



MÉANSCOIL NA TRÓCAIRE  
CNOC AN TSEABHAIC

# MERCY MOUNTHAWK

## *Newsletter*

SUMMER 2018



Presentation of the Amber Flag



Cast of My Fair Lady



Munster C 7s winners



Monument in loving memory of Martha Brassil



U15 boys hurlers who won Munster Final Title

# 'Turning and turning in the widening gyre, The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold...'

(from 'The Second Coming' by W.B. Yeats.)

## Reassurance in a year of change

We are in the midst of very significant change in second level education in our schools in Ireland influenced from many different quarters. We have the implementation of the New Junior Cycle with new curricula, new assessment structures, new short courses and Wellbeing from the NCCA, the new review of Middle Leadership in our schools from the DES, the introduction of the new attendance strategies from TUSLA, a new model of provision for Special Needs from the SENO and NEPS, the change of emphasis in teaching methodology to active learning and new quality standards for performance in LAOS from the Inspectorate – and the list continues. It can all become very busy and challenging and we risk losing sight of 'the centre' as Yeats characterised it.

Yet, what is reassuring in all this change is to hold the focus and what is reassuring for me as principal in Mercy Mounthawk is to see, in the analysis of needs carried out by staff as part of the Middle Leadership review in the past term, that they are clearly holding the focus on the 'centre' – that centre being the primacy of the care and support and encouragement we give to our students. (You can read more about this review at: <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/new-curriculum-developments/>)

## Year Teams for 2018.19

As a core outcome from the review and restructuring, it has been decided to re-structure year teams (with a Year Head, Assistant Year Head, an SEN co-ordinator, a Pastoral Care person and Deputy Principal) to support student engagement, attendance, academic progress and belonging in each year group. In this way, while we are implementing the changes required in Middle Leadership and incorporating the various aspects of the school development plan, (academic achievement, attendance, well-being and special needs), we will continue to hold the 'centre' around student care.

All of this connects well, in my view, with the theme in this 'Year of the Family' when Catholic schools are called to be a 'Family of Families': places where students feel they belong, where they are protected and supported, where they are encouraged to engage and grow and develop and where we connect with their own families in the formation of well-rounded young people. This is the core vision of the school - the 'centre' that will hold.

## The CENTRE is the STUDENT: Integration, Wellbeing, positive mental health and holistic development

It is encouraging too to see how this central concern of student care manifests itself in a myriad of ways, some big, some small, in the school community. This year we saw the erection of the 'integration sculpture' alongside the school avenue bringing to fruition a project started by the class of 2018 when they were in TY and now marking the memory of our recently deceased staff member Martha Brassil who championed

integration in the school. She understood the value of welcoming all students whatever their strengths or needs and that spirit will live on in our school.

It is reassuring as well to see the school achieve its first 'Amber flag' for mental health promotion after many years of patiently building supports and structures in the school. It is recognition of the importance of the care for student welfare in the school – the importance of supporting emotional and psychological wellbeing. Progress has been significant this year on the introduction of Wellbeing into the Junior Cycle curriculum with the short courses in SPHE, CSPE and PE ready for September 2018 and a significant uptake by the current first year students already timetabled. The surveys of parents, students and staff have been completed and priorities around promoting good nutrition and the encouragement of daily activity for each student have been identified for September 2018 – again the care of students is core. There was great energy too this year around the Young Social Innovator project on technology and family life. It was an innovative project and I understand it will be developed in the coming year to focus on the impact phones are having on the mental wellbeing of students and on family dynamics and communication. Connecting back again the 'Year of the Family', there is great interest in the Papal visit in August with 120 students and 12 teachers volunteering to support the events in late August before we return to school.

In my view the developments in assessment methods and curricula at Junior Cycle are student focused. The response for classroom based assessment in English, Science and Business has been positive from both students and teachers. I am heartened to see that the new Junior Cycle certificate allows us to acknowledge for the first time (officially) what we have always known in Catholic schools, that extra-curricular involvement is not just an outlet or escape for extra energy, but a necessary aspect of holistic education and student formation. It is great to see that there has been a strong uptake for the new Coding and Artistic Performance short courses in junior cycle – the broadening of educational choice is to be welcomed in the interests of greater student engagement and the encouragement of lifelong learning.

In all of this change – there is positivity and energy that is uplifting. I believe that we will not lose our way in Mercy Mounthawk in the midst of change as long as we hold the 'centre' and that centre will always be – the welfare and care of each student.

*John O'Roarke*

John O'Roarke  
School Principal



## ENROLMENT FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

Enrolment for students starting in September 2018 opens on Monday 3rd September 2018.

The closing date for applications for Sept 2019  
is at 2pm on Mon 15th Oct 2018 - our Open Day.

This is a very important deadline for those applying under the siblings and Moyderwell / Balloonagh criteria of the policy. I wish to remind you that all application forms must be in prior to the deadline to be considered valid. Also, please be aware that each application must be returned to the office in person, countersigned, and the carbon copy retained for your records.



## ATTENDANCE STRATEGY

The attendance strategy for the school was published last summer on the school website at: <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/POLICYonATTENDANCE2016.17-ratified-for-submission-to-TUSLA-October-2017.pdf> As outlined in section 10.2 of the attendance policy, based on the data analysis and consultation, the goal prioritised for attention in 2017/18 is to decrease the absence rate among 6th years and in particular to decrease that rate on Fridays and Friday afternoons. The SMART goal is to reduce the average absenteeism rate in 6th year by 2% points in the academic year (2017/18).

To attain this goal in attendance it was decided, in consultation with the staff in August 2017, patterns of absence, were to be communicated to Year Heads and to assistant Year Heads immediately. It was decided to take a second full school roll call every Friday after lunch and to send a text to parents of those who were absent. Personal engagement with students by the year head was undertaken as a strategy and the support of parents was enlisted. When problems continued the parents were contacted by letter by the Deputy Principal and asked to come to school to discuss and remedy the particular attendance issue.

The whole school approach to this issue has borne fruit over the year. Overall there was recorded an improvement in the attendance rate across senior cycle: For this 2018 LC cohort, their 5th Year absence rate in 2016/17 was 10.6 %. This group's absence rate when in 6th Year in 2017/18 dropped to 6.4 %. Focusing on 5th year, the absence rate dropped from 10.6 % in the 5th year cohort in 2016/17 to 6.7 % for the current 5th year cohort in 2017/18.

## THE NEW JUNIOR CYCLE - SHORT COURSES AND WELLBING WELLBEING at JUNIOR CYCLE

The introduction of wellbeing as a core component of the Junior Cycle is well underway after the year. Students attending Mounthawk from September 2018 will have 334 hours of Wellbeing in the curriculum which will be composed of a double class of PE, a single class of SPHE and CSPE, and our morning assemblies.

Further to this, as outlined in the subject choice booklets <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2nd-Year-Options-Booklet-New-Junior-Cycle-Final-for-A5.pdf>, we have been able to introduce the possibility of students choosing SPHE or CSPE and PE as SHORT COURSES for accreditation at Junior Cycle. It is encouraging that out of the cohort of 216 students progressing from 1st into 2nd year, 56% of the group has opted to take up short courses for the Junior Cycle. There has been a very positive uptake in the wellbeing subjects and also a tremendous popularity in uptake of the coding and computer literacy courses. The goals for Wellbeing in the school for 2018/19 have been decided upon based on the surveys of parents and students. We will be launching out initiatives in Spetember...

## CODING and COMPUTER LITERACY

One of the main curriculum developments in the school in the current year was the introduction of the coding classes into 1st year – which will continue next year. The development of a third computer lab was essential to this success and the introduction of the course and the lunchtime club (facilitated by Mr Nolan) gave the impetus to the uptake of the new short course for September. The arrival of a 3D printer in the last term provided possibilities of modelling and we can see this aspect of education thriving in the school in the coming years. We also thank the Parents' council for their fundraising contribution in funding the purchase of Raspberry-Pi boards for the computer classes.

We will be using the grant for ICT this year to upgrade the main computer lab with new computers and we are purchasing a number of sets of Chrome Books for class use to facilitate the research components of the new junior cycle in subjects like science, business and the languages.

## TEACHING LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

### Active Learning Methodologies

As part of the DES led focus on developing methodology for students learning, we continued at the start of the 2017/18 school year with an engagement with the PDST (the post primary in-service team) focused on supporting teacher expertise in and use of active learning methodologies for the Junior Cycle. The staff undertook to use methodologies such as 'think, pair, share', 'Graphic organisers' and 'anticipation exercises' in class to explore their usefulness in supporting learning.

A comparison of the self-evaluation reports by teachers from the start to the end of the year shows that the use of active methodologies increased in classrooms over the year. In relation to Think Pair Share, usage increased from 56% of staff to 71.3% regularly or frequently use the methodology by year end. With Graphic organisers, 39% regularly used the methodology at year start whereas after the year of experimentation 67% are regularly or frequently using the methodology. Interestingly, with regard to the Anticipation exercise while 29% had used this technique frequently at the start, by the end of the year only 24% were using this method – a question for further evaluation...

A central issue which emerged for the Teaching and Learning steering group at Christmas in evaluating the process was the question of the impact of the methodologies on the learning of students. With this in mind we engaged with Battelle – an online CPD process that allows for the evaluation of student experience and learning and allows teachers to hear the student voice.

### Battelle for Kids - Teacher self-reflection and student ownership of Learning (Shane Kissane)

A working team of ten teachers including the Principal and a Deputy Principal began to meet in February with the aim of introducing the Battelle programme into the English, Science and Mathematics departments. The team under took a course on Formative Instructional Practices (F.I.P) which they completed over the rest of the school year. The course looks at methodology and ties this to the four core components of the programme: learning targets, evidence of learning, feedback to pupils and fostering student ownership of their own learning.

Central to the programme is the survey and analysis of the student experience in the class room. The Student experience survey, delivered by the teacher, aims to understand how the student feels in the class under the headings of Hope, Engagement, Belonging and Classroom Management. The survey is delivered once per term and a detailed analysis of the results is available to the teacher. Improvements in student learning are achieved through implementing the recommendations from the survey analysis and adapting methodology.

The teachers have reported this particular aspect of the Battelle initiative to be most worthy, inspiring and eye opening as it gives them detailed information as to how their students feel about all aspects of their learning and engagement. It is by the teachers acting on the results of the survey and implementing the four core components of the course that students will take greater enjoyment from their own class room experience and learning. It is intended to roll out this programme to all staff for the school year 2018 -2019. <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/new-curriculum-developments/> (Teaching and Learning)

## LITERACY

Promoting greater engagement in reading across the school community remains a key goal of the Literacy Improvement Plan. To support the involvement of students with the book rental scheme in Junior cycle (a component of the literacy strategy), and to further encourage reading, the 'Read Red Wall' became a feature of the general purpose area of the school during the year – with book reviews being traded regularly. Door posters were created of teacher's favourite books with a review included to strengthen the whole school culture of reading.

Taking up the goals from the School's Literacy Strategy to 'Work on improving the library facilities to increase the number of students who enjoy reading for pleasure' and to 'Build on the 42.06% percentage of students surveyed who indicated that they would be interested in borrowing books if the school had a book lending facility in the library', a number of strategies were undertaken this year.

There has been an initiative by TY students to hold book club every Wednesday. Library renovations will be carried out over the summer (2018) to create – an oasis for reading in the school at lunchtime.

For the 'One Book - One Community Challenge', the book chosen was 'All the light we cannot see' – a WW2 novel. Multiple copies were made available in the library and posters about the challenge peppered the school. An invitation was sent to parents in the Christmas Newsletter to engage as well. We applied for the WELLREAD NATIONAL AWARD and received it in May which was a great boost to the efforts being made by the whole school community to promote reading.

