

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 7th January 2009	The Term Commences at 8.45am
Tuesday 12th January 2009	3rd Year Parent Teacher Meeting
Thursday 14th & Friday 15th January	Science Week / BT Young Scientist Exhibition RDS
Thursday 21st January	5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting 5th Year Retreat
Monday 1st February	1st Year Parent Teacher Meeting
Monday 8th February	Mock Examinations commence, 3rd & 6th Years
Wednesday 10th February	5th Year Retreat
Tues, Wed, Thurs, 9th, 10th, 11th February	Transition Year Musical
Friday 12th February	School ends for mid-term at 3.45pm



2010

## SPORTS FIXTURES (PROVISIONAL)

**Minor 1** Hockey Team are through to the second round of the Leinster Cup also through to the quarter final of the Leinster League. They must play Wesley College before **16th January**

**Senior 1** Hockey Team play The Teresians School in St Gerard's on **9th January** - Leinster Cup

**Junior 1** Hockey received a bye in the first round of the the Leinster Cup

**Senior Rugby Team** V St Mary's College on the **30th December** - at home

**Senior Rugby** League Final in Donnybrook on **January 12th** V The King's Hospital

**Senior Cup** 1st round V Terenure College - Donnybrook - **2nd February**

**Junior Rugby Team** 1st round of the Fr Godfrey Cup **27th January** - at 2pm in Coolemines RFC

www.stgerards.ie

## ST. GERARD'S SENIOR SCHOOL

### LETTER FROM THE HEADMASTER

www.stgerards.ie



CHRISTMAS 2009



### Oíche Nollag

*Le coinnle na n-aingeal tá an spéir amuigh  
breachta,*

*Tá fiacail an tseaca sa ghaoith ón gcnoc,  
Adaigh an tine is téir chun na leapan,  
Luífidh Mac Dé ins an tigh seo anocht.*

*Máire Mhac an tSaoi*

*(The Sky tonight is lit with the candles of Angels,  
The bite of the frost is in the wind from the hill,  
Raise the fire and get yee to bed,  
The son of God will lie in this house tonight.)*

**Tom Geraghty**  
Headmaster.

### UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Many congratulations to Jordan Egan of the class of 2009 on being awarded a UCD Entrance Scholarship in November.

### LEAVING CERTIFICATE RESULTS 2009

Once again our Leaving Certificate class has excelled and the class of 2009 are to be congratulated on the excellence of their results. The class average of 428 points per student is reflected in 100% of the students moving on to recognised third level courses.

St Gerard's was placed in the top ten schools in Ireland for the percentage of students who have gained places in higher level degree courses. This reflects positively on the educational ethos and programme of the school and the endeavours of so many to maintain high levels of academic excellence.

### JUNIOR CERTIFICATE 2009

We are most proud of the achievements of our Junior Certificate class of 2009. 38% of the students achieved 9 Higher A's, B's or C's, 55% of the students achieving 8 or more, 77% 6 or more, with the average per student at 7 Higher A's, B,s or C,s.

The quality of teaching and learning in our educational environment and within our educational programme is highlighted by the results above. The broad holistic opportunities offered to the students by our academic programme only complement the richness of the experience the students gain here in the school.



## TECHNICAL DRAWING/DESIGN & COMMUNICATION DES SUBJECT INSPECTION

The DES have completed a Design & Communication Graphics and Technical Drawing inspection and will present their report in the New Year. This is our sixth subject inspection in three years. We have already received excellent reports in History, Science, Irish, English and Physics.

## OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Our current 6th Year students will have the wonderful opportunity to travel to Rwanda during the summer of 2010 to participate in our Outreach Programme. Once again Unicef are willing to facilitate the school in the co-ordination of this event. It is envisaged that a number of students will forfeit their "sun holiday" and use the money that might have otherwise been spent on such a holiday to cover their costs. This opportunity will build on the memorable experiences of the 6th Years on their Outreach programme to Rwanda in 2009 and Uganda in 2008.

