

Dalkey Diary

ISSUE 17 | JAN 2026

A Message from the Principal

January is always a challenging month in school. Dark mornings, shorter days, bad weather, the thoughts of mocks for examination years, all impact on energy levels. As spring approaches in February, a renewed energy appears, and life becomes better.

Uniform

Due to the extreme weather conditions, we decided to allow students to wear the school tracksuit for this week. Any change in uniform policies can bring difficulties, but to their credit, students cooperated fully. In light of the continued unsettled weather, we are allowing students to wear tracksuits as an option until Friday 16th January. We will revert to our full uniform on Monday 19th January.

Retirement

Mr Padraig O'Muircheartaigh retired from Loreto on Thursday after 19 years of teaching here. We wish him good health and happiness in the years ahead. As a result of his departure, it is necessary to reallocate class groups. Ms Allyson Egan will now take 1A, 1E, 2B and 4th Year Irish, and Ms Anne Conden will teach 1B, 1C and 2D Geography with immediate effect. It may be necessary to change some Learning Support provision in the coming week, and students will be advised accordingly.

Charities

Prior to Christmas, parents generously supported many fundraising efforts. €2,000 was donated at the Carol Service to enable our students to travel to Zambia as part of a humanitarian project organised by Cuala G.A.A. €1,500 was collected at our annual Carol Singing in Grafton Street in atrocious weather, and €4,500 (provisional) was raised during Dalkey's Got Talent for Loreto educational projects in South Sudan. Our thanks to our students, and teachers who gave so willingly of their time and organised such enjoyable events which will be so beneficial for these worthy causes.

As we begin a new year, we might remember the words of John O'Donohue, who reminds us that *at the heart of every beginning lives a quiet promise*.

With that in mind, we wish all our families a happy, hopeful and promising year ahead.

Mr Dunne, Mr Flanagan, and Ms Conlon

Mark Your Calendar

Jan 20th	School closed
Jan 22nd	1st Year Parent/Teacher Meetings
Jan 29th	6th Year Mocks begin
Jan 29th	Subject choice information meeting for TYs and TY parents
Feb 5th	Junior Cycle Mocks begin
Feb 9th	TY Work Experience Week
Feb 9th	Spring exams begin for 1st, 2nd and 5th Years
Feb 13th	School closed for mid-term break

The full school calendar can be found on both the website and via our school app



Cuala TY Zambia Trip

Five of our TY students (Alison Butler, Katie Caffrey, Ailbhe Quinn, Caoimhe Westbrook, and Emma Gallagher) will be travelling to Zambia with Cuala GAA, marking 10 years of partnership with the Nsobe Community School which educates nearly 400 students from preschool to Grade 11.

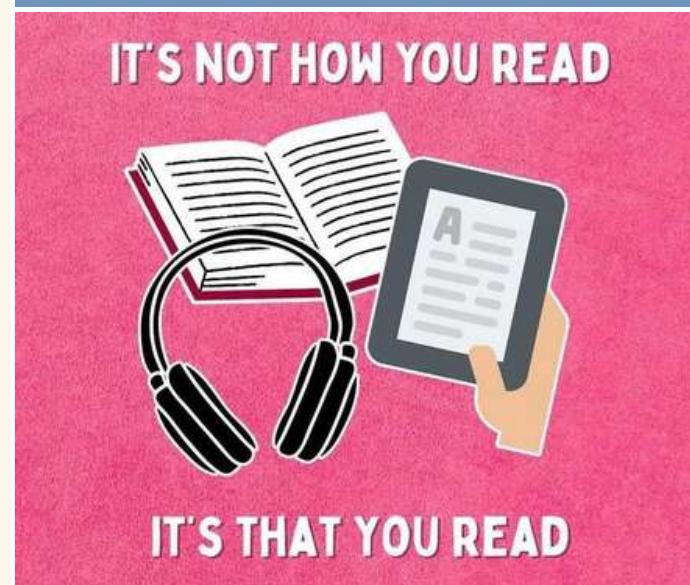
The Cuala TYs are responsible for personally raising funds that will go towards the essential work that the team in Nsobe do for their children and community.

The 2025 TYs fundraised to build two science labs, and the aim is for the 2026 TYs to fundraise the final phase including the fitting out of these labs, the gas piping, plumbing and workstation sinks, equipping and furnishing.

