

TY Newsletter

December 2021



Dear parents, guardians and students,

Welcome to our second TY newsletter, highlighting the main events since returning from the mid-term break in November. In line with our HFSS TY programme, our TY students have experienced 5 academic weeks, punctuated with a variety of new learning experiences, workshops, external speakers, along with a Work Experience week, an Activity weeks and 6 academic exams. Here are some of the highlights of our busy term:

"Intinn" Youth Film & Mental Health programme

Our TY students engaged in the "Intinn" Youth Film & Mental Health programme, presented by the Cork International Film Festival (CIFF). *Intinn* is CIFF's national film and well-being programme that offers Transition year students the opportunity to explore mental health, personal well-being and strategies of resilience, through film, questions and answers with film makers, and well-being workshops led by youth mental health specialists. This year they provided us with two new online programmes, each comprising of one short film, a recorded Q&A with the filmmaker and a well-being workshop led by Dr. John Goodwin, Lecturer in Mental Health Nursing in the School of Nursing & Midwifery, University College Cork.

Science Week

We had a fantastic response from our TY students for entering a national TY Science Quiz, during Science Week. The virtual Science Quiz saw a plethora of HFSS TY Science groups, who led for the first part of the quiz, but did not pick up bonus points for speed in answering – our teams went for accuracy instead! Great fun was had by all, and a first for HFSS to be involved in this competition organised by the Institute of Carlow and Waterford Institute of Technology.

World Wide Global Classroom (WWGS) initiative

Felicia Olusanya, aka FELISPEAKS, a Nigerian Irish poet, performer & playwright from Co. Longford, based in Maynooth, currently featuring on the Leaving Certificate English curriculum with her poem "For Our Mother's", virtually visited our TY students. She performed some of her poetry, spoke of her life experiences, gave her unique perspective on the issues of racism & discrimination in Ireland, and answered questions. This visit is recorded on the TY Team, for any parents / guardians who wish to watch it. An inspirational visit helping us tackle our World Wide Global Schools Theme for this year – Reduced Inequalities.

Think Languages

On November 22nd, our TY students marked our national Think Languages event, which is a celebration of languages and cultures from all over the world. The day included a programme of enjoyable workshops including interpreting in EU languages, Russian & ballet, Arabic & belly dancing, Chinese Art, Danish & design, Christmas in Spain and they completed their day with a classic Italian film *La vita è Bella*. We value the skills involved in learning language and appreciate and encourage learning new languages in HFSS. Many thanks to all the teachers who facilitated the day and to the students for getting into the spirit of celebrating and valuing the diversity of languages and our many diverse cultures.

Festival of Flavours

Our TY students were involved in Holy Family's third bite at Festival of Flavours. This splendid festival coincided with their Think Languages day. The quality and diversity of food available was exquisite, as we have 15 different first-generation countries within the school, and in total we had 18 stands on display. Traditional foods from their home countries included Jollof Rice (spicy rice from Nigeria) Pierogi (Polish dumplings), Roccos (Spanish biscuits), Ube cake (purple yam cake from the Philippines), Tiramisu (Italy), Samosas (India) and of course Irish brown bread. Well done to all involved as you raised over €1,000 for Teach Tearmainn.

Rotary leaders

Newbridge Rotary club invited our TY students to participate in the Rotary Youth Leadership Club finals. Congratulations to Rebecca Loftus, Michelle Curran, Aisling Lyons, Caoimhe Murphy and Aoibhe Mulraney who received their certificates and to Aoibhe who has since won the regional final against all other competing Kildare schools.

Rotary Footware appeal

In response to an appeal for footwear for some of the poorest people in the world, a group of our TY students formed a school appeal and collected over 100 pairs of shoes from the school community. We deeply appreciate everyone's generosity and it was fantastic to see the bins overflowing with contributions. The Rotary club have sent the footwear to the Lebanon, where they will be distributed to those in need.

