

🎄 Christmas Newsletter 2021 🎄

Dear Parents, Guardians, Students and Staff,

Welcome to our latest newsletter. It has once again been a particularly challenging term. The continuing impact of Covid-19 on our school poses daily challenges. We are very fortunate to be in a modern and spacious building and this has certainly helped in our capacity to limit the impact of Covid-19 on our school. We are even luckier to have such hardworking, diligent, and patient staff and students who continue to rise to the everyday challenges of school life during this ongoing crisis.

I am deeply humbled and honored to be associated with all of you. While the emergence of a new variant gives all of us cause for concern, we have many reasons to be optimistic about the future. I urge you all to stay the course, continue to observe the various precautions and protocols to limit the impact and spread of the disease and help us move towards a more normal school experience for all of us.

I wish every single one of you a very happy, peaceful and safe Christmas holiday.

Merry Christmas

Paul Glynn

Updates December 2021/ January 2022

Senior Cycle Options for 2022-2023

1. Subject Presentations to students

Our 3rd Year and Transition Year students will receive presentations in school on Wednesday 15th December and Thursday 16th December on the different subject options that are available to them for Senior Cycle. All students will be required to fill out a reflection sheet after the two days.

Presentations on other Senior Cycle programmes we offer, (LCVP and LCA), will also take place for these students over the next two weeks. 3rd Years will receive a presentation from Ms. O'Connor, our TY coordinator, on the Transition Year Programme we offer in Creagh.

Parents' Evening – Senior Cycle Options

An information evening took place on-line via a Teams webinar on Monday 13th December for all of our 3rd and TY Parents/Guardians. Information was provided on the different options available to students at Senior Cycle. A recording of the webinar is available to access on our website.

2. Subject Preferences - VSWare

From the **13th December 2021 until the 7th January 2022**, current 3rd and TY students, together with their parents, will be able to input their subject options into the VSWare Portal for fifth year. Please note, that regardless of whether your child thinks that they would prefer to do Transition Year or LCA, they still need to submit subject options for fifth year (in case they don't get accepted into those programmes).

It is very important when making their subject choices for Senior Cycle that students rank them in order of genuine preference. 1 = 1st Choice. Students should consider several important factors before making their choices. Such factors should include interest in the subject, requirement of the subject for third level/career choice, their ability in that subject etc.

2nd Years 2022 – Subject Choices

Current 1st Years will continue to study three out of their current five optional subjects in second year. i.e. they drop two of their current options subjects at the end of their First Year in school. (French, Geography and their three current optional subjects from; Home Economics, Business Studies, Applied Technology, Graphics, Engineering, Music, Visual Art, Wood Technology, Classical Studies).

Students will need to rank the subjects in genuine order of preference, 1-5 (i.e. the subject they most want to keep on is ranked at number 1; the subject they least want to keep is ranked at number 5). Please note that only students who choose French as their first preference will be guaranteed a place in French in Second year. We highly recommend that students, where they can, continue with French for junior cycle as there are some universities which require students to have studied a Modern Foreign Language (MFL) as a Leaving Certificate subject.

Students will need to input their options, 1-5 using their VSWare log-in details. The VSWare portal for this will open on the **7th February and close on the 18th February**.

Important dates for your diaries:

- **Christmas Holidays:** School will finish at **12.40pm on Wednesday 22nd December and will re-open on Thursday 6th January 2022**. Wednesday December 22nd is a non-uniform day and students are encouraged to wear Christmas jumpers to school on this day.
- **Christmas Reports:** We plan to publish reports for all students on Wednesday 22nd December through your child's VSWare account. Please note that VSWare has changed

their Assessment software and are experiencing considerable difficulties. If your child hasn't received a report from a teacher/tutor, please contact our admin office who will be able to direct your concern. A reminder to you that behaviour notes are logged on VSware under the Behaviour Tab. It is important that this is monitored regularly.

- **Whole School JCT Day for Staff:** School will be closed for a full day on **January 18th 2022** to facilitate JCT training (Summative Feedback) for staff.
- **2nd Year Online PTM:** Our 2nd Year Parent Teacher Meeting will take place online on Monday 17th January 2022 4.15 - 6.45pm. School will close at 3.45pm for all students. More information will follow on this in our first week back. Your child will be issued with a VSware ID which you will need to input your preferences for teachers for the night. Please retain this ID in a safe place.
- **1st Year Online PTM:** Our 1st Year Parent Teacher Meeting will take place online on Monday 31st January 2022 4.15-6.15pm. School will close at 3.45pm for all students. More information to follow mid-January.
- **Mock Exams:** The 3rd and 6th year mock examinations are provisionally timetabled for the 7th - 18th February, inclusive. Mock Fees will be confirmed as soon as possible, and online payments will go live early in the new year.