## NUMERACY

Developing a culture of enjoyment and resilience around maths is one of the goals of the schools' Numeracy Strategy. One of the main initiatives for this past academic year involved all first years completing a maths quiz during maths week in October. From this quiz, the top achieving students from each class were identified and this 40 or so pupils attended a lunchtime class once per week to be made familiar with and tackle question types similar to those designed for the Irish Maths Teachers Association(IMTA) problem solving quizzes. These lunchtime classes were followed and bolstered by 12 online problems each week, posted on a dedicated Google Classroom page with the answers being provided by Mr. Mulligan a week later. This initiative continued from November until March.

It was found that providing extra classed which were backed up by online questions and answers helped the students value their own skills while at the same time providing them an avenue towards general improvement in their numeracy. For 2018 – 2019 it is envisaged that this initiative with the same group will continue into 2nd year and that it would be advantageous to have the new 1st years start a month or so earlier.

# Awards



Mr O'Roarke congratulates Darragh Clarke who received the Principal's Award



Choir Person of the Year Sean McElligott with Ms Muldoon Walsh



U.C.C Cup Award Winner Thomas White with Ms Farrell



Mr O'Roarke congratulates Lauren O'Grady - Catherine McAuley Award

*The Annual Awards Ceremony was held on 16th May in the School. With over 200 award winners and their parents and friends in attendance, the school hall was thronged for the event. Awards were presented to students across a wide number of categories from Academic Awards, to School Spirit, to Christian Leadership and covering a spread of extra-curricular achievements.*

The evening was hosted by two teachers, Mr Ronan Redican and Ms Andrea Thornton and opened with an input from school principal, Mr John O'Roarke. He began by dedicating the evening to the memory of teacher Martha Brassil, who passed away the previous week. She was a teacher 'who was committed to affirming the positive qualities of the students in the school, to looking for the best in every student and to encouraging them to develop and share the gifts they had within them' he told the assembly. 'She championed positivity, optimism, hope, and promoted the potential of each individual. That spirit lives on in the school community on an evening like this where we acknowledge students for their giftedness'. He asked the parents and students present to consider that behind every award presented was a person who displayed characteristics such as generosity, empathy, love of learning, creativity, appreciation of beauty, team-spirit, determination and commitment.

Pat Fleming (Deputy Principal) who coordinated the awards ceremony pointed out that 'the ceremony recognises that learning takes place for students in a great range of activities outside the classroom whether that be music, or sport or co-curricular activities in science or maths'. He reflected that 'it is an important development nationally that the new Junior Cycle Award (JCPA) system now allows us to officially recognise this learning in the Junior Cycle.' The value of an awards night in the school is to promote and give prominence to this learning that takes place across the whole school.

The Tadhg O'Connell memorial shield for Physics was presented to Shane Walsh and Odhran Liston and the Young Scientist Awards went to Tamila Khussaninova and Olivia Moriarty. The All Ireland Finalists in 1st and 2nd year boys' basketball were acknowledged and the evening honoured several other sporting achievements, particularly in the area of athletics, with the school having won both the best Girls' and best Boys' School Shields at the recent Kerry Athletics competitions. The 'Sports Persons of the Year' awards went to Ciaran O'Reilly and Rachel Bowler.

Entertainment during the evening included an excerpt from the very successful school production of 'My Fair Lady' which was staged in Siamsa in January, and selections from the school choir. Awards were presented to Aoife King, Pierce O'Brien, Lauryn Griffin and Seamus Harty for their contribution to Arts and Humanities. Contributions to the school community were also recognised with Darragh Boyd, Adam Butler and Hugo Wells receiving awards for Community Service.

The evening concluded with the presentation of the main awards which focus on leadership in the school and acknowledged a group of students who have been role models for their peers and set a standard of achievement and endeavour.

The Board of Management Awards for leadership went to Shane Walsh and Rachel Deasy.

The CEIST award which acknowledges a student who embodies the values of the CEIST charter such as inclusion and respect for each person went to Aoife King

The Principal's Award and the Catherine McAuley Award which acknowledges the students of the year for their contribution to the life of the school in a range of different ways from drama, to debating to science to sport and academic life went to Darragh Clarke and Lauren O'Grady

The evening was a true celebration of the spirit of the school and the talent and abilities of the students.

# MOUNTHAWK WINS AMBER FLAG

Mercy Mounthawk has received an Amber Flag from national suicide prevention charity, Pieta House. The Amber Flag was presented to over 80 schools, colleges, clubs, and societies, recognising their individual efforts to create healthy, inclusive environments that support mental wellbeing.

Health & Wellbeing Coach, Alison Canavan was on hand at the event to offer advice to the students and groups before they stepped on stage to accept their Amber Flag from programme founder Frank Mulvihill and Pieta House CEO, Brian Higgins.

The award unites these groups in their efforts working toward a happier, healthier Ireland and eradicating the stigmas associated with mental health issues.

All groups receiving the Pieta House Amber Flag qualified for the award by hosting a mental health awareness event, a fundraiser, and a mental health initiative.

The programme encourages teamwork and student contributions, and works with school guidance counsellors to include a peer-support element.



Programme Co-Founder Frank Mulvihill (L) & CEO Pieta House, Brian Higgins (R) present Amber Flag to Ms Nolan and Eidi  Dowling and Marie Dwyer

## FOOD DRIVE

This year Ms Kane's 5.8 Religion class organised the annual Food Drive. The class worked hard collecting boxes, making posters and encouraging all to support their efforts.

It was a great success and they distributed over 30 food hampers to families in the community. Thanks to everyone who contributed.



Daffodil Day Mounthawk in aid of Kerry Hospice



Justice Campaign



## WORLD JUSTICE AND THE FAMILY

Class 5.6 organised a global awareness campaign on World Justice and the Family. The focus of their campaign was the plight of families especially women and children in some of the world's poorest countries.

In preparation for the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) in August 2018, the class chose to do an action project to highlight the needs of some of the world's most vulnerable families. The class after a process of research, discussions and reflection decided to take action and do a fundraiser for Trocaire. Their involvement showed high levels of motivation, planning, organization and commitment. The project helped the students to develop their skills as active citizens in our unjust world.

The students created an excellent visual display for the General Purpose Area in the school. They also created a power point presentation as part of their awareness efforts.

They organised a bake sale and an Easter hamper raffle which raised €400 for Sierra Leone, the recipient of this year's Trocaire campaign. The students enjoyed their efforts and it certainly increased awareness among students and staff in the larger school community. The action project has been entered by the students into the Oscar Romero Award competition.

Class 5.6 would like to extend their thanks to all who supported this very worthy cause. In line with the Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World, we hope that families who suffer extreme poverty will gain a little joy through our efforts.

By Ms. Foley



# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

A FAMILY OF FAMILIES



This year saw a number of activities organised for Catholic School's Week. Our goal was to encourage students to think of school as a 'Family of Families'. To this end, students engaged in a number of activities, including a letter writing activity to thank older members of their families who had made a big impression on them. Senior students followed a 'Kindness Calendar' where they would set out to do a kind deed each day for a month. The highlight of our Catholic School's Week was a visit by members of the school's Trad Music group to the

residents at Fatima Home. Accompanied by Ms Nolan and Ms Ni Dheargain, the group spent an afternoon of song, dance and chat with older members of our community. It was a touching and rewarding experience for students and staff and we hear from reliable sources that the group went down well with the residents too.

## COMPUTER SCIENCE - FROM CODING TO BUILDING WEBSITES

After the introduction of Computer Science into Mercy Mounthawk in September, 1st year pupils have developed key skills in the basics of coding using Scratch Coding. Here they coded games such as Tic Tac Toe, Flappy Bird and a few other simple games. Students were also assessed in the Bebras Challenge, an international test which looks at computational logic, which is a basis for Computer Science. Three students Coren Hughes (1st Year), D.J. McCarty and Darragh O'Keefe (4th Year) represented Mercy Mounthawk nationally in the Bebras Challenge second round in Maynooth last April 2018.

1st year students continued coding in the new year and applied their skills to coding with 'Raspberry pi' and also looked at how coding can be used in the physical world to control things. They also looked at digital literacy and staying safe online.

4th year students too have engaged with developing projects for the school Digital Champion Programme, these ranged from business training for online, helping elderly people get online, Student Council website and many others. Stephanie Keane and Daniel Sheehy managed to come second in a national AIB Webathon in Dublin, building a website on the theme of Smart Cities. Pupils continued to develop their digital skills with a training day in Limerick in January organised by the Department of Communications.



# MOUNTHAWK - WINNERS OF GTTP AGAIN FOR 2018!

It has been just announced that Sarah Healy and Charlotte O'Halloran will represent Mercy Mounthawk in Nice, France this November. The trip is five days long and students will be flown to Nice where they will stay courtesy of the GTTP partners. They will have an opportunity to visit Nice, Monaco and Monte Carlo with students from all over the globe. They will present their findings at the AMADEUS state of the art complex outside Nice over two days.

The Global Travel and Tourism Partnership (GTTP) announced that 24 secondary and tertiary students from 12 countries, selected as 2018 Student Research Competition winners out of approximately 2,000 entries.

Last year at the Nice, France conference hosted by Global Travel and Tourism Partnership (GTTP) GTTP Ireland winners Marta Gacek and Stephanie Keane of Mercy Mounthawk presented their Bleisure case study which was supervised by their teacher Stella O'Shea. Working in teams, the students developed their skills in research, analytics, and communications, all of which are essential for a successful career in Travel & Tourism.

In Ireland, this competition is integrated within Tourism Insight, an educational programme about career opportunities in the tourism industry.

This competition is sponsored by the GTTP's Global Partners and the Aldo Papone Endowment. In addition, Amadeus provided the conference facilities at its Executive Briefing Centre in Sophia Antipolis. Marriott International, provided meals and hotel rooms at Le Méridien, Nice. The GTTP Global Partners Amex, dnata, Eurostar, HRG, Hertz and Travelport sponsored tables at this year's event awards dinner.

Congratulations to Sarah and Charlotte on this wonderful achievement and look forward to hearing all about their trip when they return from Nice next November.



Marta Gacek - 2017 winner



Stephanie Keane - 2017 winner

## Young Economist of the Year gets Gold

In March 2018 PDST delivered the great news that for the first year of our school's participation in the T.V. Young Economist Competition, all four of our projects were shortlisted for the contest. Over 500 entries from all around Ireland were banded into three categories, gold, silver or bronze. One project qualified for the Gold category which studied 'How Social Media influences the Buying Habits of Teenagers', presented by Fiona Kerzaiia and Mairead Kearney. Our school's other projects all qualified for the Silver category: Alison Guerin, Rebecca Conway and Sarah Healy's project focused on Tax Avoidance, Daniel Sheehy's project 'The Basic Universal Income', 'AirBnB' by Shauna Rusk, Claire Crowley and Erin Griffin as well as 'The Economics of Gift Cards by Isabelle Lynch, Ciara Ryan and Oliver Hart.

Having decided on a title for their respective economics projects, extensive research was undertaken into how economics works, we studied current affair issues and analysed how economics affected them. After this process of research, we had a better understanding of economics and the gravity of things that it affects. We were in a position to choose the project titles that our groups would focus on. These included an investigation into the effect social media has on the buying habits of teenagers, a study into the economics of gift cards, an investigation into airBnB, an insight into tax avoidance and a study on basic universal income.

At the awards ceremony, the group in the gold category, with the project "The Influence of Social Media on the Buying Habits of Teenagers", were announced as third place in the Transition Year section of Young Economist of the Year 2018. We greatly appreciated all the guidance and support that Ms McAuliffe gave us during the whole competition. It was not only enjoyable but a great experience for all of us.



