



St. Benildus College Newsletter

‘Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.’ William Butler Yeats

Welcome to the second term newsletter of the 2023-2024 academic year. Last term was filled with a wide-range of activities, events, and successes and we returned from the Christmas break excited and enthusiastic for another productive term ahead. This term, as always, we strive to build on our achievements and continue to pursue our vision of excellence, innovation, and creativity. Our school newsletter allows us to share with you some of the news, stories, and highlights from our school community. It has certainly been an enjoyable term and we are not done yet! The Fourth Years have been working hard and getting involved with a range of exciting activities. From work experience, preparation for their Musical ‘Grease’ and skiing in San Valentino; they have taken on each new experience with enthusiasm and energy. A group of Transition Year students headed off skiing to San Valentino from the 5th to the 9th of February. Over the course of five days they took to the slopes and showed off their skills while also taking part in a range of activities from karaoke to ice-skating, keeping them all entertained. On their return, they were straight into Musical rehearsals in school over their midterm. Every performer showed great dedication, preparation, and skill both in their acting, musical and dance ability. It was evident that this year’s performance would be one to remember. Our Third and Sixth Year students were also busy preparing for a big event: their mock exams. All students showed great dedication and focus as they got their first experience of exam and timing conditions and developed a sense of what they already know or may need to focus on before June. It is evident that both Third and Sixth Years are approaching this year with maturity and focus and we are certain they will reap the rewards of their efforts.

Once again, this term saw a range of themed weeks which allowed us to celebrate and explore different aspects of our school ethos. History Week was filled with a number of thought-provoking activities that encouraged us to learn about different cultures and recognise the impact these events have on our modern lives. The theme for this year's Catholic Schools Weeks was 'Communities of Service.' It was a great week of celebration, community, and kindness and allowed all of the St. Benildus community to reflect on how small acts of service can have a positive impact. Seachtain na Gaeilge was a great opportunity to celebrate our national heritage with various events that encouraged us to speak more Irish and connect with our culture. Healthy Eating Week highlighted the importance of eating well and the impact that diet and nutrition play on our wellbeing. A huge thank you to all the staff and students who get involved to organise and take part in these weeks. The wide-ranging activities, competitions, and even decoration of our school all demonstrate the passion and enthusiasm each teacher brings to these weeks.

Extra-curricular activities play a central role in the daily life of our school. Every day students are taking part in various clubs, societies, or sporting events. These activities allow for the growth and development of our students, encouraging them to take on roles of responsibility and allow for the development of their physical and mental wellbeing. The determination and commitment from staff to run the diverse range of extra-curricular activities within our school ensures that students can explore and develop skills and talents outside the classroom. On Thursday the 22nd of February our annual Extracurricular Quiz took place in The Goat, Stillorgan. This is an important event in our school calendar as it helps raise money for the numerous clubs and teams that take place in our school and just as importantly allows us to meet parents in a less formal environment. The night was a huge success, raising €4,656 This will be a great benefit for our sports and extra-curricular teams and help with the costs associated with gear, equipment, medical bags along with other valuable resources that aid and support our students holistic and physical wellbeing. We thank everybody who supported the evening

Our incoming First Year students began their journey with us on the 27th of January for their Intake Assessments. This is an important milestone for the boys as they take their first step on their Benildus journey, experiencing the College and meeting some staff members for the first time. All showed great focus, attention and dedication to the various tasks that were expected from them on the day. It was a great sign of what is to come and a fantastic introduction to our new cohort of students. We look forward to welcoming them into First Year in September 2024.

It is our pleasure to share with you the vibrant and diverse activities that take place in St. Benildus College. Thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement. We hope you enjoy this addition of our College Newsletter.

Aimee Cullen and the Senior Leadership Team



Incoming First Years

On Saturday the 27th of January, the College was humming with activity as 150 future Benildus students entered the school to sit their Intake Assessments. This is an important milestone for the boys as they take their first step on their Benildus journey, experiencing the College and meeting staff members and Transition Year students. There was a mixture of excitement and nerves as the boys took their seats but all showed great focus, attention and dedication to the various tasks that were expected from them on the day. It was a great sign of what is to come and a fantastic introduction to our new cohort of students.

