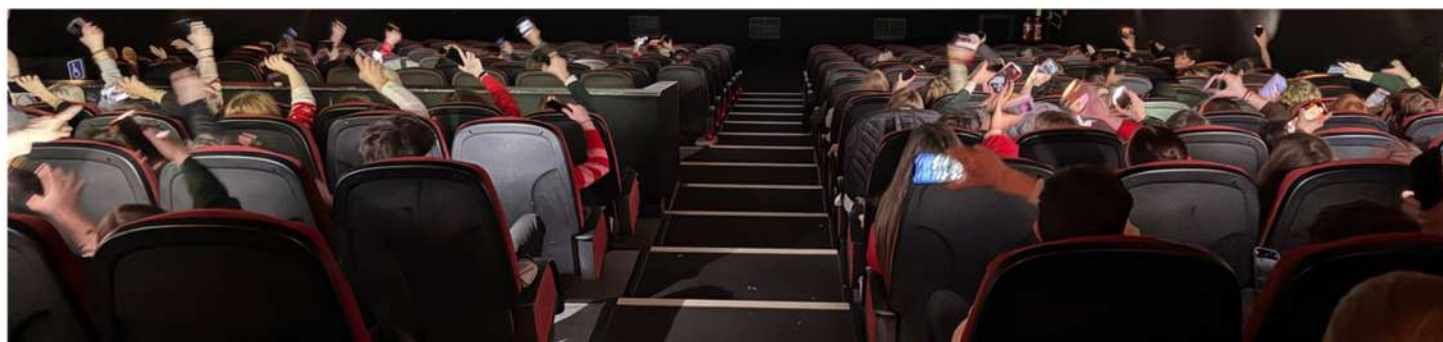
A LYRIC JOURNAL TO COMPLIMENT THE EVENT

CREATED BY VERONICA MORLEY



TY ON THE BIG SCREEN

Transition Year got to see themselves on the big screen towards the end of 2025 for an epic sing-a-long!



JUNIOR CYCLE IRISH DISTINCTION AWARDS

Davitt College proudly celebrates eight students who were presented with certificates from the University of Galway for achieving a Distinction in Higher Level Irish in last year's Junior Cycle.





Finding Meaning in Music

BY KAYLA GIBBONS, KATIE IRWIN & REBEKA VENCLOVAITÉ

On 23rd February, TY students took part in a lyric-writing workshop in the library, which gave them the chance to explore the links between music, identity, history, politics, and social issues. The workshop was facilitated by Dr Eamonn Furey, Chair of Sociology and Politics at ATU Sligo.

At the beginning of the workshop, we discussed the kinds of music we enjoy as teenagers and why certain songs appeal to us. Dr Furey then showed us that there is often deep political and social meaning behind song lyrics, and that music has long been used to spread ideas, express resistance, and give people a voice. He shared examples of political songs and encouraged us to think of more ourselves. It gave us a completely new perspective on something that is such a normal part of our everyday lives.

Later in the workshop, we were given the opportunity to work in groups – or individually – to write our own lyrics, poems, or raps based on social issues. One group, made up of Katie Cusack, Bella Kearney, and the writer, created a poem about women and how they are treated in society. Another group, made up of Abigail, Brian, and the writer, wrote a rap about what it can feel like to be an immigrant in Ireland – about knowing you are different in some ways from the society around you, trying your best to integrate, and still facing moments of difficulty or tension along the way. At the end of the session, we performed our poems, songs, and raps for the rest of the class.

Overall, we thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and learned a great deal from it. It showed us that politics, history, identity, and resilience have always been at the heart of music. More than anything, it helped us see music not just as entertainment, but as a powerful form of expression, protest, and storytelling. It definitely gave us a deeper appreciation of the meaning behind some of our favourite songs.

THE STORY OF TONY O'REILLY: FROM ADDICTION TO INSPIRATION

by Isabelle McHugh

The story of Tony O'Reilly is a powerful reminder of how quickly small decisions can grow into life-altering consequences – and how change is always possible, even at the lowest point.

How It All Began

Tony O'Reilly's journey into gambling did not begin with high stakes or major risks. It began simply – with a €1 bet. Like many others, it seemed harmless at first, just a bit of fun and excitement.

However, that small bet sparked something much deeper. Over time, what began as casual gambling turned into a serious addiction. The thrill of winning, combined with the pressure of losing, created a cycle that became harder and harder to escape.

What makes Tony's story so striking is how ordinary the beginning seems. It shows that addiction does not always start dramatically – it often grows quietly, step by step, until it takes control.

A Dangerous Spiral

As his gambling addiction worsened, Tony found himself making increasingly risky decisions. Eventually, this led to him stealing millions of euro from An Post, the organisation where he worked.

