

Katelyn Bailey– Head Girl

We stand here today on the precipice of the future. It is not a distant reality anymore, it begins here. It begins today.

At any time during my journey in FCJ if I was told that I would deliver the head girl speech, I wouldn't have believed it for a moment. I am proud, honoured and humbled to represent all the 6th years on this special day.

Remarkably, each year seems to have passed by more quickly than the one before. You might wonder, where did the journey begin for the class of 2015?

All of us then, in first year, were a little anxious and a little naïve perhaps, as we buzzed along the corridors of our new school, eager to learn new things, excited by the endless possibilities that seemed within our grasp. Little did we know back then, that we were preparing for the endless tomorrows that have moulded us into the people we are today. Although the days of first year seem like a blur, the friendships we have formed and the memories we have made are unforgettable, some more unforgettable than others.

For once we can say that we entered the school with much shorter skirts that we are wearing now. Each of us proud to wear our new FCJ crest. Would you believe it only took Emer Dunne 6 years to realise that the letters FCJ was inscribed on the crest and not just random squiggles. Some of the girls got quite a shock as Ms Mernagh was in full force patrolling the hallways looking for any speck of makeup. Back then, this was the time of base classrooms where each class group almost hibernated at lunch time. As the days of first year passed by we began to mix and our unity as a year group grew stronger. The main obstacle of lunch times was trying not to get hit in the face with the football, avoiding clean up and trying to get a peep at "Down The Back" which was still a mystical place where only the brave threatened to venture.

Between first and second year we gained independence and finally started going out to the likes of M2 or Castle. We discovered glow sticks and how to fist pump for the first time, a serious skill to perfect. This was the era of the duck face or pout, which thanks to Remmi Moore still lives on strong today.

We matured and most definitely grew in confidence during this time. In second year we had to say goodbye to our old PE teacher, Mr. Bolger but hello to our new one, Mr. Earls. Ashling Byrne took it upon herself to introduce herself with this fantastic opening line , “Mr. Bolg used to call me Ash , but you can call me later “

In Third year things began to get serious, we couldn't doss every weekend and holidays were no longer associated with lie ins. This was when we thought we knew what stress was. However ,during this period we still managed to fit in a bit of craic in . My prevailing memory of this year was “bagging”. The title is quite self-explanatory really. This involved turning somebodies school bag inside out and placing their books back inside, then scurrying back to their classroom and placing it back in the exact position. This sparked war among all the classes in third year. Bagging later evolved to pencil cases and pretty much anything else that could be dismantled. After a stressful year third year drew to a close and thankfully we all remained in one piece ,realising it wasn't as bad as we thought it would be . Despite all Ms. Friends efforts ,all us in Brid still didn't know what the passé compose was.

An entire speech could be written on the memories we shared in fourth year alone. We were segregated in groups at first but during this year we merged to form one. Each and every one of us matured and discovered new skills , like how to get off class to walk aimlessly around the school unnoticed. The most frequent excuse was to paint our mini-company boards. Of course some of the mini companies were more prosperous than others , let's just say Conel and Andrew Kellys never really got off the ground.

During our TY experience the “harlem shake” phenomenon swept the world. Naturally it was only polite of us to take part. Josh Meany definitely deserves a special mention here for being the most creative wearing a wetsuit and saxophone hanging around his neck. Little did we know that Ms. Threadgold was in the room next door. The year dispersed immediately. It's safe to say unfortunately this time we didn't go unnoticed.

For myself, Gaisce was one of the most enjoyable experiences of transition year. We were somewhat eager at the beginning and completely clueless to what 25 kilometres would feel like. With a few tears shed by Ciara Kinsella

On behalf of 6th year I would like to thank all our teachers over the past 5 or 6 years. Especially our Dean Mr. Wade for sharing his invaluable advice, we'll do our best to soak it up like a sponge and hopefully there won't be any dry sponges. And thanks to Ms. Threadgold, Mr. Daly, Nicola, Mairead and all of our form teachers. To Mr. Earls and Ms. O'Shaughnessy thank you for all your help and guidance throughout the year, it is truly appreciated. Thank you to our cleaners, David our gardener and George our caretaker for always having the grounds so immaculate. To Sr. Madeline Hayes and Sr. Madeline Ryan thank you for giving up your Saturdays to cater for 6th year study and the endless cups of tea and candles that were lit over our orals. While we begin a new chapter in our lives so does Sr. Ger. Your presence will be missed around our school but the years of service and the respect each student has for you will never be forgotten.