While some of the boys may already know about the College from their dads, siblings, or relatives; many experienced the College for the first time. In either case, it is the beginning of a new and exciting personal journey for each student and all members of the Benildus community look forward to getting to know, supporting, and educating this new cohort of Benildus Boys. Huge thanks to everyone involved on the day: to the Senior Leadership Team and to teachers and Transition Year students who volunteered and gave up their Saturday morning. It was great to see so many bright, hopeful faces ready to begin the next stage of their educational journey. This year has seen unprecedented demand for places in the College with over 400 applications for places which resulted in many disappointed families. We would love to be able to accommodate everyone but we don't have the space. We are really looking forward to welcoming the 150 boys who were lucky enough to secure a place on the 22nd of August.



Starting Secondary School

Transition Year: Ski Trip San Valentino

Day 1: The day of the ski trip had finally arrived and, after much anticipation, the students', and their teachers eagerly left Dublin Airport at 8.45am. Once they had arrived in Verona airport, they packed up the buses with their luggage and, one short bus trip later, arrived at Hotel Bucaneve, home for the next week! They took no time off and got straight to getting their rooms and getting their ski boots and helmets fitted for the week of skiing. After dinner, the lads headed to their rooms to tackle the unpacking and preparing for tomorrow's day of skiing. It was lights out for the lads but a mystery to this day as to what time they got to sleep.

Day 2: After a breakfast filled with bread and cereals the lads were raring to go for their first day on the slopes. Students were split into different groups depending on their skiing capabilities and then they were off! The first day was full of ups and downs, literally and figuratively, with some lads getting the hang of the slopes very easily while others took a little longer to get the hang of things. Thankfully the ski instructors were there to give everyone a helping hand. The lads headed back to the hotel for lunch and a chance to relax but soon were back out on the slopes. After two long sessions of skiing everyone headed back to their rooms to have a shower and a well-deserved nap. That night everyone headed to a nearby indoor football pitch where a very intense tournament took place. An enjoyable day for all!



Day 3: After a well needed sleep, that was cut short by Mr. Haughey and Mr. Curran, the lads waddled up to the baby slopes with their shins beginning to feel the pain that would only increase as the week went on. The sun was shining brightly down on the lads who were very quickly regretting putting on that extra layer! Every hour we improved our skills and graduated from the baby slopes onto bigger and better things. After the second session the lads returned to the hotel where they continued to chat to the girls who were also on a trip, desperately trying to win their attention. That night we all headed down to the local pizzeria where we devoured gorgeous pizzas after a day of heavy activity.

Day 4 and 5: The lads woke filled with excitement after certain promises made by their instructors involved chair lifts and red slopes. Unfortunately, it was back on the green slopes in the morning due to the ice but after a small rest, most groups were allowed to head up to the top of the mountain. The lads took inspiration from their mums on holiday, taking photos every two minutes as they got higher into the mountains. With our confidence growing each hour we tackled the challenging red slopes and showed off the skills we had developed over the previous few days. That night the lads had a quiz spanning six rounds with the winners getting free pizza from the teachers the next day. After long and well fought rounds the winners were crowned! Day five followed a similar pattern to the day before. However, that evening we took part in a basketball tournament. There was heavy competition from all, even after the long day on the slopes! After we were all ready for bed, exhausted after the day's activities.



Day 6: Day six began with a little more competition. Our instructors came up with a race which consisted of the lads weaving tightly in between poles placed at intervals down the green slope before passing through the finish line. After refueling back at the hotel, we went up the chairlift for what we didn't realise would be our last time. This time we were given more freedom. We could ski faster and were able to do a few small jumps. After arguably the greatest session of skiing, the lads headed back to the hotel for food before ice skating. While a few of us glided gracefully along the ice, most looked like new born fawns. The lads' survival instincts took over as they fought like animals over the scarce dolphins that could be used for balance!



Day 7 and 8: As we approached the end of the trip, we were back up to the green slopes. Energy levels had dipped slightly and many were now keen to return to the hotel for a warm shower! When 11 o' clock came around the lads welcomed the walk back to the hotel. Luckily, it was optional to go out on the second session and surprisingly a few brave souls took the risk of never being able to feel their fingers again to ski one last time. While they were out skiing, others returned to the local pizzeria. That night everyone headed back down to the disco room for our final hoorah where a big karaoke night which finished with a group re-enactment of 'Grease Lightning.' The next day we were up early to make our way back to Verona airport. After a short and peaceful flight, the lads arrived home at Dublin airport where they greeted their families and gave a huge thanks to Ms. Power and Mr. Curran for organising the unforgettable trip as well as Ms. Barnes, Mr. Haughey and Ms. Mulligan for coming on the trip and making it so enjoyable.