At the time, he justified his actions to himself, believing he could win the money back and fix everything. But as the losses mounted, the situation spiralled out of control.

This stage of his life highlights a key reality of addiction: it distorts judgement. What once seemed unthinkable can begin to feel like the only option.

Hitting Rock Bottom

The pressure, guilt, and fear eventually became overwhelming. Tony reached a point where he felt there was no way out. In one of the darkest moments of his life, he considered taking his own life. He had isolated himself and was in hiding, consumed by shame and hopelessness.





Thankfully, his family found him in time. Their intervention was crucial — it quite literally saved his life.

This moment became a turning point. It showed that even in the depths of despair, support from others can make all the difference.

Prison and Accountability

Following the discovery of his actions, Tony was arrested and sentenced to prison.

Prison was a period of reflection and accountability. It forced him to confront the reality of what he had done — not only the financial damage, but also the emotional

impact on his family, colleagues, and community. Rather than allowing this experience to define him negatively, Tony began to use it as a foundation for change.

Turning His Life Around

After serving his sentence, Tony O'Reilly made a conscious decision to rebuild his life.

He addressed his gambling addiction, took responsibility for his past, and focused on becoming a better person. This transformation was not instant — it required honesty, effort, and resilience.

What stands out most is his willingness to own his story rather than hide from it.



The STEM Diaries: Girls Learning New Skills for the Future

BY VICTORIA DENST, MARY KWA, GRACE WEBB-FLOYD, EMMA BOURKE & AOIBHÍN MULLANEY

Victoria & Mary

This year, a group of TY students took part in the Girls in STEM programme, an initiative designed to encourage more girls to explore Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Since January, we have completed three workshops as part of the programme and gained valuable experience in coding, teamwork, and problem-solving.

Now that the workshops are finished, all that remains is our graduation ceremony in September, which will take place in Sligo. After graduating, we will receive our STEM Passport, which could be a great advantage in the future. If we choose to apply to ATU, it may allow us to receive an extra 50 - 60 CAO points.

Day One:

We travelled to ATU Mayo and met our instructor, Hamel, who was very welcoming. We were introduced to what the STEM programme involved and what we would be doing across the three workshops. On the first day, we worked in groups and started learning about block coding and micro:bits. Using block coding, we created programmes that connected to the micro:bits, allowing them to display pictures or make sounds. At the end of the day, we met our mentors on a Zoom call and learned about the roles they play in STEM.



Day Two:

On the second day, we learned about Python coding and how it could be used in the future, although it was quite challenging. We also had another Zoom call with our mentors, where we learned more about the different ways STEM is involved in everyday jobs. Afterwards, we were given an assignment to complete in pairs. We had to create a poster based on a Sustainability Goal, using the stages empathise, define, and ideate.

Day Three:

The third day was our final workshop, so we spent most of the time trying to get everything finished. We went back over our ideas from Day Two and made a few changes as a group. We then chose one idea from our project, focusing on a sustainability goal linked to preventing whale sharks from being killed. After that, we built our prototype, which was probably the best part because we were actually making something instead of just talking about it. We also had to complete a written report, and everyone in the group had a role. One person from each group had to present the project, which was a bit nerve-racking.

Overall, it was a really worthwhile experience and a great way to learn new skills. It was nice to finish the programme knowing how much we had achieved, and we are looking forward to graduating in September. It was definitely something worth taking part in.



Grace

The STEM Passport for Inclusion is a new scheme designed to address inequality in the STEM field. It aims to reduce the gap between men and women in science, technology, engineering, and maths courses and careers.

The course covers a wide range of topics, including world issues, coding, project design, and problem-solving. We used micro:bits to create light displays, came up with solutions to real-world problems, and even got the chance to speak to scientists from around Ireland. This helped improve our understanding of modern technology and showed us some of the opportunities a degree in science could lead to.