Sometimes the way to do what you want to do, will be crisp and clear cut and sometimes it will be almost impossible to decide whether or not you're doing the right thing because you have to balance your goals and hopes with being practical and settling for what you can get. So many of us choose our path out of fear disguised as practicality. What we really want seems impossibly out of reach and ridiculous to expect, so we never dare to ask for it. You can fail at what you don't want, so you might as well take a chance at doing what you love. Our job is not to figure out how it's going to happen but to open the door in our head and when the door in real life opens just walk through it. Don't worry if you miss your queue because there is always doors opening, they'll keep opening. We are the new wave in a vast ocean of possibilities. On the other side of that door there is a world starving for new ideas, new leadership. Nobody knows what the landscape will look like in 2 years time, let alone a decade away. The world is crying out for a world of new teachers, nurses, doctors, farmers, mechanics and solicitors. Which on the one hand is intimidating, but on the other immensely liberating. Most of us are worried about our futures but from what I hear if you've been through one of Ms. Wade's French oral classes you'll get by just fine.

The rules, the assumptions the now we're supposed to be breaking down. You can be as creative as you need to be. The old rules are crumbling and nobody knows what the new rules are so make up your own rules. Make the

world more interesting for your being here. We have all learned invaluable life lessons during our time here. That indomitable spirit that is instilled in us by our classmates ,parents and teachers , has taught us that we should never give up and that life is worth living. Even though tough times may be ahead with our leaving cert, only 14 days now Cormac , just 14 ? We will come out the other side with a future that is bright and full with challenges and opportunities. From the bottom of my heart I would like to thank each and every one of you for making my journey in FCJ so enjoyable and wish you the best of luck in the future.



Anti- Bullying Week

LOVE

The theme of the week was
CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE.

Our Anti– Bullying Week took place from the 18th to the 22nd of May. The principal started the week off with an address to the entire school on the Monday morning. All classes were stopped to show a Power-

Point on anti-bullying called “Take A Stand”. A creative writing competition was held and the theme was celebrating difference. Congratulations to **James Murphy B2** who won and to the runners up **Alva Power A3** and **Niall Fogarty C1** who were presented with their prizes on Awards Day.

On Tuesday the form teachers showed a PowerPoint on celebrities who overcame bullying. It was intended to let students know you're not alone and that even the famous get bullied and overcame the struggle.

On Wednesday the whole school renewed our Anti– Bullying Pledge at the graduation mass.

THE PLEDGE TO END BULLYING

I do not accept bullying and agree to abide by the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

I pledge to:

*Respect one another and accept our differences
Reject all verbal, physical, relational and cyber
bullying*

Report all bullying incidents in our school.

The week finished with “Be Yourself” day on the Friday when we all came to school dressed in whatever way we liked.

Lourdes

Every September, the Fifth years take part in the Lourdes walk up Mount Leinster and back to raise funds to send students to help with the disabled on the Diocesan Pilgrimage. This year the money funded four students, **John Dunne, Ciarán Doran, Leah Maher and Laura Maguire**. From the 17th to the 22nd of May these students worked tirelessly, putting all their energy and enthusiasm into making sure the invalids enjoyed the whole experience of the pilgrimage both physically and spiritually.



School News

Holding Crosses



A big thank you to **Matt Piedmonte**, Massachusetts, USA who made small prayer crosses for the 135 graduating 6th years and shipped them to Ireland for their Graduation Mass. Matt visited the school with Mt. Saint Charles Academy in April this year and he wishes the 6th years all the best in the future.

Thank You

A big thank you to the students in 4th and 5th who made buns, biscuit cake, etc. for the students of Mount Saint Charles on the Thursday afternoon of their visit.