School Trips: Chemistry Trip

After months of anticipation, twenty-five Sixth Year Chemistry students embarked on a trip to Berlin from the 8th to the 10th of November 2023. This was an opportunity to get a hands-on experience with specialised equipment on the Leaving Cert course in a fully functioning lab while also experiencing the rich and complex history and culture of Berlin. Thanks to the meticulous planning of Mr. Hanley, Mr. Clancy, and Ms. Donnelly, we managed to fit so much in to the three days and make the trip truly memorable.

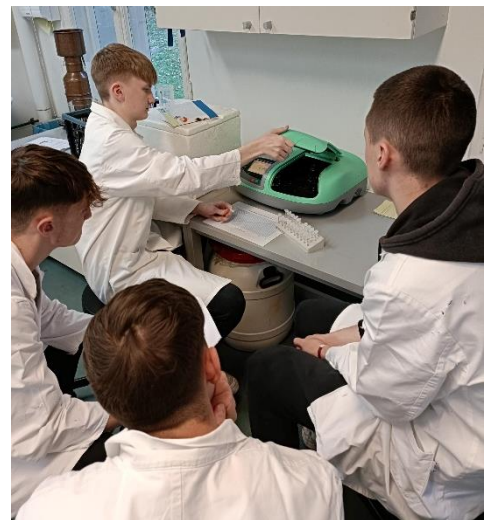
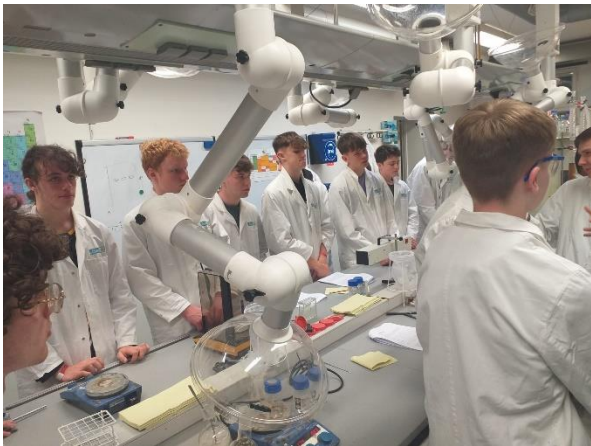
Our journey started at 3am in Dublin Terminal 2 where Mr. Hanley appeared more awake than the rest of us combined. However, as we navigated the airport and eventually touched down in Berlin, any lingering tiredness was gone. There was no waiting around once we reached our hotel in the city centre. We ditched our bags and hit the streets of Berlin where we mastered the metro system (eventually) and visited incredible historical sites. After a break for lunch in Alexander Platz where some tasted local German dishes (and the less adventurous had Burger King and Five Guys) we experienced many scientific exhibitions in the Futurium Museum.

After a rejuvenating night's sleep, we hit the road early the next morning. With the teachers' navigational skills, we managed to explore Berlin, including stops at the Palace of Tears, Topography of Terror, Checkpoint Charlie, and The Holocaust Memorial all before 2pm! Then we had the main event of the trip: a 4-hour chemistry demonstration where we learned about the synthesis of caffeine from various products. We all had an opportunity to work at different stations and use different expensive instrumentation and analytical techniques. The demonstration was both useful for the Leaving Cert Syllabus but also gave us an insight into a career in Chemistry. Afterwards we all took part in a number of competitive rounds of bowling!

Organizing and taking twenty-five lads on a trip through a city as busy as Berlin is no easy feat, and we all thank the thoughtful planning and cool headedness of Mr. Hanley, Mr. Clancy and Ms. Donnelly who made the trip as engaging and unforgettable as it was.