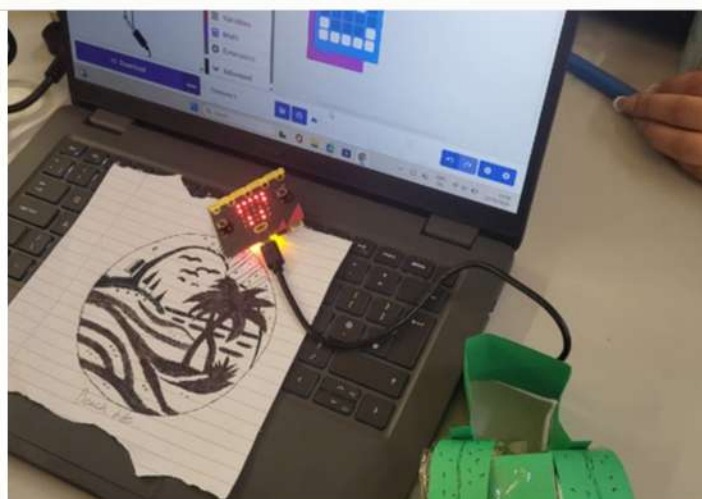
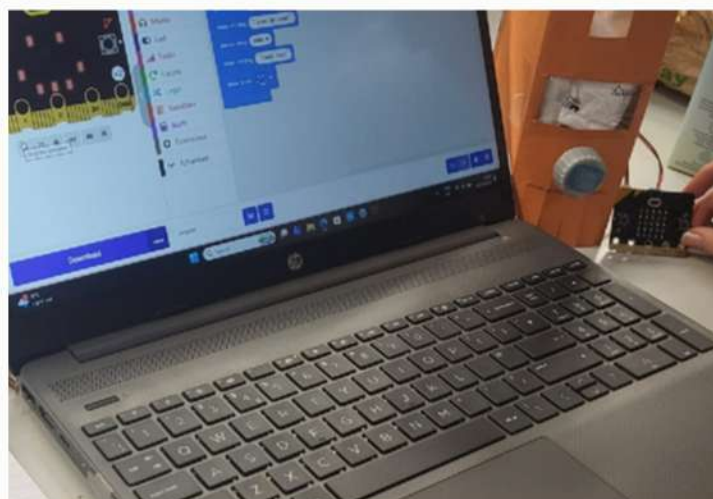
This course also offers 50 extra points towards a STEM-related course in any ATU college. It was a really great experience, and I would recommend it to any upcoming TYs who are eligible to apply.

Emma Bourke

I was excited to have the opportunity to take part in the STEM workshop this year. The programme is designed to encourage more young girls to get involved in STEM subjects and careers.

During the three workshops, which took place from January to March, we learned a wide range of new skills, including basic coding and different aspects of technology. My group and I also had the chance to speak to Ash, a woman who works for Microsoft, through a Teams call. I found this especially interesting because she told us what inspired her to choose the STEM path, explained what her job involves, and gave us useful tips and advice for the future.

I found the STEM workshop both fun and informative, and I learned a lot of new things that I would never have known if I had not taken part. It was a really worthwhile experience, and I am glad I got the chance to be involved.



Aoibhín

As part of TY, I was given the opportunity to take part in the STEM Passport for Inclusion programme in ATU Castlebar. This programme was created to encourage more girls to consider studying a STEM subject in college. One of the main benefits is that students can receive an extra 50 or 60 CAO points if they go on to choose a STEM course in one of the participating colleges. The programme took place over three Tuesdays, one each month from January to March.

On the first day, we focused on block coding using a micro:bit. I really enjoyed this session because it was easy to follow, and it was interesting to see the micro:bit light up, display words that we had entered into the code, and make different sounds depending on noise levels and temperature. Afterwards, we met with our group mentor, who spoke to us about the wide range of jobs available in STEM. On the second day, we returned to the ATU campus to learn about Python coding. At first, I found it quite confusing, but after a while I began to understand it better. We then had another meeting with our mentor, where we discussed what we had worked on that day. After that, we were given an assignment to complete on Canva based on a Sustainable Development Goal of our choice.

On our final day, we worked in groups to develop our idea from the previous session. This allowed us to hear different perspectives and improve our project. After brainstorming further, we built a prototype and wrote a report explaining our idea. We also had another meeting with our mentor. At the end of the day, one person from each group had to present their project to everyone.

Overall, I really enjoyed taking part in the STEM Passport programme. It gave me the chance to learn new skills, work with others, and gain a better understanding of the opportunities available in STEM.



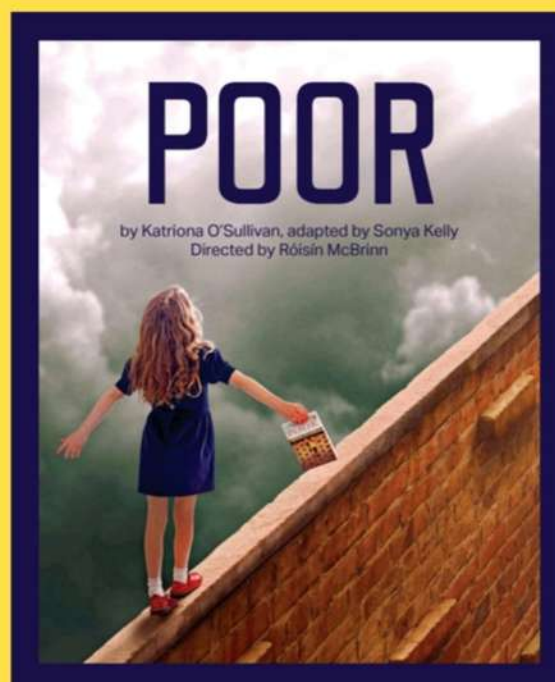
Ollscoil
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STEM STUDENTS WATCH 'POOR' LIVE FROM THE GATE THEATRE