3rd place in Young Economist Finals  
Mairead Kearney and Fiona Kerzaiia



### GTTP PHOTO COMPETITION WINNER

Marian Knightly 5th year, TY student 2016-17, with her teacher Ms O'Shea accepting her certificate and prize of €100 as a regional winner in the Global Travel and Tourism Partnership Photo Competition in the Aviva Stadium Dublin on September 28th.



Eco Unesco Winners 2018

# EUROPEAN STUDIES

by Sean Hennessy

It has been a great year for the European Studies programme in Mounthawk. The European Studies class had a busy term organising events, taking part in debates and inviting guest speakers. MEP Deidre Clune was brought to the school to talk about her life as an MEP for the Southern Constituency of Ireland and about the type of work the European Parliament does for Ireland.

## MODEL COUNCIL

The school represented Lithuania at the Model Council debate in Dublin Castle where they met the Lithuanian ambassador and then debated the best future course for Europe with other schools in the country. The school had an unprecedented 6 students reach the National level of the European Youth Parliament session in Cork last February, those students were Sean Hennessy, John McCrohan, Mairead Kearney, Timothy Grimes, Charlotte O'Halloran and Mary O'Connell.

## MOCK EYP DEBATE

At the end of the year the class held another successful school mock EYP debate. They had spent weeks mentoring second years who chose to participate

and join a committee from either Mental Health, Education, Environment or Terrorism. TD Michael Healy Rae came in and spoke to the class and second years about Irish politics and why young people should get involved in politics.

## AMBASSADOR SCHOOL AWARD

Mounthawk's European Studies programme also received recognition from the European Commission by once again achieving an "Ambassador School" status for the second year in a row. The class was invited to the ceremony in Tipperary where Sean Hennessy as class secretary delivered a speech to other receiving schools as well as MEPs Sean Kelly and Deidre Clune.



*Mercy Mounthawk  
Model European Council*

## MY TRIP TO BRUSSELS

Daniel Sheehy. T.Y.

In May 2016, I participated in the school's inaugural Europe Day event, a mock European Youth Parliament and I absolutely loved the experience. This was my first taste of the European studies programme which is offered in the school and so I was intrigued. I started to research the European Studies programme and I was adamant, I would do European studies as soon as I arrived in Transition Year. I heard stories of students of European Studies winning trips to Brussels or Strasbourg but I never imagined I would be added to this list of students but that is I believe an example of the strength of the European Studies programme and transition year in Mercy Mounthawk.

In Mid-September, Our European studies teacher Ms Carey informed us of the 'Meet your MEP' competition run by our local member of the European Parliament, Sean Kelly where transition year students from Kerry, Cork, Limerick, Clare, Tipperary, Waterford, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wicklow and Wexford are invited to write an essay on 'Why the European Union is important to me'. The winners win a trip to Brussels. When I heard of the competition a

multitude of ideas came to mind, I got to work straight away and I spent the following weekend reviewing ideas, writing and editing my essay.

The main theme of my essay was that the European Union is important to me as it gives me opportunities. When I received an email from Sean Kelly confirming my place on the trip, I was overjoyed and I found it only fitting to have the European Union grant me the opportunity of a lifetime.

The trip from 7th to 10th December included visits to the European Parliament and Commission, meetings with Sean Kelly, EU Agricultural Commissioner Phil Hogan as well as trips to the European Museum of modern history, Bruges and Ghent.

I was joined on my trip by fellow transition years and European Studies students Áine Casey and John McCrohan and we made sure to represent transition year, Mercy Mounthawk as well as our European Studies class well.

# SCHOOL CHOIR BROADCAST FROM KNOCK BY RTE

**Aoife King**



*Trad Group bid farewell to Aoife King who has been a key member of the group*

## IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC GROUP SEAN HENNESSY

Mounthawk's Traditional Music Group has grown in numbers this year due to the talents of our new first years. Our first performance was for Gaeilge 24, a day when all Transition year students speak Irish for 24 hours. The annual school Carol Service was also enhanced greatly by the addition of the Trad. group who performed throughout the night.

The choir performed at the Christmas Carol Service in St. Brendan's church. This annual event saw a mixture of traditional and modern carols and hymns sung on the night. There were also performances from the Trad Group, Ms Nolan's Dance Group, Transition Year students and the Staff Choir. Thanks to Ms. O'Carroll, Ms. Sexton, Ms. Ni Dheargain, Ms. Nolan and Ms. Sommers for all their work in creating a wonderful night of singing, music, reflection, dance and drama. Funds raised on the night were donated to the St. Vincent De Paul Society.

On Friday the 11th May, the choir travelled to Knock, Co Mayo to provide the liturgical music at the Donal Walsh fifth anniversary Mass. It was an honour to be asked to sing at such an occasion and we practiced over many weeks under the guidance of our music teachers Ms. Muldoon Walsh, Ms. O'Sullivan and Ms. O'Carroll. The mass was celebrated by the Papal Nuncio and the Bishop of Kerry. There were many other priests in attendance as well as schools from all over Ireland. The choir performed very well and received many compliments on their beautiful singing and the performance of the musicians and soloists.

The event was televised by RTE and shown on the RTE mass program the following Sunday morning. The day was a celebration of the life of the Kerry teenager Donal Walsh, his inspiring words and the legacy he leaves behind. The Donal Walsh LiveLife Foundation set up by his family continues to promote his anti-suicide message. It was a special day that will live on in our memories.

The entire choir has given considerable time and commitment to their rehearsals and preparation for the many events they were involved in throughout the school year. On behalf of the choir, I wish to thank our music teachers Ms. Muldoon Walsh, Ms. O'Sullivan and Ms. O'Carroll for all their hard work and dedication to the school choir. I would also like to thank our Principal Mr. O'Roarke for his support and encouragement to the choir. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a member of the Mercy Mounthawk Choir from first year through to sixth year and I have made many friends and memories over this time. I would encourage anyone to become a member.

**YOU CAN HEAR CHOIR PERFORMANCES ONLINE  
[WWW.MERCYMOUNTHAWK.IE](http://WWW.MERCYMOUNTHAWK.IE)**



## SECOND CHANCE UNIFORMS

The Parents' Council are asking parents to donate any school uniforms that are clean and in good condition and that they no longer need to this worthy scheme. Uniforms can be dropped in at the office.

**Second Chance Uniforms will be on sale in the school on Thursday 16th August from 12 - 2pm**



## FINALISTS IN YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST AWARDS

Brian Votta, Megan McCarthy, Oisín Percival and Liam Tuite are a group of fifth year students who entered the Eco-Unesco “Young Environmentalist Awards 2018”. Their aim was to raise awareness of the harmful, damaging effects that single use plastics have on our environment.

They visited different primary schools offering workshops on the topic to fifth and sixth class pupils and they have had nothing but positive feedback from the schools.

As finalists in the Young Environmentalist Awards, they plan to continue their work on making our planet greener!



# L.E.A.F

LEADING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS FURTHER!

## ACTIVE LEISURE BY MARTA GACEK

Active Leisure is a fantastic subject in Transition Year. This year we have been coaching young students in various primary schools. We have completed a Disability Awareness course and a GAA Refereeing Course in January.

In December our Active Leisure group coached a 2nd year P.E. group in school. We set up 15 different stations which work different muscle parts and we also worked on the students’ cardio. We coached

each other to develop our coaching skills, then when we delivered the programme to the 2nd year students. We did spinning, circuits and tabata with different exercises each week. In Active Leisure we learned to become more confident while coaching kids of all ages in primary school and in Mounthawk. We also learned many athletic skills and we learned to interact with everybody.

## HEALTH PROMOTION WEEKS

Mounthawk enjoyed an active and enjoyable Health Promotion Week in October. Activities enjoyed by both students and staff included ‘Torthai Thursday’ where first years were treated to lovely fruit lunches to encourage healthy eating, in connection with this a Lunch Box audit was carried out with senior students to facilitate and implement future healthy eating plans.

Mounthawk were delighted to welcome Shane Finn from WK Fitness Gym in Dingle and who has 24 marathons under his belt, to launch the first of our Health Promotion Weeks. Shane’s talk was both informative and inspiring and excellently received by our students.

Students also attended excellent talks by Eimear Foley I.T. Tralee on the importance

of physical activity and fitness and Bernadette Gilroy on the high impact of proper posture both now and later in life. Many thanks!

Our own Science Dept. carried out many experiments and activities to highlight food content with an emphasis on sugar and its impact on our health. Our first year students enjoyed trips to Cappanalea Outdoor Education Centre.

Our second Health Promotion Week was launched on 24th April with a focus on physical activity and fun. Students had a visit from the lads from ACT - All Change Together - which is a health promotion programme based in Kerry aiming to provide basic health and nutritional knowledge to the youth of Ireland.

Wednesday saw first, second, T.Y. and fifth year students taking part in a 5k run/walk and on Friday the First Year Olympics - an afternoon of games and fun took place, organised by the P.E. department in conjunction with T.Y.’s YSI group. Competition was keen in events such as 100m sprint, 400m relay, tug of war and even the welly toss! Class 1.5 emerged victorious when all the scores for each class were computed, winning the coveted prize of a class party.

Our thanks go to Ms. Bernie O’Shea, Ms. Ellen McKenna, Ms. Brid Marie Buckley, Ms. Denise Buckley, Ms. Quane and the P.E. Department for organising varied and fun events each year to motivate us on health and fitness.



Healthy snacks for students during Health Promotion week



Mounthawk Run - Ms O’Mahony, Ms B. O’Shea. Ms S O’Shea



Mounthawk Run



# SIXTH YEAR ENGLISH CLASS TRIP TO LONDON

In September, a group of 6th year students were fortunate to experience a fun and inspiring trip to London.

The students were treated to visits of the National Portrait Gallery and Buckingham Palace with its fascinating history. They went to see a production of "King Lear" (the Single Text for the Leaving Certificate this year), staged at the Globe Theatre and availed of an opportunity to learn about one of the world's most famous theatres. Later, they had a guided trip around London where they saw the city in all its splendour. This was followed by a trip to the Westfield Shopping Centre where gifts were bought for themselves and the loved ones who paid for the trip!

The visit to London Dungeons was a thrilling experience for those interested in that period of history. At the Apollo Victoria Theatre they saw a fantastic production of the musical 'Wicked'. After dinner in the Café Rouge, they visited the Tate Modern and the unique art work there. To end what was another fantastic day they had a "Jack the Ripper" Tour which proved interesting but somewhat frightening!

On the final day, they were given the choice of either a visit to the Science Museum, the National History Museum or the Victoria and Albert Museum. The majority of people chose the Science Museum, which proved a thrilling experience for all.

A big 'thank you' to all the teachers who accompanied them and particularly Mr. O'Roarke and Ms. Thornton for making such a wonderful experience possible.



## Second Place in Soroptomist Competition

In November, a number of fifth year students participated in the Soroptomist Public Speaking competition in the Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney. They chose the topic 'The Empowerment of Women' and explored the existing inequalities between men and women and how to address them.

Through the support and guidance of Ms. Andrea Thornton, Mounthawk came second in the competition. It was indeed a very worthwhile, enjoyable and beneficial experience. We would highly recommend that upcoming senior cycle students participate in the competition next year!

*Niamh McMahon and Katie Crowe.*

# MERCY MOUNTHAWK SECOND YEAR DEBATING COMPETITION

**Ms. Costelloe**

The fourth annual Second Year Debating Competition run by the English Department of the school has once again taken place in 2018. During the course of the competition, students are taught both the fundamentals of speech-writing and debating skills during the second term. The module allows students the opportunity to practice their rhetorical skills in a nurturing classroom environment where students are taught rhetorical concepts such as verbal wit, rebuttals and debating "points of information".

At the end of the module, students nominate their three best debaters to represent their class in the overall competition. It runs during lunchtime over a four week period in the library where on average over 100 students from different year groups attended each round to hear the arguments for and against the various motions.