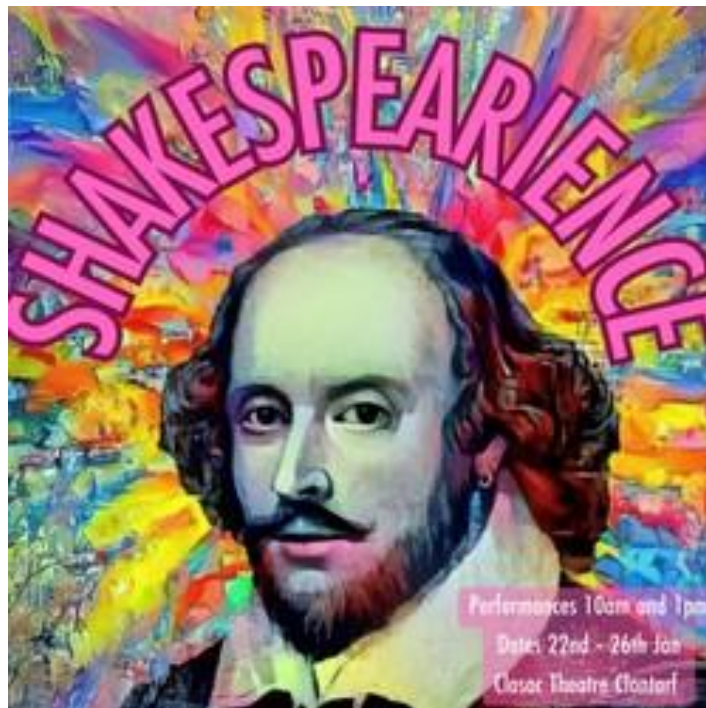
- Oscar Moran





The Merchant of Venice

On Wednesday the 24th of January, Third Year students and their English teachers travelled to the Clasac Theatre in Clontarf to see a performance of William Shakespeare's 'The Merchant of Venice.' We left the College at 9.10am and arrived at the theatre before 10am, just as the performance was about to begin. The show included an interactive workshop. To begin, the actors came out to explain different elements of stagecraft and the decisions they make before a performance to get into the minds of the characters. They then performed a number of the key scenes of the play, pausing throughout to discuss the key moment and how it was performed. After the show, the actors came out for a question and answer session. Benildus students got involved and shared their thoughts on the play, as well as asking questions about the performance we had just seen. The experience lasted approximately two hours. We travelled back to the school just in time for lunch! Overall, it was an enjoyable day out and will definitely benefit us for our Junior Cycle English exam.



Nearly Zero Energy Building

Ten students from our 5th Year Construction Studies class got the opportunity to complete a NZEB (Nearly Zero Energy Building)/Retrofit training course on Tuesday 6th February. The boys really enjoyed the day and got the opportunity to use virtual reality headsets to complete some of the tasks involved in insulating, air tightening and ventilating a NZEB home. Thanks to Mount Lucas for delivering the training day which provided an excellent insight into energy building/Retrofit for our Construction Studies students.



LGBTQ+ Quality Mark

In September 2022, 57 schools embarked on an 18 month journey to become an accredited LGBTQ+ safe and supportive school. On Friday 23rd February 2024, 37 schools gathered in Google to be presented with their hard-earned LGBTQ+ Quality Mark by James Kavanagh. Considering there are approximately 730 secondary schools in Ireland, the fact that St. Benildus College is one of the first schools in the country to become accredited is a huge achievement.

The Q-Mark initiative is run by Belong To, Ireland's leading youth LGBTQ+ charity. They provided us with a comprehensive list of requirements needed in order for us to develop as an LGBTQ+ safe and supportive school. Some of the things we did include.

- Ensuring that staff are equipped to support LGBTQ+ students. We had two training sessions to facilitate this, both of which were met with overwhelming support.
- Creating a supportive LGBTQ+ inclusive school culture and environment. We run a successful GSA (Gay, Straight Alliance) club every week. The Senior Hurling team also have pride bands on the arms of their T-shirts. We hope to include this pride band on more and more jerseys in the coming years
- We encouraged students to share their opinions and ideas on how to create a safe and supportive school. This was done through whole school surveys and also smaller focus groups.
- Developing and implementing school policies and plans. All relevant policies were updated to include LGBTQ+ language
- Implementing a curriculum that supports diversity and respect
- Working with parents, community organisations and other local LGBTQ+ youth projects to promote LGBTQ+ inclusion.