Alison, Caoimhe, Ailbhe, Emma, and Katie were delighted by the encouragement and kindness shown when they fundraised following the school Carol Service in December, and look forward to keeping you updated as they prepare for their journey to Zambia.

All Ireland League Semi Finals

Well done to the Senior A basketball team who won their All Ireland Quarter Final playoffs this week, beating Loreto Cavan 51-42 and Colaiste Na Carraige, Donegal 55-45 to qualify for the All Ireland League Semi Finals on January 29th!





Stripe Young Scientist Exhibition at the RDS

On Friday, the Transition Years headed off to the RDS to see the creative and intriguing entries that qualified for the Stripe Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition.

This was a great chance for TYs to find something that interested them, and there was certainly plenty to choose from with hundreds of exhibits from secondary school students around the country. Some of these included the science of procrastination; 'emoji politics' and the perception of political messages among Irish youth; overconsumption from the mind of a young consumer; the impact of Yondr pouches on daily life; TikTok vs Textbook and traditional learning; smart embedded clothing for the visually impaired; the impact of music tempo on speed and endurance; 'digital puberty' and how social media shapes maturity in Irish female teenagers; teen dating habits in the age of Snapchat; age and gender dynamics in sibling rivalry, and many more.

Naturally, AI featured prominently across the entries, including projects such as 'Do Teenagers Trust AI More Than Their Parents or Teachers?' or an AI-powered symptom checker to reduce GP visits, and even a comparative analysis of human police sketch artists and AI-generated sketches in forensic illustration and suspect identification.

TY Life Skills

Transition Year students put their learning into practice during their Life Skills module with Ms O'Keeffe, developing essential hands-on skills for everyday life.

In this week's class, students learned how to change a fuse and rewire a plug, building practical knowledge, problem-solving skills and independence for the future.



ITALIA



TY Trip to Italy

Excitement is building for Italy 2026! The final payment for the Transition Year trip to Italy in May is due **by Thursday January 22nd**.

A link for payment and further details have been sent to parents this week via our school app.

If you have any queries, please contact Ms Mulcahy or Ms Noctor.

coMING
SOON

Upcoming TY Dates

Jan 12th

Leadership Conversations:
Minister for Health Jennifer
Carroll MacNeill TD

Jan 19th

Leadership Conversations:
Maria Cristina Villarroel

Jan 23rd

Leadership Conversations:
Eibhlin Curley

Jan 26th

Leadership Conversations:
Miriam O'Callaghan

Jan 29th

Subject choice information
evening for TYs and TY Parents



Loreto Annual Dinner 2026 Sponsorship

Sponsorship opportunities are available for the 2026 Loreto Annual Dinner, which will take place on April 25th in the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire.

This gathering of 300 local women celebrates former classmates, mothers, and friends coming together to reconnect and share stories in a warm, relaxed atmosphere.

Our raffle provides a unique opportunity to showcase your business to a highly engaged audience, while also supporting the school community and Loreto Rumbek.

Please email loretoladieslunch@gmail.com or contact the office if you can help.



Jubilee of Youth

On Wednesday, the 6th Year Religion classes enjoyed a very informative talk from our own Mr Byrne. Mr Byrne spoke about his experience travelling to Rome last summer for the Jubilee of Youth to celebrate the Jubilee Year.