Each of the rounds featured incredibly competent speakers with the final being commented on by head adjudicator, Mr Fleming, for its assiduous level of research and the confidence of the speakers. Congratulations to this year's worthy winners: Judith Waugh, Ellie Stack and Sinead Frampton and to the runners up: Brian McElligott, Aislinn O' Leary and James Baxter.

Previous winners of this competition have utilised these rhetorical skills having been selected this year to represent Ireland at the European Youth Parliament event in Strasbourg as part of their TY European Studies class. We have no doubt but amongst the participants of this year's competition are also political leaders of the future.

Acknowledgement must go to all of the students who have participated in this year's competition, to the adjudicators and timekeepers of the various rounds and, of course, appreciation must go to the teachers who have inspired their students to develop their debating and critical thinking skills.



*Judith Waugh, Ellie Stack and Sinead Frampton  
- Winners of the 2nd Year Debates*



*Brian McElligott, Aislinn O'Leary and James Baxter  
- Runners up of the 2nd Year Debates*

## Poetry Aloud

Mercy Mounthawk was well represented by Darragh Clarke and Aine Casey at the national Poetry Aloud competition, which is run by the National Library and Poetry Ireland. They both qualified for the semi-finals of the competition which were held at the National Library Dublin in November.

The prestigious competition attracted over 1700 entries from all over the island this year, so it was a wonderful achievement to be part of the semi-final and we hope all of our students who prepared for the first regional round this year will participate again next year in Poetry Aloud 2018.

To encourage participation in next year's competition the English department ran its own recitation competition for fifth year students during literacy week in March. Aine and Darragh helped Ms Condon with the difficult job of judging. The overall winner for his convincing interpretation of Yeats' poem "An Irish Airman Foresees his Death" was Sean Gannon.



*Poetry Aloud 2018  
Mercy Mounthawk*

# A VIBRANT LITERACY WEEK

Ms Janette Condon



Winners of Poet Tree competition with Author Dave Rudden

First Year students were treated to a visit from author Dave Rudden during Literacy Week in March. Hosting an author visit is always a wonderfully inspiring experience and we hope our students agree that Dave Rudden made it an exceptionally exciting and enjoyable part of Literacy Week.

Dave captivated the first year students with his amazing enthusiasm and energy. His booming voice, humour, beard (!) and dramatic presentation of characters and events from his debut fantasy novel Knight of the Borrowed Dark cast a spell over many in Centenary Hall and they are now hooked on the book, while some students have even started on the sequel, The Forever Court.

Students told me that they found it very encouraging to hear Dave Rudden speak about the writing process. His belief is that everyone can write stories, and he shared many examples about the origins of ideas for his books, including the memorable story of his friend who was banned from Disney Land in Florida for headbutting "Darth Vader" while attempting to save his parents from the Dark One!

Congratulations to students such as Ajisha and Alex who received free signed copies of Knights of the Borrowed Dark as a reward for asking the most original and interesting questions during the visit.

We look forward to hosting many more author visits in the future.

## Rotary Competition

David Fitzgerald was chosen to represent the Tralee Rotary Club Youth Leadership Development Competition. He represented the Club with distinction at the Finals stage in Mallow.



Creative Writing Short Story winner Rachel Deasey

## Wellread Award Winner

Mercy Mounthawk was successful in its application for the PDST National Wellread award. The award is in recognition of all the initiatives and activities that were used to foster a love of reading in the school community. A portfolio was submitted in May documenting school book clubs, World Book Day celebrations, our One Book, One Community reading challenge, the read wall for reviews, author visits and many more promotions. The school will retain the Wellread title for the next three years and we are looking forward to receiving a plaque for the library and our Wellread certificate at the national award ceremony in Dublin in the Autumn.

# TRANSITION YEAR REVIEW

It began with a bus, and ended with a bus! TY has been a wonderful, chaotic and transformative journey for both myself, as co-ordinator, and students alike. 154 students began their TY year on the 28th of August with a bonding “fun” day in Cappanalea and ended the year on the sun drenched beaches of the Maharees; and in that time they have squeezed in BT Young Scientist, Young Economist of the Year, John Hooper statistics, Berlin, projects, Young Social Innovators, Eco-Unesco, Junk Kouture and much, much more!!

By definition Transition Year is a time: “To promote the personal, social, educational and vocational development of pupils and to prepare them for their role as autonomous, participate and responsible members of society.” Our Programme in Mercy Secondary is one of the largest in Ireland, and as a result, our students get to experience a year like no other. We offered our students a wide ranging timetable, being able to sample Physics, Biology and Chemistry, Chinese, Oral Irish, Academic Subjects, Applied Maths, Project Maths, Culinary Arts, Choir, Media Studies, Computer Science, Entrepreneurship as well as the traditional core subjects that Mercy Secondary school provide.

As well as being a year to mature before facing into serious study and career choices, it’s a chance “to explore different facets of oneself” through lots of different opportunities.

Every Wednesday half the year went out on work experience, while the other half enjoyed a wide variety of lesson, including Drumming, Circus Skills, Horticulture and Fashion Design. The work experience is valuable for not only

helping to shape career aspirations but also in giving youngsters a taste of the workplace.

This year we maintained the strong outdoor focus of TY, taking advantage of the brilliant amenities that the County of Kerry has to offer. We went hill walking, coasteering, surfing, wall climbing, sailing and of course the legendary Gaisce walks, where the students trekked to Dingle, all the while taking in the stunning landscape along the way.

Our annual foreign tour was the largest ever, with 102 students going to Berlin. A huge experience, where they took in the culture, arts and deep history of a wonderful city. The students also went on many trips across the TY year, among the highlights were visiting the Titanic Museum in Cork, Butlers Chocolate Factory in Dublin, Tayto Park, Fota Wildlife Park, Blackrock Observatory and Knock Holy Shrine.

We had winners in BT Scientist, Winners in Scifest, we took part in Junk Kouture for the first time and made it to the Munsters, we came third in Ireland in The Young Economist of the Year, we made it to the Finals of YSI and we came first in our category for Eco-Unesco All Ireland Competition.

We decided to have a full variety concert, where serious dramas like the Playboy of the Western World and the Magical Fantasy of Harry Potter could entertain and fascinate the audience alike. We rocked and we jazzed things up with our music groups and a brilliant night was had by all.

Our awards night was inspiring, as we celebrated the wonderful achievements of our TY students and listened to a former TY student, Patrick Flanagan, impart wise words on school and life to our year.

You certainly get out of TY what you put in. For me, the beauty of the TY experience is the freedom, the many opportunities TYs are given – a chance for young people and teachers alike to forget about “learning for the test” and concentrate on learning for life. As one of our TY students has said: It can also be a real eye-opener to see fellow pupils in different contexts, such as the shy one blossoming on stage or the non-sporty one excelling at Stilt Walking. While it can be a challenge for some to cope with the splitting of classes, “the realisation that the students you didn’t ‘know’ before could actually be great friends” is, she feels, “one of the most positive long-term experiences of TY”.

I would like to thank all the hard working teachers for making the year so wonderful and challenging for the students, the core team of Betty Farrell, Cora McElligott, Denise Buckley, Karen O Carroll, Liam Culloty and Stella O’Shea for the diligence and care they put in to each of their groups, Mr Kissane and all the Senior Management Team for their support and, finally, the parents for entrusting us with your students and supporting the programme throughout the year.

Now that the year has concluded and our journey had ended, our TYs will all be one year older – and hopefully wiser – when starting their two-year countdown to the Leaving Certificate.



Grease TY Show



Playboy of the Western World, TY Show



Harry Potter, TY Show

## TRANSITION YEAR

### TY FASHION SHOW

A colossal gathering of spectators congregated into the school gym on November 29th for the annual Mercy Mounthawk T.Y. Fashion Show. The night included various acts from singing groups to a Spice Girls tribute act. There was a special appearance by the ever obliging Michael Healy-Rae and Rose of Tralee, Maria Walsh. As always, we must thank the shops and businesses of Kerry for providing the clothes and for their generous sponsorship. Proceeds of the event were given to Recovery Haven and Muscular Dystrophy Ireland. Huge credit must go to all teachers involved, in particular Ms O'Leary for organising our fashion show.



### GAISCE IN THE RAIN

Bedraggled and mucky but determined and cheerful, students successfully finished their Gaisce walk on the Kerry Camino route. Very proud of their positive attitude in worse than usual Irish weather!



*T.Y Award Winners Sean and Mairead with T.Y. Coordinator Mr Redican*



*Darragh Boyd, Hugo Wells and Adam Bulter - Winners*

### THE GARDA YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

A banquet was held in January 2018 in Ballyroe Heights Hotel and was one of the last functions our late colleague Martha attended on behalf of the school. Darragh Boyd (nominated by Martha, was delighted and honoured to nominate him for his contribution to the URAC (Uniting Races and Cultures) YSI group and Darragh did amazing work in ensuring that the Syrian students who joined our school felt part of the school community. He also co-ordinated activities for them outside of school to assist the development of their language skills. Martha was thrilled that Darragh was recognised for all his efforts on the night." Hugo Wells received his award through his involvement with the Red Cross and Adam Butler (nominated by Mr Shane Kissane) got his award for his outstanding contribution to school life and always being available to work with and for the school community.



# BERLIN TOUR

Oliver Hart, T.Y.

The crisp, fresh and early morning of the 1st of February awaited a solid army of one hundred and two Transition Year students. After assembling on the familiar school grounds, we travelled north to the capital with five days in Berlin awaiting us.

Once the hustle and bustle of air travel escaped us, we travelled to the Brandenburg Gate; the last remaining gate in Berlin. After that we visited the memorial to all the Jewish people murdered during the course of the war, while this added a sombre mood to our tour group, it made us realise that this part of history cannot and should not be ignored.

The next days were nonstop visiting, Checkpoint Charlie Museum, the German History Museum, Berlin Bunker Museum. This I felt was a great part of the tour as it allowed us, as students, to relive and appreciate the history of Berlin and Germany. We also visited the harrowing Sachsenhausen concentration camp;

reminding us of how brutal things were during the very dark days of the 1940's. We were taught a lot on this tour about life during World War Two in Germany. For example two brothers built a small aircraft in Soviet livery and flew across to save their family on the east side.

While keeping us entertained academically, our coordinator also planned for us a visit to the mouth watering Ritter Sport Colourful Choco World Shop, where personalities really came to light as people were allowed to create a bar of chocolate of choice with whatever toppings we wished. We also enjoyed bowling and laser tag.

Another great highlight of this trip was the TV Tower in central Berlin. This gave extraordinary views of the city and the surrounding suburbs. It was also that bit more special as it was at night which added to the atmosphere.

While in Berlin, we obviously had to visit

the famous Flea market that is held there. While this was definitely a new experience for all of us, it was great to see the local artistic produce of Berlin. While many of us were carried away by the big brands in Berlin that we didn't have at home, I thought it was great to see what the people of Berlin were producing. We saw everything from handmade grass sculptures to lovely pieces of art.

The Sunday was a personal highlight of mine as we visited the Reichstag. The views from the top of the Reichstag were breathtaking just showing the kilometres on kilometres of scenery showing the combination of old Germany with the new and modern Germany.

This tour was definitely a highlight of my year and I know I speak on behalf of all those who went on the tour that we would like to express our sincere gratitude to Mr Redican and all the other teachers for facilitating this tour.



# My Fair Lady

BY SEAMUS HARTY

For a lot of the people who went to see or were part of the school musical of 2018, I think it is fair to say that none of us are truly certain about where the journey that was “My Fair Lady” began. I can roughly pin point it back to a school announcement around May 2017 for ‘Open Auditions’. Most of us went in that day, sang our part and let the thought of the musical drift away as we warmly welcomed those eagerly anticipated three months of summer. Indeed most of us students did but certainly not the teachers.