In Ireland, 76% of LGBTQ+ students do not feel safe at school. However, research shows that effective school-based interventions can improve the lives and experiences of LGBTQ+ students. We believe that the Quality Mark is a major step in allowing all students to feel safe and supported within our school. A big thank you to Ms. Lloyd, Mr. Hanley, and Mr. Clancy for their work and involvement in this achievement.





Prefects

The opportunity to become a prefect in Fifth Year was met with great enthusiasm by many students. Most of the boys were eager to be a more responsible member of the school community and get the opportunity to be a role model for the younger years. After the dauntingly formal interview process, we were awarded our prefect pins and were hopeful for the role we would play in the school. As the months went past, we were given countless opportunities with a range of different benefits not just for us but for the rest of the school too. The majority of us got the chance to teach First Year classes which was a huge success, both for the First Years and for the prefects who honed their abilities as teachers and orators. The prefects helped with the supervision of the Run for Life and were given opportunities to independently organize events within the school. Amongst these events was a charity football tournament and most notably the Sixth-Year quiz before Christmas, a huge highlight of everyone's last year in school, not only because we got to see Mr. Fahy dressed as Santa Claus. Being a prefect has been an enriching experience for everyone involved, helping us to learn practical skills of organizing events while also honing our abilities as orators and imparting knowledge on the younger years. I would like to extend a huge thank you to Mr. Haughey and Mr. Curran for giving us the opportunity to take on that role and for all of the work that they did to make it possible. It's been a highlight of many of the Sixth Years' time in the school and we're happy to pass on the torch to the incoming Fifth Years.

- Andrew Gouldson



Themed Weeks: History Week

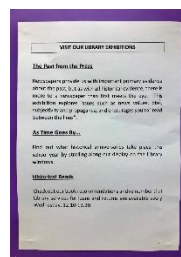
From the 15th to 19th of January we celebrated all things History in St Benildus College! History Week is a great opportunity to learn about the past and its impact on the present. It encourages students to develop their critical thinking skills, learn about different cultures and improve their research and communication skills. This year was filled with a number of creative and thought-provoking activities and was enjoyed by all. Here's what we got up to:

- 1st Years are taking part in a model making competition and met a Roman Legionary at the Roman Army talk.
- 2nd Years turned detective with a historical "Who am I?" Challenge.
- 3rd Years tested their revision with an All Year History Table Quiz.
- T.Ys toured our Library exhibitions on "The Past from the Press" (with thanks to the National Library of Ireland), "As Time Goes by" on historic anniversaries in 2023/4, and "Historical Reads" book recommendations (all available for loan in our Library).
- LC History students found a new perspective at the "Irish History through Art" lecture.
- History Club held a "What Came First?" exhibit and a debate on Dictators.

Thank you to all the History Department for a time-travelling extravaganza!!



Day	Event	Time	Location
Monday	History Award Ceremony	4.30pm - 6.00pm	Library
Tuesday	Who am I? Challenge	10.00am - 11.30am	Library
Wednesday	Historical Reads Book Recommendations	10.00am - 11.30am	Library
Thursday	As Time Goes by	10.00am - 11.30am	Library
Friday	What Came First?	10.00am - 11.30am	Library



Catholic School Week

This year St. Benildus College celebrated Catholic Schools Week from Sunday 21st to Saturday 27th of January 2024. The theme was ‘Communities of Service.’ We contemplated our school as a community of service under the following themes: Service in Our Community of Friends, Service in Our School Community, Service in Our Family Community, Service in Our Local Community and Service in Our Faith Community. We did this by carrying out a bake sale with TY students with the money raised going to charity, writing letters to a nursing home, undertaking a First Year La Sallian soccer league, competing in a John Baptist de la Salle competition and lastly, staff and students taking part in a Random Act of Kindness initiative. It was a great week of celebration, community, and kindness. The week concluded with Mass for a group of students from our school with the students from St. Raphaela’s. Thank you to all members of the Religion Department for all their work in coordinating the activities for this week.



Seachtain na Gaeilge

Bhí seachtain iontach againn anseo sa scoil ag céiliúradh Seachtain na Gaeilge 2024! Bhí na daltaí agus na múinteoirí ag caint 's ag comhrá as Gaeilge le chéile. Bhí imeachtaí éagsúla ar siúl i rith na seachtaine cosúil le tráth na gceist, bricfeasta as gaeilge, comórtas postaeir agus fíbiní cleamhnais. Bhí duaiseanna ag dul do na cainteoirí is fearr i ngach rang Gaeilge freisin. Bhí seachtain den scoth againn!

