



GROVE NEWS

www.olgrove.ie @olgrove December 2023

A few words from Mr. Dooley

Christmas greetings to all of our OLG families and wider community,

In the background as I write to you, I can hear the beautiful tones of Ms Cashman and the school choir practicing for the OLG Carol Service 2023. You may have heard that the school choir recently achieved 2nd place in the 65th Annual Kilcoole Musical Festival. What I can hear clearly explains why. Well done to all the teaching staff and students who contribute to all of our in-school musical experiences, and represent us so well at external occasions also.

At the end of our first term I once more salute my teaching colleagues for their consistent work with our young people. You need only look at Compass and our social media sites to witness how many opportunities there are at our school. All of this is provided by already busy teachers on a voluntary basis and on top of their striving for a strong academic focus in all lessons.

I would also like to thank each of you, our Parents/Guardians. We really appreciate your encouragement of time keeping and attendance, your monitoring of homework exercises and generally being a strong support to the students as they continually strive to be their best selves. Thank you for your voluntary contributions and your spirit of volunteering. It is invaluable that you are willing to support school events and even help with outdoor maintenance days organised by our Parent Association.

Our students have experienced a challenging but rewarding first term. There have been successes in hockey, netball, athletics and soccer. A large group of Transition Year students travelled to Paris in the midst of the Rugby World Cup, and there have been additional trips to Killkenny, Larchhill, the theatre, the opera and Windmill Lane Studios amongst others. 2024 promises even more with multi-cultural day, the Transition Year show, the school dance off and activity day all in front of us.

In light of recent shocking events in our city now is a time to appreciate our families and our wider communities. I hope you get to do just that over the Christmas period

Warm regards

Colm Dooley

Open Evening 2023

Thank you to all our student ambassadors who made Open Evening 2023 such a huge success. We were thrilled to be able to showcase our school and to welcome so many of you to the Grove. A special thank you to our past pupils Grace Pierce, Joeann Hussey, Rachel Keenan Dillon, Ella Kiely, Sarah Wall, Anna Cunningham, Riya Raji and Maryam Shaia who returned to speak with future parents and students. We look forward to meeting our future First Years in the New Year.



Welcome First Years!

It has been lovely getting to know our new first years since August. A big thank you to the Fifth Year Mentors, and Sixth Year Prefects Martina, Katie, Erin and Fiona who have spent a lot of time helping our first years settle in and get to know everyone. We hope everyone feels at home in Our Lady's Grove.



Student Council Halloween Fundraiser

The Student Council organised a dress up day in aid of Pieta House on Friday October 22nd. As usual OLG people came up with creative, terrifying (none more so than the staff Barbies) and fun costumes. We had our annual costume parade followed by a screening of Frozen in the hall for the whole community. Though not the scariest movie we could have watched, everyone enjoyed singing along to all the favourites before heading off into the mid-term break. Thank you to everyone for taking part and making such a huge effort to dress up.



College Aware Week

Senior Cycle students have enjoyed a number of speakers from third level institutions such as UCD and TU Dublin and have

developed a very good insight into courses on offer and progression routes in Trinity, UCD, TU Dublin, NCI, IADT, RCSI and Maynooth University. They enjoyed a campus visit to Trinity College Dublin where we met some past pupils who are enjoying life as a Trinity students. We look forward to welcoming Trinity



Professor Emma Stokes to Our Lady's Grove in January when she will give senior students and in depth overview of everything Trinity has to offer. Meanwhile Junior Cycle students have been learning about careers in a variety of sectors including Health Sciences, Law and STEM. We were more than delighted to welcome back past pupil and surgeon Ms. Sandra Hembrecht to deliver an inspiring speech about her career trajectory since she left Our Lady's Grove. Thank you to Sandra and all our past pupils who regularly return to speak to our students and are always available to email or talk to for advice and support.



Music News

On Thursday 19th October, TY students were invited on a tour of Windmill Lane Recording Studio. Many well known artists such as U2, Ed Sheeran, Lady GaGa, Niall Horan and Lewis Capaldi have recorded in Windmill Lane. Some pianists were invited to perform on David Bowie's grand piano! On Sunday 19th October, the school choir competed in the 65th Kilcoole Music Festival. Many thanks to all members from 1st year - 6th year who were available to participate on the day. The school Choir performed 'All is Found' and 'Africa' and were awarded 2nd place overall for their performance. On Wednesday 22nd November, TY students and music students from 5th and 6th year were invited to attend INO's production of La Bohème at the Bord Gáis Energy theatre. This was an amazing opportunity for students to attend an Opera performance. Irish born soprano Celine Byrne performed the role of Mimi.



Stand Up Awareness Week

The focus of the national Stand Up Awareness Week is to promote an inclusive and protective environment for LGBT+ young people and to take a stand against homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. This year the week was organised by the Student Council with the curation of a new awareness noticeboard on the top corridor, the raising of the rainbow flag and a rainbow hoody day. Thank you to everyone for taking part and please keep an eye on our noticeboard for regular updates, useful information and signposts to support.