Upon our re-acquaintance with the routine of school life in September we were also swiftly introduced to a routine of auditions in Ms. Costelloe’s room and, as the days of auditions went on, I was consistently blown away by the quantity of talented students that the school had to offer. It was remarkable, from powerful singers to captivating actors, my fellow auditionees had talent in abundance and it appeared that no matter what musical we decided on, we had the potential to do something memorable. However, that potential needed serious grafting and moulding.

To this very day, I still cannot imagine how hard a job it must have been to both decide on the right musical for us to do and furthermore, how hard it must have been to cast such a musical. Despite the difficulty of this task I feel every student fitted the part handed to

them without question.

Once the musical was cast, that was where the real fun began! Most days were spent staying back after school or staying in at lunchtime for rehearsals, be it for choreography with Ms. Costelloe and Ms. Thornton; singing with Ms. Sexton and Ms. O’Carroll, or acting with Mr. Behan from October right until January. The most striking thing for me, upon reflection, was just how well everyone got on with one another, between teachers and students we worked really worked with and for each other. We really did gel as a group and come show time we were prepared to leave every ounce of energy we possessed on the Siamsa Tire stage. However, one of the vital reasons why we were so ready, I believe, relates to the saying “If you look the part; you feel the part”, and with the dedication and commitment of the illustrious Ms. Barry we most unequivocally looked the part!

Months of hard work behind the scenes with Mr. O’Sullivan and his select group of set designers along with the magnificent artwork of our very own T.Y’s manufactured this unparalleled set that could have easily been mistaken for a set straight from the stage of the West End.

When it came to the days of the shows I felt we grew into our characters and roles even

further. Of course this became a rather more do-able challenge due to the knowledge that all our props and necessities were in the best of care with Ms. Condon and Ms. Carey and, of course, the assurance of our director Mr. Behan that we were at our peak as actors. This sense of calm was also aided and displayed by our consistent blaring of eighties tunes in the dressing room where our biggest concern became “Who’s on the aux?”

The shows went quick and fast, with much success, and relief that we had performed to our potential. If I’m honest, I do find it quite peculiar that it’s all over and I personally may never get the chance to do something similar like this again. Ironically enough, you find the things that you might have once whinged and complained about, such as rehearsals, are really the things you miss most of all now. The craic, the music, the laughter, the ability to be in an alternate life, if even for just a little while, but, most of all, the people.

I will miss everything about the musical! However, the cycle of the Mounthawk production machine has already recommenced for the 2019 play and the show must go on! Nevertheless “My Fair Lady” will have a place in the history of this school forever and us with it.



# Top Honours and College Scholarship Award Winners 2017



Ben Kavanagh  
Film & Screen Media U.C.C.  
B.A. Hons.  
Winner of the Quercus Scholarship for Creative and Performing Arts. - Excellence in Film and Photography.



Leaving Cert 2017  
Ronan Moore - 589 points  
Studying Aeronautical Engineering - U.L.  
Winner of J.P. McManus Scholarship U.L.



Leaving Cert 2017  
Thomas Curran - 565 points  
Studying Physics - U.C.C.



Leaving Cert 2017  
Ciara McCarthy - 589 points  
Studying Music  
Cork School of Music

## STATE EXAM AWARD WINNERS



Junior Cert Students Michael Moynihan, Mairead Kearney, Liam O'Brien, Charlotte O'Halloran, Timothy Grimes and Diane Meriakri who got 58 A's between them in the Junior Certificate.

## National Exam Statistics V Mounthawk Junior Cert 2017

Subject	National 'A' Grade	Mounthawk 'A' Grade
Maths	8%	12%
History	11%	13%
Geography	7%	13%
Spanish	11%	14%
Art	17%	30%
Business	7%	24%
Tech. Graph	10%	25%
Metalwork	9%	23%
Religion	11%	16%

## Munster Hurling Champions!!!

## Ladies Munster Champions!!!



Past Pupil Daithi Griffin presents medals to our Munster Hurling Champions with Mr O'Sullivan (coach)

# Athletics

**BEST BOYS & GIRLS TRACK & FIELD SCHOOLS IN KERRY. SENIOR GIRLS RELAY RECORD AT MUNSTER LEVEL INTERMEDIATE BOYS RELAY RECORD AT NATIONAL LEVEL.**

Well done also to Mercy Mounthawk's Track and Field team in what has been a hugely successful year. The students excelled in several disciplines and revelled in tremendous success across all competitions, in particular within the county region winning both titles of Best Boys and Girls Track and Field Schools in Kerry. The athletes received a total of 12 medals at the Munster Indoor Games, 75 medals in the County Track & Field Competition, 68 medals in the North Munster Competition, 27 medals and a Senior Girls 4x300m relay record at Munster level and finally 11 medals and an Intermediate Boys 4x100m relay record at Nationals.

## ALL-IRELAND TRACK & FIELD RESULTS

Venue - Tullamore Harriers Club

Date - 02/06/2018

### Major Achievements

- Intermediate Boys broke the national 4x100m relay record with a time of 43.19

### Gold Medallists

- Mervyn Shalemba (Relay)
- Luke O Carroll (Relay)
- Basit Oyebanji (Relay)
- Cillian Griffin (Relay)

### Bronze Medallists:

- Cillian Griffin (100m)
- Mervyn Shalemba (200m)
- Darragh Courtney (High Jump)
- Diana Nagle (Relay)
- Rachel Bowler (Relay)
- Orla O'Reilly (Relay)
- Ciara McCarthy (Relay)



Cillian Griffin

# SPIKEBALL

## Mairedad Kearney TY

As the year commenced Ms Dineen informed us of an opportunity to coach primary school children in the game of Spikeball and to gain a qualification as a coach. Such an opportunity was made available to promote women's involvement and association with sport.

Our first task was to take a written test where our knowledge of the game was tested after we diligently studied a booklet outlining the primary rules of spikeball. Thirty enthusiastic TY girls gathered collectively in the hall for two separate training days where the coaching of Spikeball was explained and demonstrated. We learned how to coach the different skills and developed leadership, self-assurance and confidence.

Once we had passed our assessment we were each assigned to a local primary school with whom we would be working for 6 weeks. There was lots of interest from the Primary schools to take part in the programme. This year we went to Spa, Balloonagh, Moyderwell, O Breannain and Caherleaheen National Schools on a weekly basis to work with the fifth and sixth class children. The experience proved abundantly worthwhile enabling us to grow together as leaders. Later in the year we plan to organise a blitz allowing the different schools to come together for a day where they can show off their Spikeball prowess after all their hard training.



# Camogie

Ellen Cooke

I played Camogie for the school this year. Our team consisted of first and second year girls. We participated in three blitzes. In October we played in a Munster blitz and played three matches against teams from Cork, Limerick and Tipperary. We got to the final and it was a nail-biting finish as the teams were very close. Luckily we finished on top and Kellie Meehan raised the cup.

The next blitz was hosted in Mounthawk. We played teams from Presentation and Gaelscoil Tralee. We got to the final but lost by a few points. We were devastated because we played our hearts out but, unfortunately, the other team performed better on the day.

Our last blitz was on in Kilfinnane in Co. Limerick in May. We played very well but the opposition were very skilful and we didn't meet their high standard. Overall, we had some great days out and made new friends.



Munster C 7s winners

## BREAKING RECORDS AT ALL IRELAND ATHLETICS



Track & Field Intermediate Relay Team  
Basit Oyebanji, Cillian Griffin, Aaron Malik,  
Mervyn Shalemba & Luke O'Carroll



Track & Field Senior Girls Relay Team  
Diana Nagle, Ciara McCarthy, Rachel  
Bowler & Orla O'Reilly

## TRACK & FIELD MUNSTER MEDALISTS



# BASKETBALL

## FIRST YEAR AND SECOND YEAR ALL IRELAND FINALISTS



**Basketball First Year  
ALL IRELAND FINALISTS**



**Basketball Second Year  
ALL IRELAND FINALISTS**



## Munster Hurling Champions

*Congratulations to Mr O'Sullivan and the Under 15 Boys Hurling Tea, who won the Munster Title*



**James Fernane and Daire Kennelly receiving their Irish Team Caps in Dublin last November.**

## FIRST YEAR OLYMPICS

This year saw the inaugural First Year Olympics as part of Health Promotion Week. Athletes were nominated from each class for exciting events such as 100m sprint, relay, 400m, tug of war, the obstacle course and even a welly toss! There was a fantastic mix of serious and fun events and the First Years had a fun-filled day.

Classes were encouraged to don their class colours and loudly support classmates participating in each event. When the points were tallied, class 1.5 emerged victorious and won themselves a party for their class.

Mr. Costello and Ms. O'Carroll had fantastic help from a Transition Year 'Young Social Innovator' group, FAMILYFIRST, who helped to organise and run the event as part of their YSI programme.





## First years crowned FUTSAL CHAMPIONS

This year we were once again crowned first year boys Futsal champions of Kerry. Mounthawk has a strong tradition in this competition and this year's first years were the cream of the crop again. After drawing their opening game, our boys went from strength to strength, winning every game to become Kerry Champions. They then went on to compete at Munster level where we competed in 5 games. The level of talent on display bodes well for the future of Mounthawk soccer.

## U-15 BOYS' FOOTBALL ON THE RISE

*Coached by Mr. Lally and Mr. Sugrue*

The U-15 Boys' Football journey began back in early September with the players out training twice a week in preparation for the Corn an Bhrathair Choilm Taft (Munster U-15 A Football).

Mounthawk entered the Munster "A" level for the first time in the school's history and this means that all boys' football is now played at the highest levels in all age groups from First Years, U-15, U-16.5 up to Seniors. Not a bad achievement for a school which only opened in 2002.



*Ballyroe Sponsors Senior football Jerseys with Donagh Mc Mahon, Shane Walsh, Brian O'Regan and Mr O'Shea (trainer)*

# Cross Country

## WINNERS OF MORKHAM SHIELD FOR BEST GIRLS SCHOOL RUNNER UP FOR BEST BOYS SCHOOL

Mercy Mounthawk's Cross Country team had remarkable success this academic year. Almost five hundred athletes from Kerry and West Limerick took part in this year's Kerry Schools Cross Country Championship. Mounthawk athletes showed great determination and capability on the day with Mounthawk being presented with the Morkham Shield for Best Girls School and our boys' team came runner up for Best Boys School.



*Cross Country- Oisín Spillane*



*Cross Country Coran Hughes, Sean Rice, Killian Litchfield, Alex Hoare, Luka O'Carroll & Donal O'Sullivan*



*Fergal Barry and Ciaran O Reilly and Sam Maguire*



## Soccer in Mounthawk

Mercy Mounthawk would like to wish Leo Gaxha all the best as he begins his professional soccer career with Sheffield United. Leo has been a fantastic servant to Mounthawk Soccer. He has always displayed excellent commitment, skill, hard work and dedication as a player and teammate.

Leo has also excelled as a Gaelic Football player and Sheffield's gain is Kerry's loss. All those involved in the Mounthawk soccer programme would like to wish Leo all the best and will follow his future career closely.



*Shane Enright, Bank of Ireland sponsors soccer jerseys with Louise Ni Mhuircheartaigh (trainer) and members of the soccer team*

## Ladies Soccer

This year a girls' soccer team was set up in the school. It is the first ever girls soccer team in Mounthawk history. This team was set up by Mairead Kearney, a 4th year student who got great support from her fellow students. She contacted Ms Ni Mhuircheartaigh and asked if she was interested in coaching the team which she generously accepted. The team trained every Tuesday after that to get prepared for their first game.

The team's first match was against Castletroy in Limerick. It was a very tough game and both teams put in a great effort. An excellent goal was scored by Coaimhe Moore for Mounthawk. Every girl performed brilliantly on the pitch and everyone was so proud. The team was very thankful to Ms. Dineen and Ms Ni Mhuircheartaigh for their great help and support.