We had a great week here in school celebrating Seachtain na Gaeilge 2024! Students and teachers were chatting together in Irish. Various activities were organised during the week such as quizzes, breakfast in Irish, poster competitions and speed dating. There were prizes on offer for the best speakers in every Irish class too. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the week!



Healthy Eating Week

This year we celebrated Healthy Eating Week from the 4th to the 8th of March. It was a great opportunity to think about the importance of eating well and the impact that diet and nutrition play on our wellbeing. Plenty of healthy snacks were provided for both staff and students throughout the week. These were prepared by our TY students and some staff members. From fruit salads and smoothies to hummus and crudites, there were plenty of options for all to enjoy.

As well as healthy snacks, students were encouraged to learn more about the importance of a healthy diet and nutrition throughout various classes. In SPHE and CSPE classes, students watched a documentary that focused on the importance of our health and how to make smart food choices throughout each day. In other classes, students completed a number of quizzes used to improve their knowledge on the importance of diet and nutrition. Our annual Benildus Healthy Bake Off also took place on the Friday with a wide-selection of tasty treats for our judges to sample. A big thank you to Ms. Lloyd and all the staff and students who got involved in the preparation and organisation of Healthy Eating Week.



Benildus Got Talent

First Years were given a great insight to the different talents St. Benildus College students have to offer with the Benildus Got Talent show, demonstrating a variety of music and skills from all the year groups in the school. We were treated to performances of different genres, from blues, rock n' roll, ballads to ska dance music, showcasing the diversity of talents and interests of our students. We had many soloists, such as Sixth Years' Bailey Fitzpatrick, Tom O'Neill, Darragh Coughlan and Jack Byrne and Third Years' Fionn Carey on guitar and Conor Harrington on piano with a rendition of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody.

We were given an example of student creativity with Theo Flynn and his friend Reuben Capinpin, who together performed "Circles" by Post Malone. Theo also performed on his own, with his own composition and homemade backing track for voice and trumpet. We had a great opportunity to learn about the oboe from Brendan McDonnell, who gave us a performance of 'Gabriel's Oboe'. We received a visit from Benildus' very own Liam and Noel Gallagher - Hugo Clancy and Jack Byrne in Sixth Year. Accompanied by costumes, a guitar, and a tambourine, they gave us a live performance of Let There Be Love by Oasis.

Our award winners in the end consisted of Benildus' finest bands - Fifth Years Ryan Lawlor, Luke Joyce and Monty Greenwood came together to compete together as a band and walked away with our best newcomer group to the talent show. Third place showed us a taste of rock n' roll with Josh Cunningham, Jack Clifford, Jack Beausang and Joe Long. Our final act, taking the title of first place, could have been the band Madness themselves - but it was in fact Darragh Coughlan, Seán Ryan, Matthew O'Flynn, Cuan Egan and Ethan Miskella in costume, giving us a rendition of "One Step Beyond" complete with saxophone, tambourine, and some dance moves. It even inspired an impromptu interval performance of "Set Fire to the Rain" by First Years during the judge's deliberation, proving how infectious the joy and energy from the contestants was. It was an enjoyable day for first years and hopefully has inspired them to share their own talents next year.







Grandparents Day

In December, First and Second Year celebrated Grandparents' Day to recognise and celebrate the love, care, and support that grandparents bring into our lives. The day was a resounding success as grandparents of First and Second Year students came to visit our school and have a cup of tea and a catchup with their grandsons. The atmosphere around the school that day was filled with love and joy and was a lovely way to begin our Christmas celebrations.

Our students Lasallian spirit was evident in the way the boys interacted and cared for their grandparents. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all and was a great opportunity to reflect on the importance of grandparents in our lives and the central role they play in supporting our students as they continue to learn, grow, and develop.



Emmanuel

On the 12th of March a group of Junior and Senior music students participated in the Emmanuel 2024 concert. The concert was part of a three-day event with numerous Catholic schools based in Dublin gathering to sing liturgical songs in unity promoting peace, love, and justice. The students have dedicated many months learning the songs and it was lovely to see all our hard work come together over the course of the day. On the morning of the Emmanuel, we spent the morning rehearsing our repertoire of songs in conjunction with 16 other schools. This was followed up with a number of bonding exercises for all schools to take part in, creating a sense of connection and community between all who attended the event. We reflected on how little time we have to spend in our lives doing what we love and the importance of connecting with others. Daniel and Scott Waldock offered their insights on how the students have bonded together 'like brothers' over the last few months and their enjoyment of singing as part of a choir.