Our STEM girls had the opportunity to watch a livestream of Poor by Katriona O'Sullivan from the Gate Theatre. On 24th March, over 23,000 students from 340 schools across 29 counties tuned in to hear Katriona's powerful and inspiring story. The performance gave students a moving insight into hardship, resilience, and determination, and it was a memorable experience for everyone involved.



25 March 2026
SCHOOL LIVESTREAM

Gate Theatre, Dublin

TY STUDENTS STEP UP AS REFEREES

BY DANIELLE COADY & GRACE NEEDHAM



During the week of 23rd March, several of our TY students took part in the FAI refereeing activity. This involved helping to referee a primary school competition in Umbro Park, Milebush. Each day, different primary schools took part in the tournament, all hoping to earn a place in the final round. The matches were highly competitive, and the players showed plenty of skill throughout the week.

The TY students played an important role in the running of the event. They helped to set up the pitch facilities before each game and were responsible for keeping track of the scores, timing the matches, and, most importantly, helping to enforce the rules of play. The competition was a great opportunity for TY students to gain an insight into the role of a referee and the responsibilities involved in organising match day events.

SHARING STORIES IN SCOIL RAIFTEIRÍ



PEER4PEER

BY SURNAI NI CHEALLAIGH & ISABELLE MCHUGH

In September 2025, while sitting in Religion class, we were introduced to a programme called Peer-to-Peer. The aim of the programme was to train students to teach primary school children about some of the challenges they may face as they grow into their teenage years. At first, we were not entirely sure what to expect. We had to apply by writing an essay explaining why we wanted to take part and why we felt we would be good advocates for the programme. Through this process, we began to understand that the role would involve helping younger students learn about important issues in a way they could relate to and understand.



As teenagers ourselves, we felt that our own experiences would help us connect with the children and communicate the programme's messages in a clear and relevant way. Looking back now, Peer-to-Peer was without doubt one of the most enjoyable and rewarding experiences of TY.

To prepare, we completed two full days of training in the Primary Care Centre with Mary and Yvonne, who were excellent mentors and made the whole experience both welcoming and enjoyable. At the beginning, there were definitely nerves, and many of us probably expected long, dull training sessions. Instead, the training was interactive, engaging, and full of discussion. We got to know the other students better, took part in activities ourselves, and had open conversations about our own opinions and experiences on the topics we would later be teaching. The sessions began with ice-breakers to help everyone settle in. Each student introduced themselves with a characteristic based on the first letter of their name – for example, 'My name is Surnai, and I am short.' It was a simple activity, but it helped break the tension and got everyone chatting.

During the second training day, we focused on topics such as peer pressure, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, drugs, and vaping. One of the most memorable parts of the day was acting out role-play scenarios to show what peer pressure can look like in real life. In one activity, we acted out a drink-driving scenario, where someone was being pressured to get into a car with a drunk driver. Activities like this made us realise that teaching these lessons would not be as simple as we had first thought, but they also gave us confidence and prepared us well for working with the younger students.

Our group, made up of Surnai, Isabelle, and Emma, was placed in Derrywash National School. Before our first session, even though there was no school that day, we met up to organise our materials and prepare together. When we arrived in the classroom, we discovered that, because of low enrolment numbers, we would be teaching both fifth and sixth class together. At first, we felt a little flustered, but we used the children's break time to get ourselves organised. Standing in front of the class for the first time, we quickly realised that teaching the pupils would be just as much a learning experience for us as it would be for them.

We began with introductions and focused our first session on communication. We used a variety of activities to help the children understand how to communicate effectively and to explore different types of communication. The class responded really well, and by the end of the session we felt proud of how we had handled it. As we packed up and got back into the car afterwards, we were overjoyed by the warm welcome we had received, especially from two girls who were particularly enthusiastic.

In Session 3, we focused on peer pressure. We began by asking the children what peer pressure meant, and we were surprised by how many of them could already give examples from their own lives. Some shared times when they had felt pushed into doing something they did not want to do, which gave us real insight into the kinds of issues they are already facing at such a young age. We noticed that some were confident about saying 'no', while others found it more difficult. A short role-play activity helped demonstrate the many different ways people can be pressured by others. By the end of the session, many of the children seemed more aware of peer pressure and more confident in their ability to stand up for themselves.