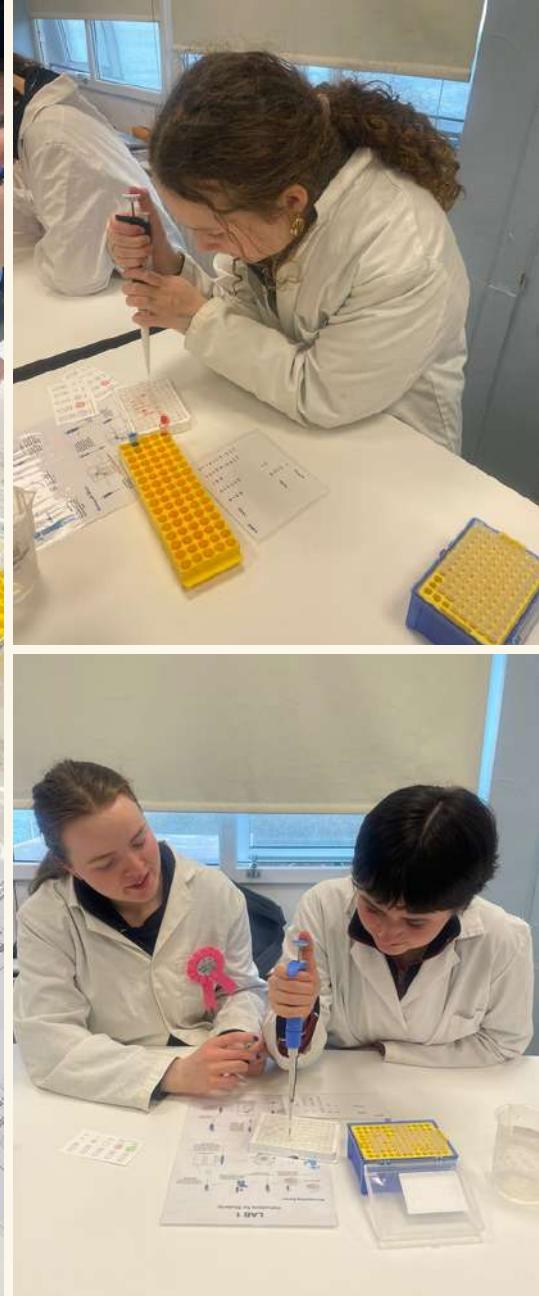
The group Mr Byrne travelled with ranged from 18-35 years old. We were fascinated to hear about the dedication that people our age have for their faith. From sleeping on the ground, to queuing for hours and walking many kilometres (all in the 30-degree Italian sun!) - we were so impressed and inspired by their dedication.

We were also surprised to hear over one million young people from every corner of the world travelled to Rome to attend this event in the company of Pope Leo. While this was spiritual and reflective, it was also a fun experience for all those involved.

At the end of his talk, Mr Byrne encouraged us all to follow our passions and seize the opportunities that come our way in the next exciting chapter of our lives. Thank you so much Mr Byrne for such an eye-opening, encouraging and interesting talk!

- Issy O'Donohue and Derval O'Connor (6th Year)





DNA Profiling and Forensic Science

Today Ms Hanratty's 6th Year Biology class stepped into the role of forensic scientists as they completed a DNA profiling practical based around a jewellery robbery.

Students analysed a DNA sample found at a crime scene and compared it to a number of suspects in order to identify the likely culprit, using gel electrophoresis to produce and interpret DNA profiles.

DNA profiling is a key part of the Leaving Certificate Biology curriculum, but this practical activity allowed students to go beyond the theory. They developed university-level essential laboratory skills, such as micropipetting, careful sample handling and data interpretation, while gaining a deeper understanding of how DNA profiling is used in real-world contexts, such as forensic science.

This valuable hands-on experience was made possible thanks to AMGEN Biotech Experience, based in UCD, who kindly loaned specialised laboratory kits to the school. Their support enabled students to work with professional-standard equipment and experience cutting-edge biotechnology techniques that are not normally available in school laboratories.

Well done to the students for their excellent engagement and teamwork, and sincere thanks to AMGEN Biotech Experience for supporting science education and helping to bring the Leaving Certificate Biology curriculum to life.

This Week's Basketball Results

Well done to all teams taking part in home and away fixtures throughout the week.

Minor A won 63-8 vs Loreto Balbriggan

Junior A won 38-7 vs Loreto Balbriggan

Senior A won 51-42 vs Loreto Cavan

Senior A won 55-45 vs Colaiste na Carraige



This Week's Hockey Results

Well done to all teams taking part in home and away fixtures throughout the week.

Minor 3 lost 4-1 vs Sutton Park

Junior 2 won 2-0 vs Sutton Park

Senior 5 lost 2-0 vs St Dominic's, Cabra

ARE YOU HAVING A NEW YEAR CLEAR OUT?



Do you have **unwanted Christmas gifts** that need a new home?



Or **books you know you won't read**, despite the best of intentions?



What about **second-hand books** in excellent condition?

IF YES, THE LIBRARY IS HAPPY TO TAKE THEM OFF YOUR HANDS!

Our library book drive continues and we are still looking for **donations of new or second-hand books** in excellent condition. A link to the library wish list can be found in the parent app.