Hopefully ladies soccer will continue to grow and will stay a part of Mounthawk for future girls to enjoy.

# OUR TRIBUTE TO MS. MARTHA BRASSIL

RIP

*“Every student needs a teacher that dances to their own tune.”*

By Klaudia Basara

Undoubtedly, Ms Martha Brassil was just that person. Whether you were fortunate enough to encounter her through the Young Social Innovators programme, which she played a huge role in every year, or you met her through one of the numerous classes she taught, it cannot be denied that she always made an impression. She encouraged so many students to get involved in activities they never would have considered and has pushed many young TY students over the years, to realise their potential in all areas, particularly in writing, public speaking and development of inter personal skill.

A lover of all cultures and creeds, she was truly inclusive in all she did and she saw potential in every student. There were no lengths she would not go to in order to help someone to achieve. Martha was more of a friend and mentor than a teacher and her presence was an integral part of life at Mounthawk for so many students, whose lives she has touched. Her outlook on life was utterly inspiring, always full of positivity and advice- particularly regarding the wonderous qualities of magnesium, the importance of filtered water and the benefits of electric motoring! She was always unapologetically herself and the life lessons she passed on to us students are something that will stay with us for many years to come.

She will be sorely missed by all those at Mercy Mounthawk.

*On Behalf of the Student Community of Mounthawk*

There are so many things I feel at the moment but I am unable to put them into words. The impact you had on my life is one that is beyond comprehension. I know I am not the only life you touched and this can be seen through the overwhelming response to your unexpected passing. You were an incredible educator; an honorable mentor; a friend that understood everything and tried to find solutions and a mother figure that only comes along once in a lifetime. You continuously strived to help students as much as you could.

Martha has not only left a long lasting effect on our lives but she has also engaged in and contributed to the principals of multiculturalism and diversity which is evident in the monument, proudly on display, outside the school.

Martha was the most lovable and understanding teacher who was willing to help anyone who needed it. She always set a great example for all of us to follow and inspired us to strive to do our personal best. She activated a hunger for knowledge and wisdom; inspiring us to plan our future and to become better individuals. She always had her door open for everyone. She is an inspiration to students and teachers alike.

We would like to thank Martha Brassil for believing in us when we didn't even believe in ourselves. Thanks for all the corny jokes and silly nicknames. Thanks for aiding the directions of our career paths. Thanks for gracing our lives with your presence. Thanks for the memories. Thanks for leaving your hand-

print on our hearts.

Mere words could never express our gratitude for her moral guidance and continuous support. Thanks for being with us!

You'll never be forgotten!

*“To teach is to touch a life forever.”  
Martha truly lived to help, inspire, include  
and nurture those around her whether they  
were students or teachers. Her life was one  
of giving and her memory will live  
long in our hearts.*

*As Mother Teresa once said:  
“Unless life is lived for others, it is not  
worthwhile.”*

*Ms. Bríd Marie Buckley*

*Martha,  
I will think of you everytime I change the  
water filter in my sink; everytime I teach  
Positive Psychology; everytime I bring my  
children to the Donkey Sanctuary and  
everytime I swim in May. As Winnie the  
Pooh once said: “How lucky we were to have  
something that makes saying goodbye so hard”.*

*Ms. S. Carey*

*“The epitome of inclusion, integration  
and individuality, a lady.”*

*Ms. B. O'Shea*



# History Week By Ms. Sommers

Mercy Mounthawk was taken back in time during the week of the 20th to 24th of November. This year the History Department and all the students celebrated and embraced the historic events of our own country and internationally.

It was a fun filled week with a huge number and variety of events. Each day we heard interesting facts about events which occurred on each date of the week. These ranged from the events of Bloody Sunday 1920 to the assassination of JFK.

First Year students wowed us all with their great imaginative creations, when they took part in a model and poster competition. Their entries were stunning and they should all be highly commended for their hard work. Entries ranged from the Stone Age to Celtic and Medieval history, going all the way up to the Moon Landing in 1969. First Years also had a very interesting talk from Claudia Kohler from the Kerry County Museum, who brought some interesting local artefacts with her.

The Second Year students had a very busy week. The History “Rap

off” which took place in the library, was both entertaining and informative. It was a unique way to get students interested in topics and was well supported by students during their lunchtime. Second Years also showed their enthusiasm for history during the table quiz. This was a very enjoyable afternoon. All teams showed their competitive streaks and fought it out to the end.

Transition Year students also embraced the activities of the week. A number of them dressed as famous figures from History. A competition was run among the other students, and the person who could identify the most iconic figures won a prize. Transition Year students were also privileged to have the opportunity to be at a special screening of “Condemned to Remember” in Listowel cinema. This is a film about the life of Tomi Reichental, a Holocaust survivor. In it, Tomi not only tells his own story but also asks if something similar could happen in today’s world.

Overall, it was a busy, enjoyable and informative week. We learned that a love for History is not just alive but thriving among the students in Mercy Mounthawk.



*History Week 3D Model Winner*



*T.Y. students get into the spirit of History Week*



*Winners of History Week’s 3D Model Competition from class 2.1*

## THREE WINNERS OF JOHN HOOPER MATHS AWARDS



*Aimee Byrne, Conagh Fitzgerald and Maggie Nolan*



*Ronan McElligott, Dylan Savage and David Ryle*



*Amy O’Mahony and Shauna Flynn*

The John Hooper Medal for Statistics in Maths is a national competition run by the Central Statistics Office to encourage pupils to investigate statistics in everyday life. Mercy Mounthawk had 2 winners again this year. The topics chosen to investigate this year are very current and topical at the moment. Is ‘Cyber the New Enslavement’ ‘How Blue Light is affecting Sleep in People who use Devices before Bed.’ Amy O’Mahony and Shauna Flynn investigated literacy skills of teenagers in our school

**MATHS**



Our First Year Winners from each class

Jennifer slattery  
Coren Hughes  
Mengyao Ni  
Jack Doyle

Jason Norris  
Eva Nolan  
Paula Holmes  
Conor Enright



Our Second Year Winners  
With Maths teacher Mr Culloty

Darragh Murphy  
Conor Bradshaw  
Izabela Gacez

Caoimhe Leahy  
Lauren Clifford

# Another Successful Maths Week 2017

Maths Week Ireland 2017 took place in Mounthawk from October 14th to 22nd 2017. Its aim was to have fun while engaging in all things mathematical for one week in the year. It also aimed to demonstrate to pupils that maths is not confined to a maths book or a maths lesson in school, but rather that maths is all around us and that it affects our everyday lives in so many ways. Numerous events were held within the school to promote the subject. Over 900 students took part in the various competitions that were held. A MASSIVE thanks to all the maths teachers for their time and effort in organising the various events.

Our senior honours maths quiz winners with prizes are - (pictured below)

Eoghan O Buachalla  
Odhran Liston  
Evan O Connor  
David Broderick

Along with Mr Fleming who presented the prizes.



## JUVENES TRANSLATORES

The contest aims to raise young people's awareness of how language skills help Europeans to communicate better and work towards a common understanding. It also points out the importance of diversifying the languages we learn in order to increase multilingualism and intercultural understanding, and highlights the benefits of studying translation, given the ever-growing need for translators in Europe.

Mercy Mounthawk was one of 11 Irish schools competing this year. We were selected along with 750 other European schools. Over 1600 schools applied. Contestants translate a one-page text in any one of the 552 language combinations possible among the 24 official languages of the EU, using paper dictionaries only (no electronic devices allowed). One winner is selected from each country and they win a trip to Brussels with a parent and teacher to attend the awards ceremony in 2018.

## FRENCH FILM

Students of French from all years travelled to the Kerry Film Festival in Killarney to see "Le Voyage de Fanny". The film tells the story of how Fanny, a Jewish girl and her sisters attempt to escape Nazi occupied France. Fiona Sheehan, second year French student wrote a review following the film and won a T-Shirt for her entry.



Students of German and French taking part in the European Commission's Juvenes Translatores translating competition



### Kerry Film Festival Win

Fiona Sheehan, 2nd year receiving her prize having submitted a review of the French film she saw with her class during the recent Kerry Film Festival.

# Seachtain na Gaeilge 2018

Cuireadh tús beomhar le Seachtain na Gaeilge anseo i gCnoc an tSeabhaic i mbliana le céilí don chéad bhliain agus ceardlann rince seit don idirbhliain. Tháinig Angela Uí Ghrífin chun na steipeanna a mhúineadh do na daltaí a bhain fíor-shult as na ríncí.

Bhain ranganna na cúigiú, dara agus tríú bliana taitneamh as imeachtaí éagsúla ina measc seisiúin bíongó, tráth na gceist, scannáin sa rang agus toraíocht taisce. Tráthnóna Dé hAoine cuireadh clabhsúr le himeachtaí na seachtaine le geandáil ghasta do ranganna na séú bliana.

Rinne daltaí na céad bliana póstaer a dhearadh agus bhain Julia Szepietowska, Michael Guerín, Sarah Costello agus Lasha Bekauri duaiseanna amach dá gcuid dea-oibre. Anuas ar sin chaith lucht na céad bliana tléinte ealaíonta a dhear siad féin chuig an gcéilí, rud a chuir le spiorad na hócáide.

Bhain idir daltaí, múinteoirí agus an fhoireann ar fad ana-shult as gníomhaíochtaí na seachtaine agus ba mhaith le Roinn na Gaeilge an deis seo a thógaint chun buíochas a ghabháil le gach aon duine a chabhraigh le himeachtaí na seachtaine.

## Gaeilge24

Bhí lá bríomhar fuinniúil againn ar an 14ú Samhain nuair a reachtáladh Gaeilge24 sa scoil arís i mbliana. Is é seo an dara bliain againn an ócáid seo a reachtáil sa scoil. Is iad daltaí na hidirbhliana a bhí páirteach in imeachtaí an lae, ina measc geandáil ghasta agus céilí. Thapaidh lucht na hidirbhliana an deis chun Gaeilge a labhairt ar feadh 24 uair a chloig. Bhailigh siad urraíocht roimh ré agus ar aghaidh leo go fonnmhar chun a ndúshlán a ghlacadh. Bhain daltaí agus múinteoirí idir thaitneamh agus thairbhe as an ócáid.

## Scoláireachtaí

Bronnadh ceithre leathscoláireacht do chuid Choláistí Chorca Dhuibhne ar an scoil i mbliana. Tugann siad seo an deis do dhaltaí freastal ar choláiste Gaeilge i rith Samhradh na bliana 2018. Is iad seo a leanas a bhuaigh na scoláireachtaí i mbliana. Ann Kerdzaia 1.6, Javkhan Kelly 1.3, Ellie Stack 2.5, Richard Williams 5.2. Comhghairdeas ó chroí libh.



Gaeilge24



Gaeltacht scholarships



First Year Ladies' Football

## SUPERVISED STUDY

Supervised Study will begin on Monday 3rd September 2018

*Supervised study is available to all students from:*

**Monday to Thursday/Friday 4pm to 6pm  
or from 4pm - 7pm**

**APPLICATION FORMS ONLINE ONLY IN AUGUST  
VIA THE SUPERVISED STUDY PAGE IN THE  
PARENT AND PUPILS' TAB.**

**PAYMENT VIA VSWARE ONLY.**  
*Please complete both the application form  
and payment to secure a place.*

*Further Information is available  
from [stellaoshea@mercymounthawk.ie](mailto:stellaoshea@mercymounthawk.ie)  
Please see the school website for study prices and policy.*

*Supervised study will commence on  
Monday 15th January 2018 and end on Thursday 31st May 2018.*

*Study is available in the following formats:  
5 day : 2 hour study €300  
(Monday - Friday from 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.)*

*5 day : 3 hour study €400  
(The availability of this option is subject to demand)  
(Priority is given to leaving cert and junior cert students)  
(Monday - Friday from 4.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.  
with a 10 minute break at 6.00p.m.)*

*Please return your form and fees to Mrs. Stella O'Shea  
before 2.00 p.m. on Friday 12th January 2018.*

*Please do not pay on-line until you have confirmed that  
there is a place available in study. Applicants availing of sibling  
discount, will not be able to avail of the on-line payment facility.*

## GEMMA'S UNIFORMS

*Gemma's will be  
in school on*

Wednesday  
8th August

*also*

Thursday  
16th August

*and*

Friday  
17th August

**10am to 3pm**

Uniforms may be  
ordered or purchased  
on these dates.