## ST GERARD'S BALL

The Ritz Carlton Hotel hosted the fourth St Gerard's Ball which was attended by in excess of 200 parents, staff and guests. The evening was an outstanding success for the nominated charities (Cystic Fibrosis Ireland and Unicef) who will each receive €20,000 from the proceeds of the Ball. As always, a special word of thanks to the main organising parents committee of Janice Ryan, Fiona Farrar, Alison Stanley, Amanda Cahill, Carol Mulcahy, Jan Taylor, Nicky Kruseman, Julie Magill, Jane & Roddy McGrath and Ciaran Nagle.

## IN-HOUSE COMMITTEE

As always, the In-House Committee continue their excellent work under their Chairperson Maureen Beirne. We thank them for their organisation of our social occasions with our parents since September, especially the New Mothers' Dinner and the Christmas Bazaar, which were both such a great success.

## BT YOUNG SCIENTIST EXHIBITION

Two 2nd Year boys, Aran Spencer-Higgins and Sean Thomas, have been selected to participate in the BT Young

Scientist Exhibition in the R.D.S. in January. The title of their project is: "Gahim: Website Creator". Their project hopes to create a software package, in which individuals can develop a quick, easy and free individualised website. We wish the boys all the best with their project in January.

## IRISH DEPARTMENT

Bhain daltaí na 5ú bliana taitneamh as an turas go dtí an drama "An Triail". Bhí an t-aisteoireacht an-mhaith cé go bhfuil an téama brónach. Tagann Mícheál Mc Mullan isteach tráth na Nollag chun cabhrú leis na béaltrialacha. Tá béim mhór anois ar an gcumarsáid agus ar an gcaint ins na scrúdaithe.

Bhí an-spraoi ag na ranganna sóisearacha ag an Tráth na gCeist Oíche Shamhna. Máire Nic Cana

## SENIOR SCHOOL BLESSING

On St Gerard's Day we were delighted to welcome Bishop Eamon Walsh, former Chaplain in our school, who led us in the blessing of the refurbished School Chapel and the new Senior School Buildings. Bishop Walsh concelebrated our St Gerard's Day Mass for the whole school community.

## DEBATING & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Debating and public speaking got off to a great start this year in St.Gerard's. There has been much enthusiasm, which is evident in the high number of students wishing to participate. St.Gerard's has proved a strong contender in both the L & H Junior Debating and the Denny Senior Debating with both teams of William Eddershaw and Edward Clarke and Karl Brennan and Ben Blunnie progressing to the second round of their respective competitions. Thomas Emmet and Mark McGann also participated but were narrowly beaten. Dillon Kavanagh, Kevin Olanah and Aimee Kingston unfortunately missed out on a place in the second round of The Mental Health public speaking competition but show great potential for next year. In the coming months we look forward to continued success. Best of luck !

## MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS

The students in St Gerard's have recently been treated to a series of truly inspiring lectures from some world-class speakers. On December 7th Mr. Ian McKeever, broadcaster, lecturer and world-record holder, addressed TY students, detailing some of his many adventures. On December 15th Dr Kate Coleman, consultant eye-surgeon

of last year, a final against King's Hospital School. We congratulate those members of our squad who have made it on to the Leinster and Ireland panels so far this season. You will hear more about them in our Year Book later this school year. During the Christmas holidays, we will be involved in intensive training sessions in preparation for our Cup campaign, beginning with our match against Terenure College at Donnybrook on Tuesday February 2nd. Congratulations also to our management team of Eric, Shaun McCarthy (who also plays and coaches with St. Mary's, who are at present on top of their AIL league), Damian Hall and Seamus Jennings, with help from Des Fitzgerald and team manager, Mícheál Mc Mullan. All our rugby teams have had a very productive season so far. The TY squad has amalgamated with the Senior Seconds who are competing very strongly beside the Senior First squad. The squad was, however, brought back together for a semi-final match with Clongowes Wood on 14th December (which they won in extra time.)