Trip to Kilkenny

In October the Third Year students travelled to the historic city of Kilkenny. They toured the famous Kilkenny Castle, Black Abbey and Rothe House which is one of the oldest intact Medieval houses in Ireland. They walked the Medieval Mile where they heard stories about the history, legends and landmarks associated with the city. This was a great day out and hopefully they know more now about Medieval Ireland.



House System

In September our new First Years were inducted into their Houses and presented with a t-shirts in the colour of their House. In November we had our first competitive House event with a quiz. The first round was for First Years only to help them integrate into their houses and the following rounds which covered, music, history, film and the sciences were very competitive. There was a great atmosphere around the school as each House competed to be the winners. In the end Malala House reached the top of the Leader Board. There will be plenty more events throughout the year so lots of time for the other Houses to catch up. Currently all houses are working on Hampers for St Vincent de Paul.

Parent Association News

The OLG PA kicked off the new school term with a 1st year new parent's coffee morning and uniform sale. It was great to see so many new and old faces, and it's a lovely opportunity for new parents to chat about that big move to secondary school!

We also had our first gardening/tidy up in September, where on a bright Saturday morning members of the PA come together to do some gardening in the walled garden and a general tidy up of the outside space.

As we are approaching the end of the first term, we are holding a "Festive Coffee Morning" this Friday 8th December and are looking forward to welcoming everyone. We are always looking for new members to join the Parent's Association and if you would like to join please email e.waters@olgrove.ie.

Senior Students

Sixth Year English students went on a trip to see a production of Hamlet at Smock Alley Theatre-which was a fantastic day out provided by the Gaiety School of Acting. Fifth Year English students attending a screening of Shakespeare's King Lear by the National Theatre Live where they witnessed an outstanding performance by the legendary Ian McKellen in the lead role. Fifth and Sixth Year students had a guided tour of the exhibition 'The Way We Wore' charting the history of clothing and jewellery at The National Museum, Collins Barracks.



Following the November tests, Sixth Year students had a very enjoyable day trip to the Stella Cinema in Rathmines followed by lunch in Elephant and Castle. Preparations are currently under way for the Sixth Year Christmas Dinner which they are hosting in the common room and of course the whole school is waiting to see the Sixth year Christmas Jumpers from Monday December 18th.

Bake Off

Preparations are under way for the annual Christmas Bake Off that sees Transition Years compete against teachers for the much coveted title of Grove Baker of the year. Transition Year students competed in the heats by baking Buche de Noel and Spanish Polvorones. The Student Council had the very difficult job of judging these cakes. We look forward to the final which is taking place on Thursday 21st December.



TRANSITION YEAR NEWS

By Saaksharaa Prem Kumar, Leah Dempsey McGrath and Sinead Ni Bhaighill

Transition Year, a compulsory year in our school, is an extremely fun school year where we get to take part in many different activities and workshops, complete some work experience, help the community in many ways and also figure out what our interests might be for our future. Although it's only been 3 months, all the TY's can agree that we have taken part in many activities that are not only entertaining but also helpful in many ways. Here were our personal favourites from the three months: -

September



We had our first activity day less than 2 weeks from the start of the new academic year. It was a new concept to us, which got everyone excited and eagerly looking forward to it. The day was split into three with Makeup and Skincare, African Drumming and Cooking Class being our three activities. During the Makeup and Skincare workshop, we were taught many tricks

and techniques on having and skincare routine and how to do our makeup while some of our classmates volunteered to actually get their makeup done. The African Drumming workshop was new territory for almost everyone making it even more of a thrilling experience. We were taught how to play the Fanga rhythm and throughout the workshop were given many little facts on the basics of African Drumming. Although with sore hands, we were able to play a 5-minute piece at the end. Finally, a cooking class. Without even having to think twice, we can all agree that this was extremely amusing. We got to make Autumn themed Vanilla cupcakes. We brought our own ingredients and got the freedom to decorate however we wanted. It was cool to see everyone's different cupcakes and most, if not all, tasted delicious. Chinese Mooncake Testing – as a part of our TY Chinese studies, we got to taste test some different flavours of Mooncakes to aid our learning about the Mid-Autumn Festival (Zhōngqiū). We got to try flavours like the classics red bean, pineapple and tapioca, egg yolk and lotus and many more. Although not everyone particularly liked all the Mooncakes, it was a unique experience.

Paris



Without a doubt I think majority of the TYs can agree that our trip to Paris was the highlight of our month, if not year. We went on a four day trip with an itinerary full of activities. We got to visit iconic tourist attractions like the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre as well as spend a whole day in Disneyland and got to experience the stunning Disney fireworks show. The 4 days were extremely busy and tiring but it was all

worth it. Each day, we were given plenty of time to explore bits of the city ourselves and buy loads of souvenirs. I could go on talking about this trip for pages considering so much happened, but I'd like to end it by saying, Paris is truly beautiful and we are extremely delighted we got to go on this fantastic trip. Merci beaucoup to Ms. Cooke, Ms. McDermott and Ms. McNally for bringing us.