In Session 4, we covered the topic of vaping and drugs using a PowerPoint and discussion-based activities. We showed the children how vapes can often be disguised in colourful packaging and made to look harmless or appealing. They were very shocked by this. Many of them shared stories about seeing vapes thrown on roadsides, and almost all of them knew someone older who smoked. When we explained some of the harmful chemicals found in cigarettes and vapes, they were genuinely surprised. It was clear that the session had made them think more seriously about the dangers involved.

One of the best parts of the programme was building a connection with the children in Derrywash. We all agreed that they were a lovely, entertaining group and an absolute pleasure to work with. By the final session, we had really bonded with them, so it was sad to say goodbye. The children even made us a goodbye card, which showed that the experience had meant something to them as well.

Overall, we really enjoyed our experience with the Peer-to-Peer programme. It gave us the chance to help younger students understand important issues they may face in the years ahead, while also teaching us a great deal about communication, teamwork, and leadership. It helped us build confidence in speaking in front of groups and taught us how to present ourselves in a way that younger children could look up to and respect. Most of all, it gave us a real sense of achievement. We hope that something we said during those sessions will stay with the children and help them in the future. It is an experience we would strongly recommend to any TY student considering taking part.



DAVITT COLLEGE SUPPORTING SVP



Davitt College TY SVP students welcomed Helen Ralph from SVP, along with volunteers Mick and Tadhg, to the school. During their visit, the TY team presented a cheque for €500 raised through their Beanie Winter Appeal, Christmas Food Appeal, and Bake Sale in support of the local community.



TY students host a Bake Sale for SVP



Davitt College SVP Winter Appeal

Davitt College launched its SVP Winter Appeal toward the end of 2025, encouraging the whole school community to support an important local cause while staying warm during the winter months. As part of the initiative, the school sold Davitt College beanie hats for €12, with €4 from every hat going directly to SVP (St Vincent de Paul) to support people in need.

The appeal brought together students, staff, and parents, highlighting the strong community spirit within Davitt College. The hats were promoted and organised by the TY SVP team, who played a key role in running the campaign and distributing the beanies once sales were completed.

The initiative proved to be a great success and showed how small actions can make a big difference. By supporting the appeal, members of the Davitt College community helped spread warmth this winter – both in hearts and on heads.



CODING WITH LEGO

By Kacper Milewski & Brady Girling-Moore

On Wednesday 28th and Thursday 29th January, a co-founder of Glow Group visited Davitt College to share his experience of coding through LEGO, making it a very memorable learning experience.