Housekeeping

Uniform

Please ensure that all students are in the full school uniform as per our [Uniform Policy](#).

Late to school

We would encourage students to arrive at school on time, each morning. Tutor commences at 8.52am and students should be seated in class by this time. Students who are late to school should ensure that they have a note in their journal explaining why they are late. If they do not have a note, they will be placed on lunch time detention.

COVID UPDATE – REMOTE LEARNING

The shadow of Covid-19 has loomed large over school life since the first case was confirmed in the Republic of Ireland on Feb 29th 2020. At the start of this academic year, we were cautiously optimistic that we would gradually return to more normal school life over the course of the year; we are certainly in a better place than we were twelve months ago.

As we approached last Christmas, the vaccination program hadn't commenced yet (the Republic of Ireland's first vaccine was administered on Dec 29th 2020) and we were at the

beginning of a new wave of infection that severely disrupted schools for the rest of the 2020/21 academic year. This year has seen a resumption of many school activities that were curtailed last year, but we, and all schools, have been significantly impacted by substitute teacher shortages compounded by the impact of the virus on teacher availability.

Throughout all of this difficult period, our staff and students have risen to the considerable challenges they have faced. Whether it be online teaching and learning, mask wearing, complying with all the restrictions in place, etc. our students and staff have conducted themselves with patience, kindness, diligence, and consideration for others.

The full impact of the Omicron variant remains to be seen, but we will still be living with the impact of Covid-19 on daily school life for the coming months. We thank all of you for your patience and cooperation with the measures in place and urge you to continue to do all the small things that limit the spread of the virus.

In the unlikely event of an extended school closure please be aware that we are well-positioned with regards to IT facilities to provide the best possible online teaching and learning experience if it should be required. Please encourage your child to bring home their books and other materials from school for the Christmas period, just in case!

School Self-Evaluation; Focus on homework!

As a school we strive for academic excellence. Our teachers ensure that students are provided with every opportunity to learn to the best of their ability and achieve success in their studies. We encourage our staff to regularly reflect on their methods of teaching and provide them with opportunities to engage in professional development.

As part of our school self-evaluation process, we have identified Homework as an area we want to focus on developing. Research has found that there is a direct link between homework and student attainment. Please continue to check your child's VSware behaviour tab and check their journal on a weekly basis.

Stand Up Awareness Week

During this past term we took part in **Stand Up Awareness Week**, where we took a stand against homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. The week was about letting everyone know that Creagh College is taking steps to ensure that our school is a safe and supportive space for LGBTQI+ young people. We want everyone in our school to feel comfortable expressing themselves and their identity.

Hurling

Well done to our Junior hurlers who beat St. Grennan's College & Scoil Aireagail from Kilkenny on Thursday 6-08 to 3-06. This win was well deserved after a huge amount of preparation by the students since the beginning of the school year. It was great to see so many players from Ballynastragh Gaels, Naomh Eanna, Ferns, Castletown, Réalt Na Mara Ballygarrett, St. Pat's, Crannford represent their club and school with such pride and determination throughout the game. We look forward to the next rounds of the South Leinster GAA championships in the coming weeks.



Football

Our Junior Gaelic football panel had another great win recently vs. Blessington C.C. on a score line of 6-10 to 3-05. The weather conditions were tough and there was a great determination from both sides to give a brilliant display of football. Scorers on the day for Creagh were Cormac Kinsella (1-0), Max Buggy (2-01), Charlie Roark (2-0), Lucas Kinsella (1-02), Jack Gethings (0-1), Darragh Gethings (0-02), Conall Dunne (0-01), Cody Lawless (0-02) and Paddy Keavey (0-01). Well, done to all the panel for their great attitude and work rate throughout the match.



A special thanks to Altura Credit Union for their continued sponsorship of GAA over the last number of years in Creagh College.

Bonding Week for 1st Years

From October 11th - October 15th, all First-Year students took part in 'Bonding Week' - a week of fun activities which aimed to build upon their Induction Programme and allow students to develop peer relationships in a positive environment. The week was a great success and lots of fun was had by all students and teachers involved.

Students created posters in their Wellbeing classes, took part in a Quiz in History, worked on group activities in P.E. and went for a wellness walk in Geography classes. Students also took part in a creative writing competition entitled 'School'.

At the end of the week, all First Years were provided with a breakfast treat and prizes were awarded to 1 Beech for winning the class Quiz. Tutors awarded a prize to the Tutees of the term from each of the nine tutor classes. These included

1 Ash: Meela Rae O'Toole Crawford

1 Beech: Marley Saunders

1 Elm: Miesko Piotrkowski

1 Hazel: Ryan Landigan

1 Maple: Tristian Diaz

1 Oak: Emma Russell

1 Pine: Eoghan Ó'Griallais

1 Rowan: Zach White

1 Willow: Johanna Considine

Prizes for creative writing achievements were also presented to the following students: Daria Ciurdea, Ryan Doyle, Dylan Duffy, Paula Kanep Szmyt, Ava Brennan, Ava Curran, Jodi Rapple and Maria Galvin

Overall, a great week was had and well done to all 1st Years on an excellent first term in Creagh College.

