



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents & Guardians,

As we approach Christmas, we get an opportunity to reflect on the year and in particular our journey since the return to school. Term 1 has seen staff and students adapt to so many changes, new routines, struggle with communication in the classroom due to masks etc. I am very proud to say that in Coláiste Iognáid the positive relationships between students and teachers and the support of the entire school community has enabled us to find new ways of doing things.

Extra-curricular activities have returned in a covid-controlled way. Many teachers worked hard to ensure that Hockey, Rugby, Basketball (limited numbers), Gaelic Football and debating were provided for students this term. It would be much easier for the school to cancel these activities, but they continue because of the dedication of the teaching staff and the realisation that we need to strike a balance between rightly adhering to covid controls and the wellbeing of the students. Well done to all involved.

I would like to pay tribute to the student council and their coordinator Julie O Sullivan for the different

events they organised this term. The Halloween dress-up, the stand-up week and the various Christmas events all contributed to a sense of well-needed normality in a very strange year.

In the event of a new lockdown, we have put plans in place for online learning. We, of course hope that these plans will not be needed, but it is prudent to plan. Please find the protocols which were recently ratified by the board of management attached. One issue which I would highlight is that teachers can now be contacted very easily by using MS Teams. There are many benefits to this, however communications should in general, not take place outside of school hours.

May I take this opportunity to wish the entire school community every blessing of the Christmas season and we pray for loved ones that are not with us this year. With the vaccine on the way, we look forward to 2021 with optimism.

Beir Bua agus beannacht,

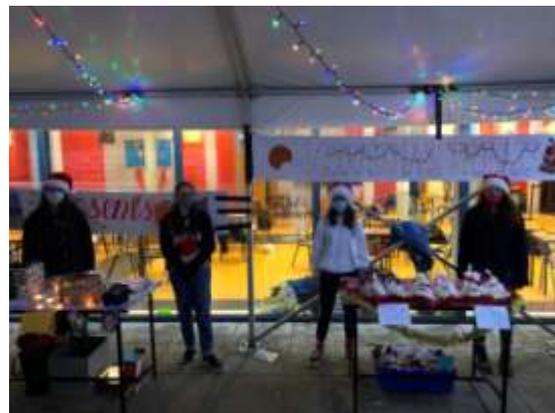
D. O'Sullivan

Term 2: Some Key Dates

6 th January	Return to School
12 th January	Staff In-service Afternoon: Student finish at 12.35pm
3 rd February	Mock Examinations for 3 rd & 6 th years
8 th – 12 th February	Transition Year Work Experience Week
9 th February	Staff In-service Day: No School for Students
15 th – 19 th February	Mid-Term Break

TY CHRISTMAS MARKET

In an effort to keep everyone's spirits up and also to spread some festive cheer, the Transition Years organised a very successful Christmas Market on the 17th December. The event was held outdoors under our new marquee. A total of €1034.16 was raised for COPE Galway. Well done to all involved.



CHAPLAINCY NOTES

The school term is coming to an end and Christmas and the New Year is fast approaching. This year has been like no other. It is safe to say that it is a year that most people would prefer to forget. It was a year of emotional and physical pain, suffering, disconnect and disillusionment.

On top of this we have come to unwillingly accept that this Christmas will be different. Sitting down for Christmas dinner, family gatherings and social outings will not be the same. The rules and restraints have subdued our joy. Despite these drawbacks, one must remember the true message and miracle of Christmas, God deciding to lay his tent in our backyard so that we

can pause and encounter the Holy in the simple. Let us value the simplicity and stillness of this COVID-19 Christmas and with a genuine heart seek out the joy and light of God's presence in our lives.

Chaplaincy events

December

- Retreats for 2nd year students
- Advent/ Christmas Liturgy
- Daily Advent prayer for staff and pupils
- Weekly Advent reflection

EXTRA-CURRICULAR NOTES

HOCKEY

Hockey club training is in full swing this year. Despite no matches being allowed due to Covid, the girls are training hard and enjoying the outlet. Hockey training is on Monday for Juniors, Wednesday and Sundays for Seniors. Covid regulations are carefully monitored & adhered to.

Thank you to all the coaches, staff, parents and of course, to our dedicated students, for keeping our hockey spirit going!

Good hockey memories!



JES JUNIOR GIRLS GAELIC 2019/2020

There is no doubt about it, the Jes Junior girl's gaelic team made their mark in Connacht and Ireland with an undefeated roll through the season. Before even getting a team training session under their belts, they met Taylors in round 1 and beat them soundly with a score line of 9-18 to 1-4.

Next up, the maroon side defeated Coláiste na Coiribe, 6-10 to 3-3. After that, they trekked out to Headford on a very icy morning, narrowly beating them 3-14 to 3-11. They marched on to beat Salerno and St. Pauls Oughterard by an unforgiving score line, which booked them into the Connacht semi final vs. Athenry.

Despite going in as under dogs, the girls beat Athenry 7-4 to 4-3, securing a place in the Junior Connacht C final with Strokestown of Roscommon as their next opponents. With a fresh set of jerseys, kindly sponsored by John Daly of Ireland Food, the girls came up against a confident Strokestown in Ballyhaunis at the end of February. They battled hard and deservingly came out on top with a score of 4-9 to 3-4. This was a momentous day for Jes girl's football as it is the school's first Connacht title in that category.

They eagerly marched onto the All-Ireland semi final facing a tough Tipperary school, Our Lady's S.S Templemore in Rathkeale, Limerick. With a 12pm throw in, the Jes girls' nerves quickly settled into the game. The Tipp. school were a strong side making scoring difficult in the first half. In the second half, the girls really showed their resilience and fought back making it neck and neck right down to the dying minutes. Amazingly, it was the Jes that came up victorious, winning by one point, 4-5 to 1-13. They were thrilled and deservingly, they won a place in the All-Ireland final, due to be played on April 4th.

Sadly, due to COVID-19, they weren't able to finish the journey. It was an amazing and historic year for this superbly skilled Jes team with their mix of players from 1st years to 4th years. A huge thank you to Mr. O'Loinsigh and Ms. Biggins for all their hard work and commitment to the team, it is really appreciated. Without a doubt, the girls will be back next year to finish off what they started!