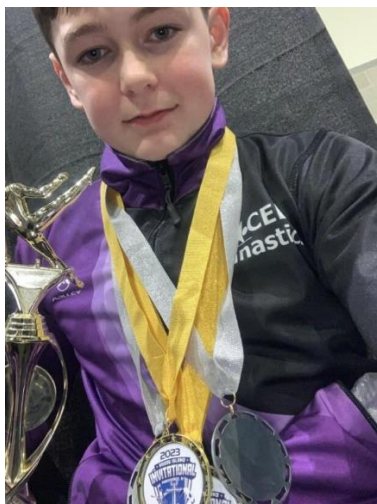
After a quick lunch, then came the dress rehearsals. Our boys not only performed well but our two sixth year students, Niall Clinton and Conor Harrington, gave a beautiful reflection on the importance of water for life and to not take what God has given us for granted. Soon it was our moment to sing together, not only the schools but the audience too! The choirs taught the audience a short song (with accompanying dance moves) creating an enjoyable and truly connected experience. Our boys showed truly exemplary behaviour throughout the day and we are so proud of them. Well done to all involved.



Evan Kinsella: Gymnastics

In November of last year, I was chosen to compete in a gymnastics competition in Rhode Island in America. The competition was called 'The Rhode Island Invitational'. There were 25 Irish gymnasts competing: 7 boys, and 18 girls. There were also five coaches with us. We flew to Boston and we took a train to Rhode Island where we stayed at a hotel near the venue. One the day of the competition, I was quite nervous. The first apparatus that I was competing on was the pommel horse. This was the routine that I was most nervous about. The routine went perfectly and I was very happy. My nerves went away. The final five apparatus went smoothly and it was one of my best performances ever. I won a gold medal on pommel, high bar, vault and rings and I won a silver medal on parallel bars and floor. I also won a gold medal for the all-around competition. The rest of the team also did extremely well and we won a first-place trophy in the team event. We all celebrated by going ice skating. Overall, this experience was very enjoyable and has created many happy memories for my teammates and I.

Evan Kinsella – Class 2.6



Sport: Athletics

St. Benildus College Cross Country teams have had great success this season. From our first event in DSD to the Leinster Finals in the Phoenix Park, the blue and yellow singlet has always been amongst the medals. We have had great success in the recent East Leinster Cross Country Championships where all our athletes who ran on the day qualified for the Leinster Finals. The minor runners who qualified for the Leinster Finals were Oran Bartelink, Conor Pimlott, Conn McCluckey, Luca Moran, Conor Wren, Liam O' Flaherty, Darragh Scanlon and Tomás Jackson. From the Junior boys Luke Leydon, Cohen Doyle, Soren Doyle, Ferdia Gibson, Paddy Carty, Cathal Sullivan, Daniel Reynolds, and Joe Sheridan all qualified for the Leinster Finals. Tadhg Bartelink flew the St. Benildus colours and qualified for the finals. Brendan McDonnell, Andrew Gardiner, Jake Mathews, Seán Healy, Ciarán Connolly, and Sam Costello all qualified for the Senior Leinster Finals.

In the Leinster Finals all our boys ran great races, and we are extremely proud of their achievement of reaching the finals. Our First Year runners had great success and managed to qualify for the All-Ireland Finals in Tymon Park on Saturday March 9th. Conn McCluskey and Conor Pimlott will represent the College in the All-Ireland Minor Boys Cross Country. The boys will run 2500m in the final Cross Country event of the academic year and everyone here in the College would like to wish them the best of luck. Athletics training will now take place every Tuesday (weather permitting). The boys who wish to compete in the Track and Field events this spring should meet at the Sports Hall at 15:05pm. We are always open to new members going from the school community. Keep an eye on the Athletics noticeboard outside the Junior Science Lab for News related to Athletics.



Soccer

This term the First Year football team had multiple games against neighboring schools in both the league and the cup. Unfortunately, the team failed to progress in the competitions. They showed great courage and determination on and off the pitch and have many reasons to be proud. We are immensely proud of the work they put into the team this year and are very excited of what they have to offer in their next five years in the College.