## JUNIOR RUGBY

The JCT did not have a very successful league campaign. However, with two emphatic wins over teams from St. Mary's and Gonzaga, spirits are up and we are now focused on a more productive cup campaign, getting underway after Christmas.

The U14s have had a mixed start to their year with a good win over the likes of Templeogue yet two defeats in their league. They developed greatly since September and are strongly focused on turning their league campaign around.

This year has seen the U13s fielding two teams. Despite starting their league with a defeat to Gonzaga, the highlight of the season thus far was beating Cheadle Hulme School (Manchester) in the inaugural Anglo-Irish Challenge return match. What proved to be a very successful weekend, hosting the English school for the first time at this age group, saw them go on to take the spoils in a very clinical and convincing display of rugby.

## REPRESENTATIVE RUGBY

Many congratulations to Steven Toal Lennon who was selected on the Leinster U 20 squad in September against Italy, Josh Glynn and Jodie Crosbie who were selected on the Leinster U 19 school side, Adam Bowtell who was selected on the Leinster Youths U 19 side and Jack Conan who was on the Leinster U 18 side and who is currently on the Irish School development squad.

## SHOW JUMPING

The annual St Gerard's Show Jumping event was held in the Boswell Equestrian Centre in September. Once again over two hundred horses and riders took part and

the competition was won by Scoil Mhuire, Trim, Co Meath, with the St Gerard's team finishing 4th overall. A sincere word of thanks to Mrs Mary Boyd, Mrs Heather Gilmore & Mrs Rosemary Cross. Many thanks also to our Ambassadors, Miriam Bourke & Fiona Kelly.

## TENNIS

The tennis players are maintaining their high standards with training every Friday from 4 pm -5 pm. We are looking forward to participating in the Summer Competition. Anyone interested in taking part should contact Mr Drummy.

## SAILING

The St. Gerard's Sailing Team competed in the Inter-Schools Regatta back in September. Despite the very tricky conditions over the weekend, it proved to be a very successful one for the team. The team consisting of Ian Byrne, Oisin O'Neill and younger sister, Moirin finished 3rd in the Mixed Team Trophy. In addition to this great result, Ian Byrne finished the weekend 2nd overall in the Individual Trophy.

## GOLF

The St. Gerard's Golf Team were very unlucky in narrowly missing out in qualifying and progressing further in two separate competitions since September. The first of these was the Leinster Inter-Schools Match-Play competition. The team, consisting of Nick O'Laughlin, David Fitzpatrick, Stephen Stapleton and Chris Clarke, missed out the chance to play in a three way playoff round. After two convincing wins against Pres Bray and Dublin Oaks, the team were poised to take a qualification spot. This was however not to be, after a narrow defeat to St Kevin's of Dunshaughlin. The second of these near misses came in the Leinster Inter-Schools Stroke-Play Competition. The team only missed out on a qualification spot on a count back.

## SOCCER

The School's senior soccer team have been entered in a Leinster league this year. Sadly though, they did not progress to the knock-out stages. Although in a very competitive league, the team showed great heart and determination in all the matches.

In addition to these sports, [Tennis & Golf have already been mentioned above] there has also been a very positive take-up in the extra-curricular activities in the school. This has seen many pupils taking part in a variety of different disciplines such as, Hapkido, Tennis, Archery, and Golf lessons.



## HOCKEY

We have 11 teams entered into the Leinster League. There have been some fantastic results.

**Senior 1** started their league campaign in great style beating Foxrock, High School and King's Hospital and drawing with Holy Child Killiney. They lost to Alex and narrowly lost to Loreto Beaufort. They play Sutton Park and Mount Anville after Christmas.

**Senior 2** had a tough start to their league campaign losing 4-1 to Muckross but picked up with a fantastic win beating St Columba's 5-0, and Notre Dame 5-0. They play Loreto Beaufort after Christmas.