Christmas Shoebox Appeal

The first group of students participating in Gaisce this year were involved in the Team Hope Shoe Box Appeal. The students organised a successful non-uniform day in September and purchased enough items to fill a fantastic 108 shoe boxes for the charity.

The students spent a number of weeks gathering, wrapping, and sorting out the shoe boxes, a massive team effort! The boxes were then collected in the school by Team Hope and will be distributed to children in need in Eastern Europe and Africa in time for Christmas.

Thank you to all who supported our non-uniform day, donated boxes etc. and well done to their teacher, Ms. Moody, and the Transition Year students involved!



Young Scientist Competition

Balazs Gyrko is a 2nd year student. The title of his project is called '**Analyzing our world from Scratch**'. The purpose of the project is to use three games, created and designed by Balazs, using the Scratch coding programme.



These games are then played by participants and the data generated after completing the games are analysed using algorithms written by him. Any correlations within the data generated will be identified using algorithms and presented in graphical format.

He hopes to measure people's reaction rates and determine if they are physically active, will it enhance their reaction rates. All the while, using the game to inform the user of climate change.

Spanish Christmas Traditions

Ms Nuria Lluch, our Spanish teaching assistant, has created a link to an interactive Advent Calendar which has been created using Spanish traditions at Christmas. Please click on the link below to access this wonderful resource.

<https://view.genial.ly/61953adef15f860dfdb82fca>

Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

It was a positive term for Leaving Certificate Applied students who experienced high quality learning in the classroom, on work placement and taking part in many workshops and events.

Some of these included a trip to “Alive Outside Adventure Centre” in Kilruddery estate, a goal setting workshop with author and public speaker Stephen Kiernan, a resilience workshop with “Soar” and a workshop from “Reptile Haven”. Well done to staff who strived to achieve the best from students learning in the classroom and to students for their excellent participation to date.



A special word of thanks to parents and guardians for their continued support this term. There are many exciting things to look forward to for Leaving Certificate Applied students in 2022 and we wish all families a safe and happy Christmas.

Creagh’s Own Superhero - “Braveman Ben Kelly

Ben Kelly a 6th year, Leaving Certificate Applied student created and launched his very own comic book called “*Braveman*” on the 5th November. “*Braveman*” features an alter ego superhero who offers an inspirational glimpse into the challenges of life on dialysis and the healing power of Art.



Ben has described how Braveman is the story of his life. Ben is currently waiting for his 3rd kidney transplant and undergoes dialysis three times per week. Ben is a kind, funny strong, imaginative and brave young man who we are very proud of. We wish you all the best Ben.

Junk Kouture 2021



Junk Kouture 2021 saw a team from Creagh College reach the Grand Final for the first time. Every year to date we have entered and have been represented regularly in the South-Eastern Regional Finals. In our 10th year of Creagh College it is such a fantastic achievement to have Wooden Warrior represent the school after such a tumultuous school year. Having to continue to develop an outfit as a team while working in isolation was no mean feat and bringing all the elements together, they had doubts over if it would all come together aesthetically. Thankfully, it did!

Designers: Aoife Kavanagh, Clara Hart, Lauren Paisley, worked incredibly hard throughout. They experimented and manipulated their materials and had to problem

solve along the way. What they have created is an exceptional example of creativity and patience using very difficult materials. Michelle Visage spoke very highly of them in the grand final and was super impressed with what they have achieved and the message behind the theme.

Design Details: Focusing on a variety of different textures, the design evolved into a warrior-esque look. The design raises awareness of deforestation, using a variety of wooden elements such as Venetian blinds, match sticks, saw dust and wood curls from the woodwork room.

The competition and talent were exceptional this year and although the team missed out of one of the coveted prizes, they are still in with a shot of claiming the Audience Prize. We would ask everyone to cast their votes form the link below!

<https://mobilebeta.rte.ie/lifestyle/fashion/2021/1207/1265360-junk-kouture-rte-2fm-audience-award-south-eastern-region/>

	<p>Junk Kouture RTÉ 2FM Audience Award: South Eastern Region / mobilebeta.rte.ie</p>
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The girls need your votes! Vote as many times as you can between now and 17th Dec!



12 Musical Days of Christmas at Creagh

Our Music Department have been running the 12 Musical Days of Christmas. Each day a student or group performance will be uploaded to our website and social media pages. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the amazing talent we have in the school.