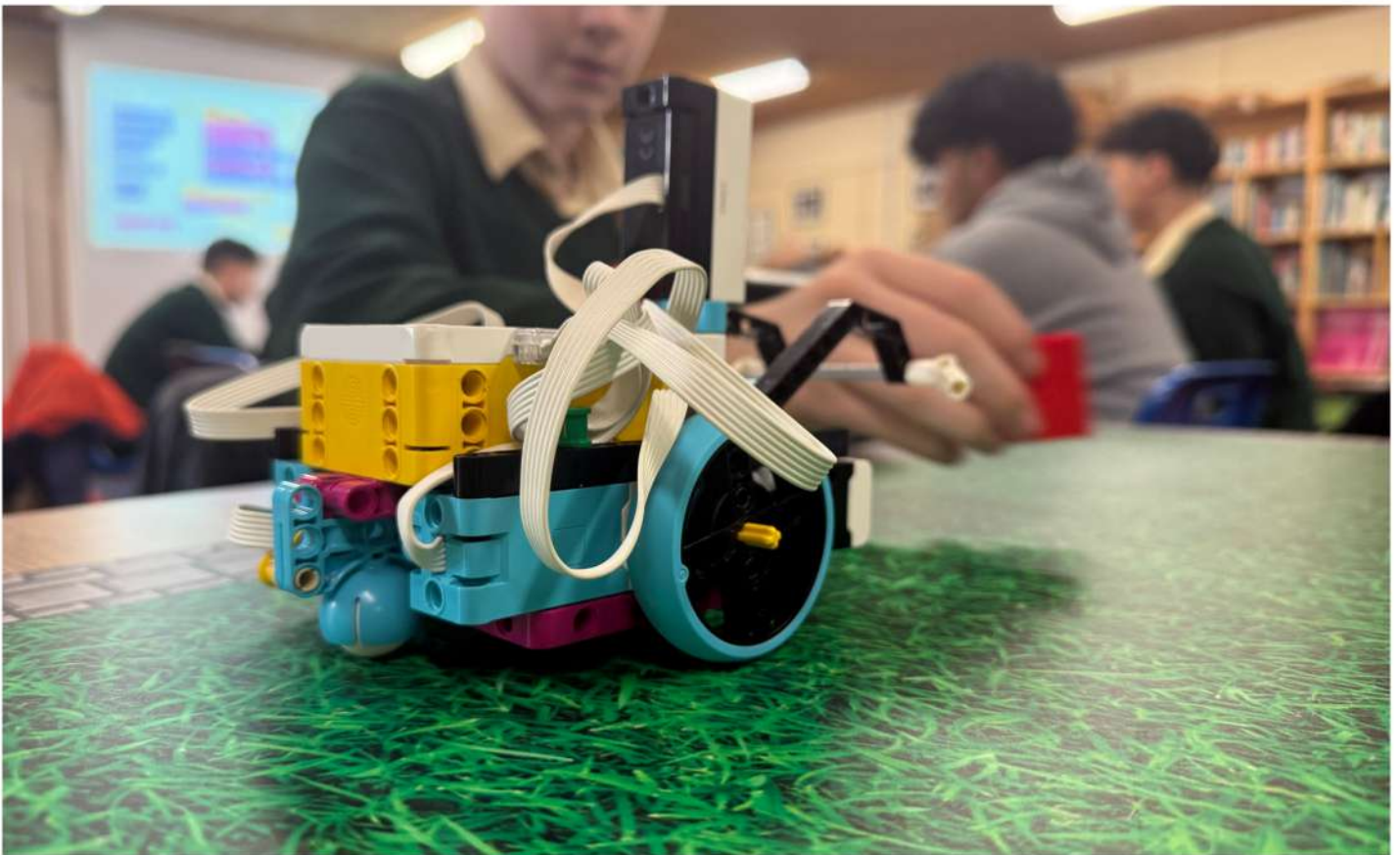
We had our workshop on Thursday 29th from 8.55 a.m. to 10.55 a.m. At the very start, we immediately noticed the huge box of LEGO on each table. We then split into groups of three or four. Christopher began by explaining the fundamentals of coding and told us that coding is everywhere and is not as difficult as people might think – although you do have to be prepared to fail repeatedly.

Soon afterwards, Christopher handed each group a tablet with an app showing instructions on how to build a robot out of LEGO. Everyone immediately became invested in finally getting to build something. Once each group had finished building, he gave us a quick demonstration of how to connect the robot to the tablet so that we could begin coding.



We quickly got the basics sorted and moved on to our first challenge – guiding the robot through a maze. At first, it looked extremely difficult, and once we tried it, we became frustrated almost straight away. However, we kept at it, and after many failed attempts – and a few bits of LEGO falling off along the way – we finally managed to complete the maze.

To finish the session, Christopher summarised everything we had learned and even showed us how to add sound effects for a bit of fun. Overall, it was an excellent experience, and I would highly recommend taking part if the opportunity ever comes up.



GLOW
GROUP

ROBOTICS AND CODING
WORKSHOP

Where Creativity Meets Coding

DJ WORKSHOP

By Yesieniia Pohorila, Andrii Tsipino & Anastasiia Havryliuk

A DJ workshop is a great way to explore music, be creative, and learn new technical skills. It is especially enjoyable for people who love music and want to try something different.

A DJ workshop is a fun and interactive session where you learn how to mix music like a real DJ. During the workshop, you get to use equipment such as decks, mixers, and headphones. The instructor showed us how to match the beats of two songs so that they play smoothly together, which is called beatmatching.

You also learn basic skills such as cueing – starting a track at the right moment – using effects, and creating playlists that keep the crowd engaged. Sometimes, you even get the chance to perform your own short mix in front of others.

Overall, we found this workshop to be one of the best experiences of our TY year.



TY STUDENTS TAKE THE WHISTLE AT MILEBUSH PARK

BY DANIELLE COADY & GRACE NEEDHAM

Last week, twelve TY students volunteered at the FAI Primary Schools 5-a-side blitz in our local Milebush Park. Their main jobs were refereeing matches and keeping track of the scores. With so many schools taking part, our students also had to help organise where each team was meant to be and at what time, helping the day run as smoothly as possible.



At times, it was a challenge – especially when it came to making calls for frees, and when some coaches took things a little too seriously – but overall it was great fun to be there and take part alongside our friends.

At the start of the day, we were given a team sheet and had to keep track of who was playing where, as well as who won each game, so that the finalists could be decided. There was also an important timekeeping role, as each match lasted six minutes with a 30-second half-time, helping to make sure the day stayed on schedule and didn't run overtime.