Thanks to **Aoife Doyle, Eva Kavanagh, Bernadette Lambert, Annie Doyle, Anna Kinsella and Emma Tobin** for making lunch for 120 people.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

Comhghairdeas le **Bob Kavanagh, Clodagh Murphy** agus **Genevieve Perry** a bhuaigh duaiseanna i gComórtas náisiúnta Seachtain na Gaeilge.

Karate Championship

Well done to **Joey Whelan** who came third in the World Karate Championship. He competed in the blue to black grade in the under 60kg.

PDST National Poetry Competition

Congratulations to **Eli Byrne** for winning the Junior category with his poem “*His First Flight*”. The awards ceremony will take place on the 30th of September.

L.C.V.P Enterprise Activity

Ms. E. Kirwans 5th year L.C.V.P students used their planning, team and organisational skills when they invited two local business people to our school to talk to all 5th L.C.V.P students.

Thank you to **Ms. Mary O’ Neill**, “Sugar and Spice Bakery and Deli” and **Mr Michael Kehoe** “River’s Edge Bar and Grill” for visiting our school on 27th April and sharing their business knowledge, experience and advice with our students.

Cake Sale



On the 6th of May Aidan 1 held a bake sale at lunchtime for all 1st year students. They raised €189 for the I.S.P.C.A. The money was handed over to a representative from the I.S.P.C.A on Monday 25th May. The money will be used for animal welfare. Thank you to all those who supported the Aidan’s bake sale.

Special thanks to the parents who helped too!

5th Year L.C.V.P

A friendly soccer match between F.C.J. 5th year students took place in the soccer pitch in Buncclody. The students raised €366 for Buncclody Day Care Centre. A big thanks to Mr. Earls and Ms. Behan for helping to organise the event.



Transition Year

History Trip

All TY students went to Dublin for a History Trip. They visited Glasnevin Cemetery and Croke Park. First stop was Glasnevin. In groups, the students were given a tour around the cemetery. They were shown the resting places of Charles Stewart Parnell, Michael Collins, Eamonn De Valera and Daniel O'Connell, to name just a few. After the tours had concluded, students then went to Croke Park. They were given a tour of the stadium, and GAA museum. They saw the dressing rooms, conference rooms, and the pitch and stands of the stadium. After a day filled with historical information, an hour was spent in Dundrum shopping centre. A great end to a brilliant day.



Gaisce

On Wednesday 20th and Thursday 21st of May, TY students who did Gaisce completed the bronze medal challenge. They went to Graiguenamanagh to complete a 25km hike. On Day 1 in the evening after school, they walked 8km along the riverside from St. Mullins to Graiguenamanagh. That night they cooked their own meals using food that they brought that day. That night the students sat outside watching a movie thanks to Mr. Earls. After the movie, the students camped in the luxury of a Scouts Den.



The next morning, the students had to cook their own breakfast. After the fries had been cooked the students set off to hike another 17km up Brandon hill, in Graiguenamanagh, and back. The view was beautiful from the top but most used it as a time to rest their feet. After descending the hill, the students gathered all their equipment and got back on the bus to head home. Overall it was a very worthwhile experience.



Italy Trip

On the 24th of April this year, all TY students embarked on the highlight of Transition Year, the trip to Italy. Leaving the school at 2am on Saturday morning, the students were in Dublin airport for their flight leaving at 6am. After a very calm flight they landed in Milan Airport at around 10am.

Day 1

Firstly, the students went to Sirmione, a town near Lake Garda. Students had an hour to get food and a souvenir or two if they wanted. After this they got on a boat and rode across lake Garda to the other side of the lake. Here, they got on cable cars and went up to the top of a small mountain. From here, everyone got a beautiful view of the Lake. It was a great end to a great first day. After descending down the mountain the students went to the hotel and were asleep by 11.



Day 2

Early Sunday morning, the students got on a bus and went to the beautiful city of Venice. Upon arriving here, students were given a tour of the wonderful city. They were shown St. Marks Square, the gondolas and many canals that flow through the city. After this students had their own free time to do their own thing. After a couple of hours, the Students left Venice and went to a Shopping Centre near the hotel for 2 hours. Here they bought clothes, food, souvenirs etc. Afterwards, they went back to the hotel and this brought an end to Day 2.