Rugby

St. Benildus First Year Rugby is coached by Ms. Clarke with the support of Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Kennedy. Transition Year students, Daniel King, Harry Hughes, Noah Harty, Christian Sinclair, and Leon Saunders have been a fantastic addition to the coaching set up, providing invaluable support and encouragement for this promising squad.

Training takes place every Tuesday after school from 3pm to 4.15pm with a large turnout each week, demonstrating the commitment of the players. During these sessions, the boys are taught a variety of skills. It starts with the whole team coming together for a warmup before splitting into two groups based on positions: forwards and backs. Forwards work on creating their structure for attack by setting up pods, working on lineouts and then scrums. Backs work on a multitude of moves prepping for the in-game scenarios they will face. The session ends with match play whereby both the backs and forwards are now working together.

The 2023/2024 season has been enjoyable for both the trainers and players with many fixtures taking place for both the 15's and 7's squads. The opening 15's match against De La Salle Churchtown was an unfortunate loss but great success has been seen in the most recent match against St. Columbus College, with a very impressive win. The 7's Blitz organised by Leinster Rugby took place at Energia Park in Donnybrook this season and it provided a fantastic opportunity to nurture the further development of players.



Chess

Kicking off our first Chess fixture of 2024, on January 18th, two teams participated in a Chess tournament at Blackrock College. This time, our teams comprised only First-Year students in what was their first outing representing the school in a Chess tournament.

The students, Luke McCarthy, Oscar O'Brien, Ben Hodgins, Sonny Williams, Nathan Coyle, Ben Coyle, Darragh Lennon and Conor McLoughlin, displayed exceptional skill and incredible sportsmanship with the other eight schools that participated in the tournament.

Although the teams were unsuccessful in winning the top prize of chocolates, the experience gained from the tournament is something that they will carry into future professional experiences for years to come. Chess Club with Mr. McAllen and Mr. McKeever (with the occasional appearance from the legendary Mr. Scott) takes place every Monday from 2:50 pm to 3:40 pm in the Physics Lab.



Extracurricular Quiz

On Thursday the 22nd of February our annual Extracurricular Quiz took place in The Goat, Stillorgan. This is an important event on our school calendar as it helps raise money for the numerous clubs and teams that take place within our school. This year the quiz was organised by staff members who facilitate Soccer and Chess along with the Senior Leadership Team. It is a great opportunity for members of our wider school community and staff to meet in a more informal setting. It was an enjoyable night for all involved and a great opportunity to show off one's general knowledge! The night was a huge success, raising €4,656 This will be a great benefit for our sports and extra-curricular teams and help with the costs associated with gear, equipment, medical bags along with other valuable resources that aid and support our students holistic and physical wellbeing. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the night, whether they donated, sponsored a round or a question, bought a table or took part in the raffle. Special thanks to Mr. Haughey and Mr. Curran who acted as quizmasters and a big congratulations to the winning team pictured below!





Christmas Quiz

On the 20th of December all Sixth Year students eagerly descended into the canteen hall to join forces with their teachers and take part in the annual Sixth Year Teacher-Student Christmas Quiz. Senior Prefects were involved in the organization, set-up and running of the big event and ensured that the afternoon ran smoothly. With Christmas jumpers on and excitement mounting, students put their general knowledge to the test; tackling rounds on teacher look-a-likes, Christmas traditions, and general knowledge.

Throughout the afternoon, there were plenty of surprises to keep everyone entertained. Spice bags were given to each table, ensuring attention and focus were maintained throughout the afternoon. While scores were being tallied, teachers and students took to the stage to belt out some Christmas classics. Mr. Fahy brought even more festive cheer to the occasion dressed up as Santa. To add to the celebrations, Ms. Brohan came in with an early Christmas present for the Sixth Years... when students finished up the Christmas Quiz they would officially be on their Christmas holidays! Cheers descended amongst both students and teachers as we got ready for Christmas to officially commence. The quiz was a great success and will definitely be remembered as a highlight of the school year. A special thanks to the Senior Prefects who helped organise the event and a big congratulations to Mr. Haughey, who retained his title of Christmas Quiz Victor alongside his team of Sixth Year students.