Overall, it was a really enjoyable experience, and we would strongly recommend that future TY students get involved in events like this.



Science Through Irish at Gaelscoil Raifteirí

BY SURNAI NI CHEALLEAIGH

We recently had the opportunity to visit Gaelscoil Raifteirí, where we carried out a number of science experiments with the students, focusing on the properties of gas and water.

The first experiment we did was the 'dancing popcorn' experiment, which involved using carbonated water to make popcorn kernels rise to the surface. The carbon dioxide in the fizzy drink attaches to the popcorn kernels, carrying them upwards. When the bubbles burst at the surface, the kernels sink back down again. They then collect more bubbles and rise once more, making the popcorn appear to dance.

The second experiment was 'Magic Milk', which involved adding food colouring to milk and then using a soapy cotton bud to create swirling patterns. The washing-up liquid breaks the surface tension and reacts with the fat in the milk, pushing the food colouring across the dish and creating a colourful firework effect.

The final experiment was the Balloon and Jar Air Pressure Experiment. This demonstrated air pressure by placing a burning piece of paper into a jar and covering it with a balloon. As the flame went out, the air inside the jar cooled and the pressure dropped, causing the balloon to be pushed into the jar by the greater air pressure outside.

This visit gave us a really engaging opportunity to teach children about scientific ideas through Irish. Overall, it was a great experience, and we really enjoyed explaining the science behind the experiments as Gaeilge.





FRENCH FILM TRIP: EN FANFARE

by Daisy Finnerty

A few weeks ago, the two French classes in our year were told that we were going to watch a French film called En Fanfare. Before the trip, we were given a workbook explaining the storyline. The film centres on two brothers who were both put up for adoption, but whose lives turned out very differently. The two brothers, Thibaut and Jimmy, are brought together after Thibaut receives a serious diagnosis, and they gradually form both a brotherly and musical bond.

We walked to the Linenhall, and were pleasantly surprised to find that we had the whole theatre to ourselves. As the film began, we settled in and kept an open mind. There were several dramatic moments throughout, which kept many of us interested and engaged.

When the film ended, there were definitely mixed opinions, but overall I think most of us enjoyed it. The musical element of the story was probably the highlight for many of us.

Overall, it was a really enjoyable experience and a nice break from the usual 'open page so-and-so' type of French class. It was great to get out of the classroom and experience the language in a different way, and I think most of us would be very happy to go on a French trip like this again in the future.



DAVITT GIRLS SPORTS DIARY

by Ellen Joyce

This year was a good year for the sports teams in Davitt College. The under 20 girls soccer team got to a Connaught semi final, which was such a big achievement and so special to be apart of as we had a good few leaving certs playing. Although we narrowly lost in a really good battle and unfortunately missed out on a Connaught final in the following week it was still a really enjoyable season. A big thank you to our coaches Ms Kearns, Ms Gallagher and Mr Cunningham for putting in so much work with us.

The Gaelic Senior team had a really competitive group for the Connaught competition but unfortunately lost by one point to Ballinrobe community school who then went on to win the all Ireland recently. As we lost that match we did not make it out of the group which was really disappointing as we had worked really hard all year with trainings after school and our 7 am trainings on a Friday morning. It was really disappointing we couldn't get out of the group as it would have been nice for the Leaving certs to end on something special. We were so grateful for all the hard work Mr Brogan and Ms Flynn put in all year.

Finally for junior Gaelic football this year we got to a Connaught semi final but unfortunately narrowly lost out. This one really hurt because we felt we just didn't show up on the day. It was also my last year at junior so it was pretty disappointing we couldn't make it into a Connaught final. We had been quite successful in the group stages which was great so we could get loads of girls game time as we had huge numbers which was lovely to see girls still playing sport. Our coaches for junior this year were Ms Casey and Ms Hughes and they were a great team and we definitely couldn't have got to a Connaught semi final without all their dedication and belief in us.



SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE

by Surnaí Ní Cheallaigh agus Aisling Ní Ghabhláin

Surnaí

Is féile idirnáisiúnta Ghaeilge í Seachtain na Gaeilge agus ceann de na ceiliuradh is mó den teanga dúchais agus ar gcúltur a tharlaíonn gach bhliain in Éirinn agus fud fádar domhain. Bunaíodh seachtain na Gaeilge i 1902 mhair sí seachtain iomhlán i dtús. Ó shin i léithd'fhás an ócáid go dtí dhá seachtain iomlán a mhaireann ón lú go dtí an 17 ú Mí an Mhárta cuile bhliain.