Day 3

Gardaland was the main event of the day today. At 10am the students arrived at Gardaland, got their tickets and went off to ride the numerous rollercoasters in the theme park. As a small crowd started to arrive in Gardaland, the rain came. And once it came, it didn't go. Fortunately, this meant that there was barely anybody in the park except FCJ



students so we went around and around on every rollercoaster we could find. Unfortunately, by the end of the day everybody was soaked to the skin. This meant we couldn't go to town to get ice cream that night.

However everybody still really enjoyed the day.

Final Day

On the last day of the trip, we went to the town of Verona, home to Shakespeare's famous love tragedy, Romeo and Juliet. We got a tour and were shown that famous balcony, and were also shown the ancient



Roman Coliseum-esque theatre. After this we were once again given free time to soak up the last few hours in Italian civilisation. We then departed Verona enroute to the Airport. After a stress free security check, everyone piled onto the airplane. We arrived back in rainy



Dublin at around 10pm and then hopped on to a bus for the last time and were back at school at around 12 am. It was a brilliant holiday that everyone enjoyed. Thanks especially to Mr. Daly and to the teachers who chaperoned us.

6th Year Student -v- Teacher Soccer Match and Fun Day

On Wednesday May 13th the 6th year students took part in the annual *Student versus Teacher* soccer match as part of their last afternoon of PE in FCJ. The interest shown in the game by students was larger than ever, with 54 students signing up to play, and more offering their services as First-



Aiders and Waterboys/girls. Some teachers were just as excited to get out for the afternoon, and even arrived in fancy dress! The large number of student players were divided into 3 teams, and were re-

sponsibly managed by Katie Owen, Josh Meany and Colm Redmond. Each team then played 20 minutes a-side against the teachers and staff. The games were played in great spirit, with a (small) few moments of skill, some exciting moments of competitiveness, and many moments of (at times unintentional) comedy and humour throughout, all giving the crowd something to cheer and enjoy. The “experience” of the teacher/staff team (with the help of a number of 6th year students who were enlisted to help out the teachers’ cause), was clear at the final whistle as they ran out 3-1 winners on the day. A big thank you to Mr. Quilter who took on the difficult task of refereeing the event, and did so knowledgeably, despite awarding the students a dubious penalty for a Mr. Cloney hand-ball! Well done to those involved in any way for making the event such an entertaining one, especially those students, teachers and staff who kitted out to play.

Following the match, and to the envy of the 650 strong cohort of 1st-5th years who came down as supporters, but had to return to class at the final whistle, the 6th years were treated to an afternoon of games and activities in

the form of inflatables and sumo-suits. Again, this was to mark their last PE class in FCJ, and would serve as a positive afternoon of fun before the run-in to the exams. The



students enjoyed great weather, local food from *Kelly's*, and ice-cream as part of a *HB and Down Syndrome Ireland Fundraiser*. It was hard to tell at 4pm if the many red faces were as a result of the sun or the day's activities, but what was certain was that all students seemed to enjoy the opportunity to relax and have an afternoon of fun during what can be a stressful time of year for 6th years. A word of thanks should be mentioned to the Senior Prefects in their efforts to plan and organise this event for their peers.



Finally, as a result of a bucket collection at the match and donations for the ice-cream, the students raised almost €300 for *Downs*

Syndrome Ireland, so thank you to all those who contributed to such a worthwhile cause.



Active School Flag Award



In October of last year, our school began its application process for achieving an Active School Flag Award. This procedure involved making our school a more positive and engaging place, with regards to physical activity, exercise, fitness, and general health and well-being. As a result, a number of new initiatives began, and existing ones were developed and improved. These initiatives covered a wide range of activity areas (both curricular and extra-curricular), and evaluation of the application process was to be assessed in 4 key areas:

1. Physical Education – the school’s PE programme and curriculum
2. Physical Activity – school teams and initiatives for an active and healthy school
3. Partnerships – links made with local community groups/ organisations and National Agencies
4. Active School Week – a week of activities and events dedicated to the values of the ASF

Active School Week

Motto Competiton Winner:

*“Good Food and Fitness is the Way,
That’s How We Do it in F.C.J.”*

Aoife Lawlor (V.III)