Rainbow day

As a school, we celebrated LGBTQI+, inclusion and awareness for a fortnight. All students participated in an LGBT+ awareness lesson and then our school community celebrated our support of inclusiveness and diversity by wearing all the different colours of the rainbow. Organised by our SRC, our TY students wore green. Many TY class tutors commented on how knowledgeable our students are on this issue. HFSS values the importance of ensuring that our school environment is a welcoming and safe place, where all our young people learn about equality, diversity and inclusion.

Congratulations

Heartiest congratulations to all our TY students involved in school GAA football, soccer, basketball and volleyball both in school and in their respective clubs, as the winter season now comes to an end. Special congratulations to our three TY students who won the All Ireland Senior A Volleyball final on the 6th December who beat St. Mary's Naas comprehensively. In fact, this team progressed to the final undefeated in all of their matches. I expect this to continue into the future Emma Byrne, Áine Dowling and Jessica Dowling!!

Activity week

The Activity Week aims to cater for all subjects and provide a varied programme of experiences including:

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| - Forensics module (Forensic Fun) | - Tech Graphics -session 2 |
| - Drumming workshop (Jabba Jabba Jembe) | - Geography Country workshop |
| - Christmas crafts | - DNA keychains |
| - Zeeko Internet Safety module | - Racial awareness programme |
| - TY Olympics | - Oreo truffles |
| - Breast cancer awareness programme | - ACT FAST (Action for Stroke signs and awareness) |

Work Experience

TY students were given their second opportunity to plan and organise their own work experience and write a meaningful reflection on their return to school. Many students took the opportunity to take an extra week of voluntary work experience. There was an array of careers sampled over these weeks including acting, hospitality, teaching, veterinary, equestrian work, retail, health services, pharmacy, photography, childcare, politics, work shadowing and volunteering. With rising number of Covid-19, some students did our home package, which can be supplemented with online courses. The next work experience will run from **February 14th – 18th, 2022**. Students are encouraged to try a range of career types to assist them in effectively selecting their Leaving Certificate subject choices. A gentle reminder that all required documents for work experience are on our school website under the TY tab – documents include our school insurance letter and reports.

TY Christmas Market

This December, after two years without, we were thrilled to return our TY Christmas market for our TY Mini-companies. With serious logistical planning from our facilitating teachers, our TYs got to present, advertise, promote and sell, sell sell (!) their goods and services. It was a delight for the whole school community to visit the stalls and buy some amazing products and bargains for Christmas. Well done to all involved, we certainly have some serious entrepreneurs in our midst, as orders were coming in from abroad for certain goods!

Ice-Skating

After a technical issue with the ice and then a weather warning, we finally made it! Just after half past 8 on the morning of 9th December, our TY students, as a year group, got on the road to Blanchardstown to go ice-skating. What a sight to behold and what shrieking of delight was to be heard as they took to the ice. It was their first trip as a collective, and I was in awe of their prowess on the ice and more-so the kindness they showed to one another, all were encouraged to take baby penguin steps and pull away from the barrier. After 20 minutes, it was amazing to see how many had become avid skaters. Maybe it was the music, maybe it was the ice surroundings, maybe it was the laughter and giggles behind masks, but our ice-skating session was one of my personal highlights of the year to date, as we were all together. Thank you so much to all who supported and cared for all who were anxious – it was heartfelt and a testament to your beautiful characters.

Willowbrook, Holy Family Convent and Curragh Lawns Nursing Homes

In true Holy Family spirit and in the spirit of Christmas, our TY students truly showed their innate kindness, generosity and thoughtfulness as they inundated the Chaplaincy office with gifts for our friends in our local nursing homes, Willowbrook, Curragh Lawns and our dear Sisters next door in the Holy Family convent. Photos of all these gifts don't do our students justice, it was their positive reception of this initiative that was incredulous – their delight in being assigned a specific and unique first name of their recipient, and the effort and thought that went into their Christmas messages was simply magical.

May I take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our TY families for all their support over the last few months, and wish you and yours a safe and peaceful Christmas.

Dearbháil Dowling

TY Co-ordinator & Year Head 2021