An chiall

Ciallaíom seachtain na Gaeilge i mBéarla "Irish language week". Maireann an cheiliuradh coicís. Ní botún é seo. Ar d'tús bhí sé beartaithe maireachtail seachtain amháin ach mar gheall ar an méid suim a bhí tógtha di cuireadh í fád siar go coicís. Bhí an t-ainm seachtain na Gaeilge i measc an phobail agus níorbh féidir í a athrú.

imeachtaí

Cuirtear féilte agus ócáidí speisialta ar siúl chun an Ghaeilge a chéiliúradh. Lena chois sin, múintear ceachtanna Gaeilge a chuireann béim ar Sheachtain na Gaeilge ar fud na hÉireann chun misneach a thabhairt do dhaoine óga a dteanga dúchais a labhairt agus a spreagadh i gcuideachta pobail na hÉireann.

An eagraíocht

Is í Conradh na Gaeilge an phríomh-eagraíocht a bhíonn ról lárnach aici in eagrú na féile. Cuireann sé acmhainní ar fáil do scoileanna agus bíonn comórtais ar siúl acu gur féidir le duine ar bith cur isteach orthu cosúil le tráth na gceist. Cuireann Conradh na Gaeilge an ceiliúradh seo chun cinn agus téann siad i mbun fógraíochta chun deiseanna agus ócáidí a chur ar na meáin sóisialta i rith na bliana.



Aisling

Ghlac na hidirbhlianta páirt agus chabhraigh siad le roinnt gníomhaíochtaí le linn Sheachtain na Gaeilge. Ghlac cúpla idirbhliain páirt i dTrath na gCeist agus in imeacht labhairt poiblí i Scoil Naomh Iósaef. Ghlac beirt idirbhlianta páirt san imeacht labhairt poiblí. Pleadh Surnaí Ní Cheallaigh faoi thábhacht na Gaeilge agus bhí Aisling Ní Ghabhlain ag labhairt faoi fhadhb mhór na bochtaineachta in Éirinn. Bronnadh gradam ar an mbeirt chailíní as páirt a ghlacadh.

Cé go raibh dhá fhoireann againn ó Choláiste Dhaibhéid, níor bhuaigh muid an chéad áit. Chríochnaíomar an oíche le hÓró sé do beatha bhaile agus Amhran Na bhfainn. Chuidigh na hidirbhlianta freisin le Trath na gCeist na chéad bhliana, a mhair ar feadh dhá uair an chloig sa ceaintín.

Aisling agus Surnaí

D'oibrigh an Coiste Gaeilge le mr. Gallaher chun físeán faoin nGaeilge a dhéanamh chun an Ghaeilge a cur chun cinn i measc na daltaí. Thug príomhoide Uachtarán Ó Raghallaigh réamhrá faoin scoil go hiomlán i nGaeilge. Ina dhiaidh sin rinne muid agallaimh ar na mhúinteoirí agus ar fhoireann na scoile. D'fhiafraíomar díobh cad é a ról a bhfuil acu ar scoil agus cad iad na rudaí is fearr leo faoi Choláiste Dhaibhéid. Fuair baill den choiste gaelbhratach deis a bheith bainteach sa fhíseán freisin. Chuir mr. Gallaher an físeán in eagar agus thaispeáin sé é ar theilifís na scoile. Rinne coiste Gaelbhratach fógra freisin ar an idirchum do Sheachtain na Gaeilge le seanfhocal an lae gach lá. Ina theanta sin chuaigh cuid de bhliain a ceithre chuig rang a haon i scoil raifteirí chun leabhar a léamh dóibh. Bhí na paistí eagraithe i ghrúpaí beaga de bheirt nó triúr daltaí. An aidhm a bhí ar seo ná cabhair a thabhairt dóibh cleachtadh a dhéanamh ag labhairt agus ag léamh i nGaeilge.

Thug siad cuairt chuile Déardaoin ar feadh uair an chloig le cúpla seachtain anuas. Thaitin sé go mór leis na daltaí sa cheathrú bliain. Bhí Seachtain na Gaeilge thar barr againn i mbliana, le réimse leathan imeachtaí eagraithe againn do gach aoisghrúpa agus do gach leibhéal Gaeilge. Tríd is tríd, ba sheachtain den scoth, lán le spraoi agus cultúr agus táimid fíorbhuíoch do chuile duine a ghlac páirt inti. Ba chóir dúinn a bheith brodúil aisti.

Tá Seachtain na Gaeilge an-tábhachtach do Choláiste Daibhéid agus bíonn Gaeilge a thabhairt chun cinn chuile bhliain. Is buaicphointe é i saol na nGaeilge ar scoil. Beatha teanga í a labhairt.