October



We got to learn how to ride Segways. We did this by going around an obstacle course that the instructors set up on the tennis courts. After the obstacle course and a few games, we were all very confident on the segways, until a few of us had a few accidents which led to a few segways going rogue. The TY's really enjoyed this as we got to dance to songs aswell.

JC Results Day – It was the time that some of us were counting down and others were dreading, it was our junior cert results day. We got pizza and drinks and then got our results. Hopefully everyone was happy with them.

Windmill Lane – We also got to visit Windmill Lane this month, a music recording studio. Here we learned all about recording music and mixing. Some of us even got to use a mixer and mix a track. Then we finished up the tour and went to Mc Donalds,

November

Work Experience – November was a very exciting month for our transition year students as well, with them embarking on their first outing into the world of work. Between the 6th and 13th, all of our TY's completed their first week of work experience, with our students working in a wide range of areas, from primary schools to solicitor offices, business complexes and in retail. It gave all of the students a great insight into what a working environment is genuinely like, and an opportunity to consider their placement area as a potential future career.



Opera – This month our TY's also got the incredibly opportunity to attend an opera in the Bord Gais Energy theatre. They were offered this opportunity by the Irish National Opera (INO), and also got to partake in a workshop prior to the event where they learned about 'La Boheme', the opera they went to see and even got to play out some of the scenes. The opera was a wonderful event and a great opportunity that they got to experience, offering them a better insight into music as an art and presenting them with a chance that they may never have experienced otherwise.

Language Week – Finally, as a great way to finish of an exciting month, our Transition Years took part in language week, a week providing them with the opportunity to learn about other countries, their languages, cultures, and experience many fun activities. For example, they partook in a Brazilian 'Capoeira' workshop, where they learned the traditional dance of Brazil, a Spanish flamenco workshop, an inter-schools quiz between all the schools involved in language week (congrats to 4a on first place!), a mystery movie in the IFI, as well as the school's tradition of the bake-off heats, where our French students made the Bûche de Noël cake, and our Spanish students some Polvorones cookies. It was a fantastic week that truly immersed our students in the different cultures of other countries, and sparked interest in languages, and in choosing a language for leaving cert.



SPORTS NEWS

Hockey

Hockey is off to a great start this season with both the Minor team and Junior team having won some of their league matches in the Leinster School Hockey Leagues. The Minor team is off to a promising start winning 2-0 against St Wolstans The junior team is also off to a flying start this year drawing 1-1 with St Wolstans and winning 7-1 against Drogheda Grammar. The Senior have had plenty of matches this term with mixed results.

The uptake in hockey this year is huge with first years being able to field two separate teams. The first years are currently playing in their friendly 8 a side league to gain match practice. They have played numerous games with excellent results. They will play competitively after Christmas in the Leinster Schools League similar to the other teams. All the teams are looking forward to the annual Christmas Tournament. We welcome back Ben Johnson and Issac Johnson as coaches this year and also see the addition of a third coach, Sam Johnson. All three of the coaches bring a positive attitude and help push the girls to the best of their ability in training. The junior team are currently leading their division in the Leinster Schools league which is a fantastic achievement. They have the possible opportunity to qualify for quarterfinals and semifinals in this league. We wish them the best of luck in remaining matches



Athletics

Athletics and fitness training takes place every Monday after school. Students attend who want to keep fit, as part of their Gaisce award and students attend who wish to compete competitively in school events. The cross country team took part in the Blackrock Relays recently and are now preparing to take part in the East Leinster Championships in January. All students are welcome to take part in this training every Monday.



Soccer

This is the second year that soccer is in the school and it is better than ever, with the help of Colm McKillen and Lee Redmond as coaches, who have coached teams such as Leicester Celtic, Mount Merrion, Wexford Fc and UCD, and Ms Doolan supervising, organising matches and telling the information to the team. This years goal is to have as many matches as possible against other schools and this goal is off to a great start with the 1st to 3rd years winning 8-1 against Alexandra College on the 17th of November, 2023. Soccer takes place on Friday from 1:30- 2:30 and any year is more than welcome to join.



Netball

Following on from an extremely successful season last year for our netball teams, we were ready to hit the court running (quite literally) this year with enthusiasm, determination, and skill. Our junior and senior netball teams are yet to play their first match, due to unforeseen circumstances- we look forward to playing St Leo's Carlow in the upcoming weeks. Our 1st and 2nd year team however, played their first match of the year back in October, and showcased their resilience, persistence, and resoluteness.

We have been diligently training, improving our skills, and fostering team spirit in preparation for our upcoming matches. We are super excited to face and overcome new challenges, and hopefully accomplish the paramount goal- having fun along the way. Netball is flourishing with even more popularity in junior age groups than ever before which is truly fantastic to see.