**Senior 3** had a good start drawing 0-0 with Holy Faith Clontarf, beating Newpark 3-0, St Dominic's Cabra 4-2 and losing to Tullamore 1-0 and Mount Anville 2-0.

Senior 4 are improving all the time having had two narrow 1-0 defeats to Sion Hill and Loreto Bray. They play Manor House after Christmas.

**Junior 1** had a great start to their league campaign beating Loreto Bray 5-1 and had two 1-1 draws to Our Lady's Terenure and Loreto Dalkey. They lost to an excellent Loreto Beaufort side 4-0. The Juniors received a bye in the first round of the Leinster Cup. They will hear who they play in the second round the second week of January.

**Junior 2** had narrow 1-0 losses to Newbridge, Loreto Stephens Green and Newpark and they beat Loreto Dalkey 2-0.

**Minor 1** beat High School 2-0, Loreto Dalkey 2-1, King's Hospital 2-0, drawing 0-0 with Our Lady's Terenure and losing 2-0 to Alex.

**Minor 2** had narrow defeats to Tullamore, Terenure, and Muckross 1-0. They play Newpark and St Columba's after Christmas.

**1st Year A** had great wins over Newbridge, Loreto Beaufort and Notre Dame. They play Mount Temple after Christmas.

**1st Year B** lost narrowly to Loreto Dalkey and Our Lady's Terenure 1-0 and they play St Louis Rathmines after Christmas

Congratulations to Laura Gallagher and Suzy Kenna who were selected to play for Leinster U16 Interprovincials in Dublin in Oct 2009

The Cup draws are out: Seniors v Teresians at home, Juniors receiving a bye and Minors V St Raphaela's at home.

## SENIOR HOCKEY TOUR TO CANADA 2009

Last June saw the Senior Hockey Girls go on their two-week tour to Canada. They spent the first week on the fabulous Campus of the University of British Columbia. It had fantastic facilities. They had five tough fixtures, losing

to The Grasshoppers 4-3, The Hawks 2-1, West Vancouver 3-0, The Bulls 2-0 and British Columbia 4-0. They did tours of Vancouver Aquarium, Historic Gastown, Chinatown, and Northwest coast on a canoe and a kayak, Capilano Suspension Bridge, and even ran up the famous Grouse Mountain! The girls from the exclusive West Vancouver school hosted the squad. From there they went by ferry to Vancouver Island, where the girls enjoyed a 50k cycle. Tofino was the next port of call where the squad took two surf lessons, went whale watching by boat and stopped off at the hot springs for a soak.

Whistler was the final destination. This fantastic ski resort is host to the 2012 Olympics. The girls went on the Peak-to-Peak challenge where they travelled by Gondola to 30,000 feet. They then jumped off to do a trek up the snow where they were shown how to snow climb. Last was the adventure sport, zip- lining, which involves going from tree to tree by rope.

This was an extremely successful tour for both hockey and bonding. The Senior Team to date have shown superb team spirit and have had some fantastic wins in the league.

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## SENIOR RUGBY

Following on from our winning of the Senior League last season, every available squad member was present at our early August training sessions in anticipation of another successful season. Of major interest also was how everyone would react to the new structure under Coach Eric Miller, the former Ireland and Lions test player. From their first session, all drills and skills were worked at a furiously controlled rate. These August sessions produced the desired result with a victory in our first match against Kilkenny College (away). The league followed and similar to last year we won every match except (again the same as last year) when we lost at home to C.B.C. Monkstown. This gave us a wake-up call and we went on to win our section of the league with bonus point wins over De La Salle schools Skerries and Churchtown, having already had victories over top opposition Gonzaga (away) and Newbridge (home). In addition to our league successes, we have also played a highly creditable draw with Clongowes and, the icing on the cake; our thrilling 18-0 away win over St. Mary's College last week.