**MADRID TRIP**

**A Glimpse of Madrid** Charlotte Fort. (2nd Year)

It was our first night there. We had landed in Madrid very early that morning and everybody was beaten down with exhaustion as we strolled home through the city. It was now dark but the streets were lit by the lights from the restaurants that lined every corner of Madrid. We all found it strange that they ate so late.

There was a cool but comfortable breeze in the air as we walked through street upon street. The only noise being the excited buzz emanating from us as we chatted about our day and talked about how we couldn't wait to get to the hotel.

I walked slowly, trying to take in every bit of my surroundings as I figured I would only get one chance at this. The tranquillity of the city was incomparable to Tralee's unsettling atmosphere. It seemed

no matter whom you passed or what you saw, you just felt safe. It was almost as if you were sitting in your own home.

My friends and I nattered on about the strange array of foods we had been supplied for dinner (including amazing pineapple); how beautiful the city was and how we couldn't wait to go shopping in Sephora.

It was when we talked about the small things, like the strange clapping goat in one of the many Plaza Mayors or the pure love that people seemed to share with each other, that I realised I wanted to share many more moments like this with my friends. I recognised that the small county boundaries of my home country weren't enough to fulfil me any longer. The travel bug called to me.



**SPANISH DEPARTMENT**

**TAPAS NIGHT - SOL Y SOMBRA**

Last March the Spanish Department took a group of 6th years to an evening of Spanish food and music to the renowned tapas Restaurant in Kilorglin 'Sol y Sombra'. A great night was had by all!



# PARENTS' COUNCIL END-OF-YEAR REPORT 2018

The Parent's Council had another busy and productive year in 2017/18, commencing with a hugely successful Career's Night for senior-cycle students in the school in early October. This was our second year organising this event and we are extremely grateful to the 24 local specialists who gave so generously of their time and expertise to engage with and to inform the almost 200 students who attended. Next year we propose to expand this event to offer information for parents on how they might assist their young adults to manage the transition to college.

In late November, we invited Sergeant David Leslie of Tralee Garda Siochána Drugs Unit to give a presentation to parents/guardians in our Centenary Hall. 'Substance Abuse – A Guide for Parents' covered issues relating to alcohol, tobacco, and prescription and illegal drugs abuse within the context of Tralee and also the wider community. This was a very informative evening with good interaction and open discussion.

We were delighted to secure funding from Kerry County Council for a 'Bone Health' fitness initiative, resulting in four low-impact fitness classes being delivered to parents by Wayne Quillinan. The sessions were tailored to the requirements of the group and were both beneficial and very enjoyable. We were also delighted to receive support once again from Kerry Education and Training Board (KETB) to run a four-week Parenting Course for parents of Junior Cycle Students presented by the very experienced and engaging, Mary Wall.

This year, the Parents' Council organised two bag-packing events and a Table Quiz and we want to thank all those who took part in and supported these fund-raisers. The Annual Table Quiz was held in the Centenary Hall as part of Family Week, with the focus on uniting and sharing time together as families. The hall was filled to capacity with students, staff, family and the extended community enjoying a great night of fun and fantastic prizes. Thanks to the wonderful level of financial support received at these events, we were able to run our extensive programme of activities and were still in a position to donate over €2,400 to school initiatives. These included much needed resources for the new computer room and the renovated gym exercise room, in addition to a contribution to the cost of a talk on Social Media and its Impact on Family Life by Gerard Brick, which was run as part of the Year of the Family.

These are just a sample of the many events and fund-raisers we organised. However, our primary goal is to act as a voice for parents/guardians, with open discussions at our monthly meetings. We are actively seeking new parents to participate in our meetings and events so that we can be more broadly representative. Maybe you have a concern which you'd like to raise or perhaps you'd like to become more familiar with the educational issues facing your child/children. We encourage you to come to our meetings, to support our fundraisers, to offer us your feedback and maybe just a little of your time in helping us to organise one of our events. Join us for our Annual General Meeting on 26th September or on the second Wednesday of every month in Room 35 for our regular monthly meeting. Further details will be available on the school calendar or contact us by email at [mmparentscouncil@gmail.com](mailto:mmparentscouncil@gmail.com) at any stage throughout the year. You can also visit our page on the school website <http://www.mercymounthawk.ie/parents-council/>.

As we conclude another successful year, we wish all our students, staff and parents a relaxing summer and, for those who are completing their time in Mercy Mounthawk this year, we wish them every success in their future endeavours.

*Deirdre Carr, Secretary*



## GUIDANCE COUNSELLING

*Ms. B. Farrell and Ms. M. O' Mahony*

And so another academic year draws to a close and with it an opportunity for the Guidance Department to reflect on what has been another busy term. Our focus, from the beginning of the New Year, was on preparing Leaving Certificate students for the next step in their academic journey. To this end, a talk on the C.A.O. process was given to Leaving Certificate students and their parents. Applications to the C.A.O. were submitted by the February 1st deadline while applications for both D.A.R.E. and H.E.A.R. were completed by the April 1st deadline. Information on Post Leaving Certificate courses, maintenance grants and preparing for life after school were disseminated to all 6th year students.

There were a number of information evenings facilitated by the guidance counsellors for students, and their parents, including the Subject Choice talk for 1st years going into 2nd year and the Senior Cycle Subject Options talk for 3rd and 4th years going into 5th year. A number of speakers from third level institutes visited 6th year students, including representatives from local post Leaving Certificate courses.

In order to prompt students in other years to begin planning their future career paths, the Rothman Miller Interest Blank was administered to all 5th years, including L.C.A.1, while the Differential Aptitude Test was administered to all 4th years and 5th years who did not do 4th year. Results were disseminated to all students. 3rd years took the Career Decision Making test as a guide to their decisions around Senior Cycle Subject options. Appointments with students and parents of students, making those subject choice decisions, were facilitated on request.

The Guidance team would like to thank fellow staff, parents and management for their ongoing support throughout the year. We wish all our students a summer of good mental and physical health, happiness and, fingers crossed, a summer of sunshine. In particular, we are mindful of the Junior Certificate students and wish them luck in their upcoming exams. We bid farewell to another group of Leaving Certificate students. They were a pleasure to work with throughout the year. We wish them well in their exams and hope that as they move on from here they will, as Thoreau said, "go confidently in the direction of your dreams and live the life you have imagined"

## Health, Fitness & Wellbeing Committee

The Health and Fitness Committee is responsible for promoting health and fitness and wellbeing in our school. They aim to encourage an active lifestyle amongst students. They also promote and establish various sport clubs in Mercy Mounthawk. The committee formed a link with the Transition Year Active Leisure class. Last year they helped to organise a teacher versus students soccer game. This committee is responsible for our schools "Centenary Sessions" where students perform to provide entertainment for their fellow students at lunch time. This term there has also been a junior and senior girls' rugby team established. They have plans for a first year sports day later in the year and are also planning a health and fitness week.

Mary O'Connell. (Head Girl elect)

# STUDENT COUNCIL

## STUDENT COUNCIL

This year every class elected three class representatives; one for each committee of the Student Council. Two students from each year group were elected to the Executive Student Council. The Executive Student Council meetings are chaired by our Head Girl Lauren O'Grady and our Head Boy Darragh Clark. In December we elected our Deputy Head Girl Mary O'Connell and Deputy Head Boy Adam Butler. The aim of the Student Council is to encourage students to play an active role in their school and to have their voices heard. This year we became a member of the ISSU- The Irish Second Level Students Union. The

Student Council has had a very successful year so far completing projects and organising events for our students.

## SOCIAL INTEGRATION COMMITTEE

**Chairpersons - Mary O'Connell, David Fitzgerald**

The Social Integration Committee is designed to promote the cultural diversity and the integration of students into all aspects of school life in Mercy Mounthawk. The committee liaises with multicultural groups in Transition Year and especially with our S.S.I.-Senior Social Innovators. Our committee consisting of students from every year group had a very busy and rewarding year. This year, along with the S.S.I. we organised a Stand Up to Bullying Day where we had multiple events including a photo booth and we handed out bracelets which people wore to pledge to stand up to bullying. We also helped the TY group 'Family First' to run their Family Week. In May we organised a multicultural day with a centenary session. Students presented on their countries in religion and SPHE classes and some students wore traditional dress from their country. This year, our biggest achievement, along with S.S.I., was to win the Amber Flag for mental health for the school. This is a huge honour for the school and was achieved in part by the commitment and hard work of the committee. Forming a strong link with the Senior Social Innovators certainly added to the efficiency of the committee and we look forward to a very successful committee next year.

## ECOLOGY AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE

The aim of the Ecology and Recycling committee is to make Mercy Mounthawk more environmentally friendly and to promote stewardship in our school. The committee works closely with the school's S.S.I. (Senior Social Innovators). The committee succeeded in getting recycling bins in every class room in the school. In addition they achieved their goal of introducing a reusable school water bottle for every student. This has significantly cut down on the number of disposable plastic water bottles in our school which were having a terrible impact on the planet. This month they succeeded in unplugging all TVs that had been left on standby around the school which will prevent a lot of wasted electricity.



*2nd place in IMTA, Kerry Maths Quiz, who missed out by 1 point in the final*

*Conor Healy, David Kelly Benson, Mathew Dineen & Lorcan Ryan with teacher Mr Mulligan. The team came second place, missing out by just one point for 1st place*



*Darragh Clarke and Lauren O'Grady*



# SCIFEST

192 students from 11 schools were showcasing 91 projects in this event. Mercy Mounthawk had 15 entries into the competition this year. Mercy Mounthawk was the school that walked away with four of the major awards. Diana and Jessica will compete in the National finals in November.

**Maths and Science Award**  
Ella Itsede

**Best Communicator Award**  
Sean Hennessy and John McCrohan

**Intel Best Technology Award**  
Robin Porter

**Boston Scientific Medical Device Award**  
Diana Meriaki and Jessica Murphy



*Scifest winners Sean Hennessy and John McCrohan*



*Scifest Intel Technology Award inner Robin Porter*



*Scifest Boston Scientific Medical Device Award Winners Diana Meriaki and Jessica Murphy*



*Apprentice Chef Winner Isabelle Lynch*



*Food Fair prize winners Sarah Healy and Niamh Ryan meet Rose of Tralee*

## Apprentice Chef Finalists - Isabelle gets Second Place

Harry Emerson and Isabelle Lynch both reached the final of the Apprentice Chef which was held in Tralee I.T on the 10th of May.

Harry's mouthwatering dish was pan seared scallops on Annascaul black pudding with a red onion marmalade, carrot and orange puree, potato rosti and a balsamic reduction. Isabelle's dessert consisted of a dark chocolate mousse with honeycomb charades, raspberry coulis, lemon curd, a shortbread crumb and a profiterole.

Isabelle's dessert was victorious on the day placing second in the competition. We look forward to tasting more culinary delights from these students in the future.