Although many new ideas and projects were undertaken for this application, it was also about evaluating and improving what we already do in our school. As a result, the school’s PE programme has been developed and restructured to incorporate new strands and areas of activity, and we have

made a conscious effort to raise more awareness of achievements that students are accomplishing at local, national, and international levels of sport. As this project has been ongoing since last year, it would take pages of writing to go through every facet of the work the school, staff and students have carried out, however some of the new initiatives and improvements we have made in recent months are:

- Break time circuit exercises with all 1st year students two mornings per week.
- Lunch time walking group with all 1st year students 1-2 afternoons per week.
- Participation of 1st and 2nd year students as well as teachers in the Aviva Health - Fitness Challenge.
- Participation of 2nd year girls (Zumba Dancing), 5th and 6th year boys (Boxing), and teachers in two separate Sky Sports - Living for Sport projects.
- Whole-School Participation in a number of 5km Fun Runs.
- Addition of new modules to TY and Senior Cycle PE (e.g. TRX and Fleet Feet classes).
- Planned addition of aquatics to the Junior Cycle PE.
- Professionally mapping the school grounds and laying out orienteering courses.
- Developing links with local sports clubs (e.g. use of facilities in the HWH GAA club, Bunclody Boxing Club, and Bunclody AFC for training and events), links with Sports Active Wexford, use of local sporting celebrities, parents and past-pupils as guest speakers, coaches, etc.





- Improving links with local primary schools – GAA coaching by 4th year students with many primary schools from around the area.
- Allowing students to have more responsibility with planning, organising and

running activities and events (e.g. TY students that assisted teachers with the Walking Club).

- Whole school Healthy Eating initiative was increased from 1 day a week, to 4 days a week.

• An Active School Week was successfully run and included guest speakers, PowerPoint/video presentations to form classes, events and activities, etc., all geared towards the ideas of Exercise, Healthy Eating, Fitness, and Well-Being.

These are but a few of the areas that were focused on by the school community, and after a visit from an Active Flag Inspector, we became just the 2nd secondary school in Co. Wexford to be awarded our flag in April this year. This award however is an ongoing process, and as a school community we must maintain our drive towards a more active and healthy school over the next 3 years in order to keep this endorsement as an *Active School*.

A big thank you and well done must be said to the Active School Flag committee of staff and students, the teachers and students who helped with so many events and initiatives, and the greater school community for their efforts in achieving this accolade.



CONGRATULATIONS JUSTIN

The Volvo Ocean Race is the leading round-the-world sailing race for teams. It began life in 1973 and was then known as the Whitbread. Today it is sailing's biggest offshore race and one of the most coveted prizes in the sport. It lasts for nearly nine months - the longest sport event in the world and is contested over 38,739 nautical miles. This year the race visited 11 ports and every continent.

The 2014/2015 race was won by the Abu Dhabi Ocean Racing vessel, who's bowman, trimmer & helmsman was an Irish man, **Justin Slattery**, formerly from Bree, Co. Wexford, and a past pupil of F.C.J. Buncloody. This is his second time to win this race, he won in 2005-06 with ABN AMRO ONE, and his fifth time to take part. He



He broke a transatlantic record at the age of 23 and was the bowman on Steve Fossett's record-breaking multihull non-stop circumnavigation of the world in 2004.

Throughout the race Justin wrote a log for The Irish Times, which gave a marvellous inside view of the extremely tough conditions endured by the crews involved in a round-the-world sailing race. In 1992 Justin was awarded this school's Good Fellowship Award. Nowadays he lives in Hamble, England, with his wife, Sue, and their daughter, Molly



Committee Members:

Michaela McDonald, Mr. Sean Mullins, Mr. Brendan Daly, Deputy Principal, Ms. Kay O'Connor, Ms. Monica Dunne, Ms. Carmel Wade, Alice O'Dowd, Martin O'Connor, Mr. Tommy Earls, with Ms. Frances Threadgold, Principal & Mr. Tommy Walsh [Missing from the Photo Mrs. Breen & Ms. Majella Kelly]

Web Site Galleries & Information

There have been some difficulties with the school web site recently which resulted in the loss of the photo galleries and information pages. Happily, the problem is now solved and all are invited to see the photos in the galleries especially of events which happened during this school year—keep checking as we keep working !