Our successful English tour (to the London area) has just finished and at present, as we go to print, we are looking forward to our league semi-final against Kilkenny College on Wednesday (December 16th) and hopefully, a repeat

and founder of the "Right to Sight" Organisation which aims to eliminate cataracts in Asia and Africa addressed 5th and 6th Year students and on December 17th we welcomed Caroline Casey of "Aisling Foundation", an award-winning social enterprise which aims to enhance relationship between disability and society.

The informative, amusing and genuinely inspiring nature of these talks was of huge benefit to the students and teachers lucky enough to be present. We are looking forward to more exciting events in the New Year.

## PERMANENT TSB HIGH ACHIEVER AWARD 2009

Niall McLaughlin (5th Year) has been awarded a Permanent TSB High Achiever Award 2009

This award is part of the Oral Communication Examination which Niall completed as part of his Transition Year Programme

## ISTA SENIOR SCIENCE QUIZ '09 NATIONAL FINAL

Many congratulations to the team of Ben Blunnie, Daniel Cooney and Theo Jebb (6th Year) who came sixth in the National Finals in Trinity College, Dublin. Many thanks to Ben, Daniel and Theo on a wonderful job and in particular for the amount of preparation they put in to the event.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

Our new Student Council was elected during the week leading up to St. Gerard's day. The council comprises of fourteen student members, the Head Boy and Head Girl, two students from 6th year and two students from each other year.

The Student Council meets every three weeks to discuss ideas they may have and also voice any issues their year group have with the Headmaster and Miss Fanning.

The council has been busy in the last week of the school term organising the non-uniform day in aid of the Cystic Fibrosis Association of Ireland and the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

We look forward to lots of new proposals and projects in the New Year.

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The Bazaar was most enjoyable with a great buzz everywhere and lots of smiling faces. The activities on offer ranged from the very popular spectator sport of leg-waxing to our very successful fundraiser - The Auction. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff, students and

parents who contributed their time, work and money to make the evening a great success. We hope to have raised in excess of €20,000 and this money will go to help local and national charities at this important time of year.

## MINI-COMPANIES

Mini-company students have brainstormed for ideas, undertaken surveys, sourced materials and succeeded in producing a wide range of products.

They have received guidance from Wicklow County Enterprise Board representatives and some have attended a marketing day at the Clermont Campus in Rathnew, Co Wicklow.

On Bazaar night stalls were set up so that the mini-companies could sell their products and contribute their profits to charity. Their hard work and enthusiasm show that enterprise culture is thriving and we wish them success in the Wicklow Enterprise Young Entrepreneur Competition in the New Year.

## MUSIC FESTIVAL

Many congratulations as always to everyone who participated in the wonderfully entertaining Music Festival. A special word of congratulations to our winners Ben Blunnie (6th Year) Hilary Repko (6th Year) and Aaron Lynch, Jack Brennan & Rory La Hart (6th Year). The variety of talent on show reflects the depth of musical talent here in the school. We look forward with expectation to the Summer Concert later in the year. A special word of thanks to our judges, Mr. Phil Coulter, Mr. Cyrille Laurens and Ms. Deirdre Farrell.

## INTERNATIONAL MODEL EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The International Model European Parliament 2009 took place in Bonn, Germany, in November. Congratulations to Niall McLaughlin (5th Year) who was one of five delegates representing Ireland at this event. The Irish delegation's resolutions were a true success, with Niall chosen to give the final defence speech of the week's Parliamentary debates. Many congratulations to Niall on his total commitment to the International MEP session.

## TRANSITION YEAR

This most enthusiastic TY group have truly settled into their role and are fully immersed in their programme to date. So far this year, the TY group has been having a brilliant time. A collection of excellent Junior Certificate results began the Lough Dan camping trip on an optimistic note. In an unprecedented turn of events, the gloomy clouds and rain which had characterised the camping trips of previous



years failed to turn up, and the trip was a complete success. October began with a trip to Kairos, a workshop in Maynooth where the students wrote, produced and performed in three different mini TV programmes. While the quality of the finished products was questionable, everyone involved felt it was a great success!