## Prizes at Listowel Food Fair

Last November T.Y. students Sarah Healy and Niamh Ryan were presented with prizes for coming second in the Listowel Food Fair schools' competition. They completed a project on organic and super foods. T.Y. Home Economics students attended a food academy where they observed some cookery demonstrations, received a lecture on the latest food trends, participated in Zumba and also got to taste some fabulous food samples. Plenty food for thought on offer!

## Junkkouture

Ms O'Leary

T.Y. students travelled to University Concert Hall, Limerick on 9th March to support our outfit in the Southern Regional Final 'Tea at Granny's'. The creative group that designed and produced the outfit were Isabelle Crowe, Louise O'Sullivan and Clodagh O'Sullivan. The girls took inspiration from one of their favourite pastimes drinking tea at granny's. The outfit was made from recycled materials, a tablecloth, tea bags, ropes, biscuit wrappers and ribbons. Isabelle Crowe modelled the outfit on the night. While the group did not qualify for the grand final, Ms Mary Barry and Ms O'Leary were very proud of the group. It was an amazing achievement to qualify and we are looking forward to working with next year's entries.



*Isabelle Crowe models Junkkouture*

### Superfurry Animals

The Superfurry Animal show came to the school on the 13th of November to launch Science Week. A selection of first years attended the show. Catherine Daly hosted a most interesting presentation. We learned about the adaptations of predators and prey. A huge variety of beautifully preserved animals were on show and a variety of exotic creatures were on display in a safe and entertaining way in the Centenary Hall. There were close encounters and lots of handling opportunities! The selection included lizards, snakes, owls, tortoises and a chinchilla.

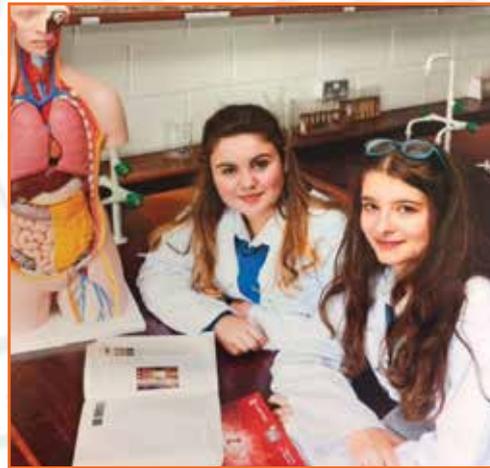
### Tomb in a Lab

Killaclohane Portal Tomb near Milltown is the oldest man-made structure in the county. It underwent a major excavation and restoration programme during the summer of 2015. The artefacts which were found on site have been subjected to intensive scientific scrutiny. The techniques used in these tests and the results they have yielded were the subject of the seminar held in the Omniplex Cinema. Transition Year students attended the event during Science Week.



Ella Itsede Winner of Maths in Science Award

# THE SCIENTIFIC YEAR



### Outstanding Results win places in E.U. Science Olympiad

Charlotte O'Halloran and Diana Meriaki were chosen to represent the school at the Irish European Union Science Olympiad in Dublin City University. They were chosen on the basis of their outstanding results in their Junior Cycle Science and Maths examinations.

### First Year Science Quiz

The First Year Science Quiz took place on the 17th November in the Centenary Hall. Thirty teams took part in the event. There was a very high standard again this year. Tie-breaking rounds had to be used to decide the winners.

The quiz was sponsored by Cotters Caterers. The money raised by the event was donated to a local charity. Sean Gannon and Laura Egan were the quizmasters and the sound was provided by Adam Butler. Some Transition Years and Fifth Years also helped to run the event.



First place: Dylan Cunningham, Michael Maritz and Conor Enright



Second place: Shonagh Griffin, Donal O'Sullivan and Ciara Sugrue

### 1st & 2nd Place in ISTA Junior Science Quiz

22 teams represented the county on the 22nd March in I.T. Tralee for the junior ISTA Science Quiz. The competition was very strong and after six rounds one point separated Mounthawk from the winners. Mathew Dineen, Patrick Nolan,

Pablo Lopez Phelan and Nour Khidir came 1st place for Mounthawk followed by joint second Keela Hughes, Daire Doyle O'Brien, Eoin O'Connor, Sean Fitzgibbon, Cormac O'Riordan, Mathew Quilter, Isobel Keane and Michalina Gora.



Joint 2nd Place - Michalina Gora, Isobel Keane, Cormac O'Riordan & Mathew Quilter



Joint Second Place - Daire Doyle O'Brien, Eoin O'Connor, Keela Hughes and Sean Fitzgibbon

# MOUNTHAWK PROJECTS QUALIFY FOR BT YOUNG SCIENTIST 2018

An impressive 2,031 projects were submitted by students across the island of Ireland, with every county represented by a submission to the 54th BTYSTE. 550 finalists were selected to present their projects at the exhibition that ran from 10th - 13th January 2018 at the RDS. Mounthawk succeeded in getting four projects selected -

Olivia Moriarty and Tamila Khussainova did an explorative study investigating the factors influencing students STEM subject choice. (or lack of) Students are analysed surveys completed by current 4th and 5th years, the students involved in the project are now working on how as a school we can address gender imbalance in these subject areas, and any initiative we can incorporate in our school to promote STEM subjects and careers.

Olivia and Tamila came third in their category.

Robin Porter is developing an antibacterial paint that can be applied to a phone case to reduce bacteria growing on smart screens. Some bacteria found on phones are linked to pneumonia and meningitis for example. He is using different additives and testing which screen protector is most cost effective. Robin was highly commended at the exhibition.

Ciara Murphy and Jessica Oke Cotter analysed the perceptions young adults have on homelessness today and attempt to make people more aware of the homelessness issue. (investigating if being "Just and Responsible" is being recognised by students

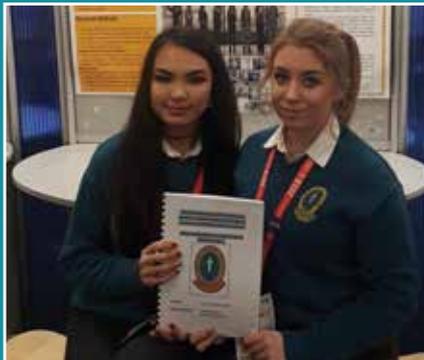
Ella Itsede aimed to discover whether or not the negative view among the population towards the HPV vaccine is related to the media (vaccine hesitancy and moral panic) and if the fear and apprehension surrounding it is as a result of credible research or simply hearsay.

## SENIOR SCIENCE QUIZ 2ND PLACE

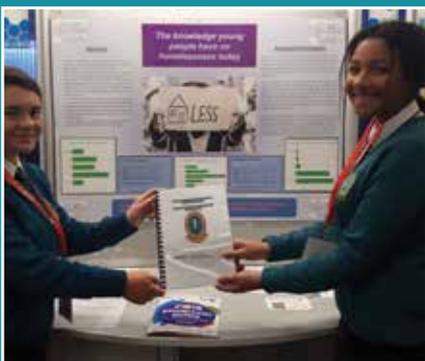
ISTA Senior Science Quiz took place on the 16th November in the I.T. Tralee. Twenty teams from all over the county took part. The Tralee event was one of a series of competitions that took place simultaneously across the country to select those who will take part in the National Finals in Trinity College on November 25th. After eight rounds, Mounthawk's Eoghan O' Buachalla, Lauren O'Grady and Nessa McGarthy were joint second. After two tie-breaking rounds, one point denied them a place in the finals at Trinity. The other teams representing Mounthawk were Daragh Clarke, Diarmuid O'Connor, Daniel Carton, Vlad Lica, Rachel Bowler and John Holmes.



*Robin Porter - Highly Commended*



*Tamila Khussainova and Olivia Moriarty who came Third Place in the Senior Social and Behavioural Section*



*Ciara Murphy and Jessica Oke Cotter Homelessness project*



*STEM and Minister J Halligan*

# OUTLINE CALENDAR 2017/2018

August - December

## SCHOOL RE-OPENING DATES

Tuesday 28th August	1st year students begin school. T.Y. students return to school
Wednesday 29th August	3rd, LCA 2 and 6th years return (1st years remain at home)
Thursday 30th August	2nd year students return (school for 1st 2nd 3rd 4th and 6th years)
Friday 31st August	LCA 1 and 5th year students return (school for 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th years)

## HOLIDAYS

October Mid-Term	Closing Friday 26th October. Reopen Monday 5th November
Christmas Holidays	Closing Friday 21st December. Reopen Monday 7th January
Spring Mid-Term	Closing Friday 15th February. Reopen Monday 25th February
St. Patrick's Day	Closed on Monday 18th March
Easter Holidays	Closing Friday 12th April. Reopen Monday 29th April
Summer Holidays	Closing Friday 31st May

## IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday 8th August	Gemma's Uniforms in school
Thurs. 16th & Fri. 17th August	Gemma's Uniforms in school
Thursday 16th August	Second Chance Uniforms 12 - 2 p.m.
Wednesday 5th September	T.Y. Parents Night - 7.30 p.m.
Tuesday 11th September	Talk for parents and students 3rd and 6th years, 7.30 p.m.
Thursday 20th September	Talk for parents and students of 1st years, 7.30
Monday 24th September	Mercy Day
Wednesday 26th September	AGM of Parents Council, 8 p.m.
Wednesday 26th September	Talk for parents and students of 2nd and 5th years 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday 3rd October	HSE - HPV 1/T Dap vaccination - 1st year girls
Thursday 4th October	Parents' Council Careers Night for 5th & 6th Years
8th - 12th October	Health Promotion Week
Saturday 13th October	Open Day 9.30-2.00
Tuesday 16th October	School Closed - Staff CPD
15th - 19th October	Maths Week
Monday 22nd - Friday 26th October	Mid-Term Exams 3rd & 6th Years
5th - 9th November	History Week
Thursday 8th November	Transition Year Parent-Teacher Meeting 4.15-6.45
12th -16th November	Science Week
Monday 19th November	6th year Parent-Teacher meeting 4.15-6.45
Tuesday 27th November	3rd year Parent-Teacher meeting 4.15-6.45
Thursday 13th December	Carol service in the church of Our Lady and St. Brendan
17th - 21st December	House Exams 1st, 2nd, 5th years
10th & 11th January	Retreat for 5th Years
Wednesday 16th January	Senior Cycle Options Talk for parents of TY/3rd year students
Thursday 17th January	1st year Parent-Teacher meeting 4.15-6.45
Monday 28th January	2nd year Parent-Teacher meeting 4.15-6.45
28th Jan. - 1st February	Catholic Schools Week
Monday 4th February	HSE Vaccination -MenC -1st Year Boys
Tuesday 5th February	Meeting for parents of 1st years re 2nd year subject choices, 7.30 p.m.
Wednesday 13th February	5th year Parent-Teacher meeting 4.15-6.45
Thursday 7th -15th February	Mock exams for 3rd and 6th years
Saturday 9th March	Admissions Day
March 11th - 15th	Seachtain na Gaeilge
March 25th - 29th	Health Promotion Week
April 1st - 12th	State Oral Examinations
April 3rd	HSE - Vaccination - HPV 2/MenC -Girls, Boys MenC
April 29th - May 10th	State Practical Exams
Wednesday 15th May	Awards Night
Thursday 23rd May	Transition Year Awards Night
Friday 24th May	Graduation Mass
Week of May 27th	Block Study for 3rd / 6th years. Summer exams for 1st /2nd /5th years

## PROVISIONAL DATES FOR PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS.

### ALL MEETING ARE FROM 4.15 PM - 6.45 PM

Thursday 8th November	Transition Year Parent-Teacher Meeting
Monday 19th November	6th year Parent-Teacher meeting
Tuesday 27th November	3rd year Parent-teacher meeting
Thursday 17th January	1st year Parent-Teacher meeting
Monday 28th January	2nd year Parent-Teacher meeting
Wednesday 13th February	5th year Parent-Teacher meeting



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