In November, the students went on two cultural trips, to Newgrange and Croke Park, in order to explore their heritage. Later that month, each student set out to expand their social consciousness through a week of voluntary service to the community. They worked in various charitable and educational organisations, using their respective talents to contribute to their community. In the final week the students immersed themselves in the St Vincent De Paul programme. They organized, prepared and delivered in over 330 hampers within St Peter's Parish here in Bray. More recently, the students have been enjoying themselves with the preliminary preparations for the musical, which will take place in the New Year.

## ART

Congratulations to Daniel Murray, 1B, who won the under 16's section of the Bray Drug Awareness Forum's Annual Bookmark Competition. He was the overall winner in the Senior Section of this competition. Well done Daniel.

## CAREERS '09

Making career decisions is often a slow and arduous task for students. The more time given to reflection and research, the easier the decision will be in the end. In a career, one wants to be capable, happy, adaptable, interested and realistic. . 6th Year students attended the Higher Options Exhibition at the RDS and also the UCD and TCD Open Days. They also had a very informative talk from the Head of Admissions at DIT.

The annual Careers Workshops provided an opportunity for our students to talk to people who are experts in their chosen field. The evening was extremely successful with speakers representing the following occupations: Aviation/ Pilot, Engineering, Risk Analysis, Economics, Banking, Stock Broking, Accountancy, Journalism/ Public Relations, IT, Law (barrister/ solicitor), Medicine, Design/Art.

## SOCIAL AWARENESS

The Social Awareness Programme is intended to confront our students with issues that are often outside of their experience and to challenge them to think about these subjects and how they affect them and the world around them.

The senior students were given presentations from the UNICEF group who travelled to Rwanda last summer and from the St Vincent De Paul Society. The Samaritans also presented a workshop which has made our students acutely aware of the need for understanding of their own and others' problems in modern society.

## CHEERIOS CHILDLINE BREAKFAST

Many thanks to all of the Prefects who organised the Cheerios Childline Breakfast in November. Almost €1,200.00 was raised by the students for this very worthwhile charity.

## PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Mr Liam O'Brien has completed his first term of office in October and has continued for his second term as Chairperson of the Parents' Association. Congratulations to the newly-elected members of the Parents' Association who took office in October also. I would like to sincerely thank all of those members of the previous committees who have done such positive and honourable work on behalf of the school. We look forward to working with Liam and the new committee.

## ST VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE

The incoming committee 2009/2010 have built on the success of the inaugural committee 2008/2009. They have had a successful term under the leadership of Chairperson Simon Wilson and Vice-Chair Steffan Jolley and Secretary Aisling Glass. The committee were delighted by the Junior School support; over €600 of Smyth's vouchers and car loads of presents were kindly donated for the St. Vincent de Paul families.

The TY students packed and delivered over three hundred and thirty hampers to local families in need. Over €800 was raised at the Christmas bazaar. Once again a huge thanks to the nine boys who waxed their legs for charity.

## CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

Over the last three years, we at St Gerard's School are most proud to be associated with the St Vincent De Paul Conference of St Peter's parish in Bray. During December the school supported the purchasing, packing and delivery of 330 hampers worth in excess of €25,000. I would like to offer my gratitude to the 4th & 5th Year students from our own Conference of St Vincent De Paul who co-ordinated and ensured the packing in the Sports Hall and delivery of all 330 Hampers.

Many thanks to all of the parents, staff and students who in any way supported this most worthy cause. A special word of thanks to the parents of the Junior School who donated so many wonderful presents and gift vouchers to go with the hampers.

## 5<sup>TH</sup> YEAR ENGLISH TOUR TO LONDON

Over forty 5th Year students travelled to London on the English Tour in November. The students enjoyed the spectacular musical "Billy Elliott" at the Victoria Palace Theatre. They visited the Globe Theatre and visited a number of educational and cultural sights and venues. Many thanks to the English Department for facilitating this opportunity.

## DCU OLYMPIAD

DCU annually invites students who have achieved 6A's or higher in the Junior Certificate to take part in a rigorous selection process in order to field a team to represent Ireland in the Science Olympiad. Two of our TY year students went forward for this: Paraic Behan (Biology), Neil Counihan (Chemistry). While not 'Olympians' on this occasion, well done to Paraic and Neil for your enthusiasm and excellent effort both in preparing for and engaging in this very challenging test. It is hoped that you have gained much from the experience!

## YOUNG SCIENTISTS

At this point our 'young scientists' should be putting the final aspects of their projects together. The projects are as follows: "Prevention is the cure!" "Skin cancer, what are the risks? Do you care?" Neil Counihan, Declan Keaney, and Alan Smith (Transition Year); Two 2nd Year boys, Aran Spencer-Higgins and Sean Thomas have entered a project entitled "Gahim: Website Creator". "The great St. Gerard's dust buster"! is a project entered by Gareth Byrne (1st year). We wish all of the students success in their endeavours.

## YOUNG SOCIAL INNOVATORS IN TRANSITION YEAR.

There are three very hardworking and enthusiastic TY groups taking part in the Young Social Innovators Project this year: One group has decided to raise awareness of the massive problem of homeless young people in Ireland. The students are in touch with a number of charities that deal with this issue, and are hoping to raise a greater awareness in the school community of this sad and growing problem. The teams wish to also organise a used clothes collection drive before Christmas and donate all of our unwanted clothes to those who will really benefit from them.

Another group is aiming to raise awareness of the problem of Animal Cruelty in Ireland. The team are hoping to educate themselves on this issue by visiting a local Wicklow animal shelter, so that they may learn more about the mistreatment of animals and how they might be

of help with this problem. This group will be organising events in the school to support animal shelters.

The final group are investigating the issue of the School Book Scheme for disadvantaged schools, which was cut in last year's budget.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

In September, TY Students attended an Environmental Conference organised by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. The conference took place in the council headquarters. The students were addressed by three main speakers representing change – i.e. Fairtrade and The Importance of Hedgerows in the Irish Landscape. All of the students agreed that it was an interesting day and would recommend it for future TY Students.

## CROSS-COUNTRY

St Gerard's School hosted the Wicklow Schools Cross-Country Championships on 16th November and all the runners had a fantastic day. The 1st and 2nd Year squads were joined by a number of enthusiastic 3rd, TY and 5th Years. Many thanks to all the Transition Year students and staff who were a great help on the day! Particular congratulations must go to Laura Finnerty for leading the U13 team across the line in 5th place which placed the U13 Girls' team 1st (Louise Gilmore 6th, Lauren Lynch 7th, Aine McCabe 10th and Fiodhna Campbell 11th). Mark Gallagher put in a powerful performances to cross the line in 6th position in the U13 race with Darragh Sheil, Niall Byrne and Adam Simmonds performing well to help their team to finish 3rd. In the U14 Girls' race, St Gerard's team finished 2nd in a very competitive field with all of the team finishing in the top 15,( Claire Foley 6th, Karla Gallagher 8th, Shannon O'Brien 9th, Laura Gallagher 12th and Sophie O Reilly 15th ).

Cormac Tierney put in an outstanding performance in the U14 race, finishing 7th overall, closely followed by Mark Prendergast in 12th position. Not to be outshone, the senior students also put in gallant efforts with the U16 girls, (the team included Zoe O'Shaughnessy (5th ), Clare Lavelle (8th ), Emer O'Reilly (9th ), Lisa Chadwich (10th ) and Alannah O'Caoimh (13th) finishing 1st overall. Sarah Cantwell 6th, Sheenagh Walker Ayers 7th, Izzy Spencer-Higgins 8th, Miriam Burke 11th, dashed around the course to put their U19 team in 2nd place.

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