



St. Louis Grammar School

In this edition . . .



Year 10 Boys reach Ulster Final



Golf Trip to The Irish Open



Trips to Munich and Italy



Students And Staff 'All In This Together' as High School Musical Comes to St Louis

. . . And Much More

It has, as always, been a busy start to the academic year in St Louis. There have been trips at home and abroad, charity events and an amazing school show. The work in the classroom continues as students build towards exams. On the playing fields, courses and courts, sports teams are in full swing with Gaelic Football, Camogie, Hurling, Golf and Netball players, all training and competing with the school, while Athletics, Music, Drama and many other pursuits continue to thrive. We hope this latest edition of our school newsletter helps give you a sense of some of the exciting things happening in our school.

The school was also dealt a severe blow with the tragic passing of Miss Aisling McGivern, Head of Home Economics, after a very short illness but the students and staff rallied round each other exemplifying the St Louis motto of 'Ut Sint Unum' uniting as one to help each other through a difficult time.

New School Council Elected

A new school council has been elected with members coming from Junior, Middle and Senior school. With the growth of our school in recent years, our council has also grown. Over the year, the council will play an important role in relaying the students' views to senior management with a view to improving the school experience for all. They will talk to their peers and bring ideas, feedback and suggestions to the council. As well as giving feedback, the council are in a position to use their student voice to initiate campaigns and generate change in the school. They are being ably assisted by the Head Boy and Girl teams in Year 14 in conjunction with Miss D Rooney and Mrs B Cunningham. They have already been very proactive and we wish them continued success.



Middle School Council Representatives

Year 8 Induction Trip to Emerald Park

Among the various induction days and activities organised for our new Year 8 students in September was a fun filled trip to Emerald Park. This gave all the new students a chance to get to know their classmates outside the setting of the classroom and was a day that was thoroughly enjoyed by all. In addition to this trip, 'getting to know you' and teambuilding activities and events were held in the canteen, Drama room and other locations, as our new students blended seamlessly into the fabric of St Louis, settling in quickly. They are already becoming great role models in, and for, the school.



Having Fun at Emerald Park



New Student Leadership Team at St. Louis

St Louis Grammar School are delighted with the progress and work, so far, of those students who were elected to the posts of Head Boy and Girl and those who fill the roles of Deputy Head Boys and Girls for the Academic Year 2024-2025.

These prestigious posts are the result of the students, initially, being elected as a Senior Prefect during Year 13 by both peers and teachers. Applicants then undergo an application process which involves completing a detailed application form and attending an interview with the Senior Management Team in school. St Louis Vice-Principal, Mr Eamon McGlue, emphasised the prestigious role the positions hold in the school and the wider community. "At St Louis we are hugely proud of all our students, and we acknowledge that they are all fine ambassadors for St. Louis. The Senior Student Leadership Team reflect the characteristics which are necessary to be responsible leaders and role models for their peers. The standards they set and the way they conduct themselves is an example for all to follow."

Once appointed, the Head Boy and Girl are asked to represent the St Louis student body at various functions and events. They have already delivered speeches at the Year 14 Formal and at prize giving ceremonies as well as carrying out other administrative duties pertaining to their team of prefects in the school.

The posts of Head Girl and Boy for 2023-2024 went to Emma Quinn and Shane Quinn (both Holy Cross PS, Atticall) while the Deputy Head Girls are Grainne Rooney (Moneydarragh PS), Grace Larkin (St Dallan's PS, Warrenpoint) and Alannah Cunningham (St Patrick's PS, Mayobridge). The Deputy Head Boys are Reuben Reilly (St Peter's PS, Cloughrea), Sam McDonald (Magor CIW Primary) and Cormac Small (Holy Cross PS, Atticall). Head of Year 14, Miss Shirley Edgar, congratulated the students on their election to the coveted positions, 'I have great confidence that these students will prove to be fine ambassadors for St. Louis Grammar School. They are already all outstanding young people as is evidenced by their appointments to these significant roles, and I have no doubt they will carry that on to their adult lives, embodying the St Louis spirit wherever they go.'

'Red Carpet' Style at the St. Louis Formal



Students relax and enjoy themselves at the Canal Court ahead of the Formal.



September is that time of the year when students return to school. At St Louis Grammar School, the senior pupils' return to school is always eagerly anticipated as they begin their final year at St Louis with their own night on the red carpet. The 'Sixth Form Formal' is an event which marks the beginning of their final year. Our students were delighted to attend and enjoy one of the great nights in the school calendar, in all its splendour.

Organised by the Year 14 students and co-ordinated by Head of Senior School, Mr. Eamon McGlue, and Head of Year 14, Miss Shirley Edgar, the glittering event was held at the stunning Canal Court Hotel in Newry. It proved to be a fabulous evening in which the students reflected on their days at St. Louis with their teachers. Of course, the event provided the students with an opportunity to 'glam up' for the night and the style on show was befitting the occasion.

The event involved the students being 'presented' to their peers, highlighting their hopes and ambitions for the future. Head Boy, Shane Quinn, and Head Girl, Emma Quinn, paid tribute to their school and to their teachers, many of whom were also present, for their encouragement and support over the past six years. It was a hugely enjoyable night and one in keeping with such an auspicious occasion.

With the formalities over, the 'Class of 2025' settled down to enjoy a night of reminiscing, joviality and dancing, which they duly did - and a wonderful time was had by all.



Bunsen Burner Licenses Secured by Year 8s

Shortly after joining our school at the start of September, our Year 8s got to grips with lots of new things. They were all very focussed when they acquired their Bunsen Burner licenses as they proved themselves capable of using the equipment safely and effectively.

Good work, everyone!



GOAL Jersey Day Fundraiser A Huge Success



This year we were delighted to welcome Sarah O'Malley from GOAL to talk to all our students about the incredible work the charity does. Sarah spoke about the varying kinds of aid GOAL help with in different parts of the world, such as bringing safe and clean water to communities who don't have it, and also how they can offer help in response to natural disasters.

Demonstrating, with the aid of a basketball being handed across the stage, how much more efficiently aid can reach the places it is needed when people are on site rather than distant, Sarah highlighted how important it is that GOAL have 'boots on the ground' in these places, and we were given first hand insight into the work done by GOALies who are close to the communities in the countries where help is most needed. Mrs Cunningham was delighted to facilitate this event, as we have a long tradition in helping GOAL by partaking in the annual Jersey Day fundraiser. This year we raised a fabulous £820.21.

Pictured above are members of our student council presenting Sarah with the cheque for the Charity.



St. Louis Irish Dancing Success at Ulster Championships

The St. Louis Community were thrilled to hear the news of success in the An Chomhdháil Ulster Irish Dancing Championships in Letterkenny, once again, for Eábha O'Hagan (Year 13).

Eábha was dancing as part of the senior team who won for a fourth consecutive year. A magnificent achievement.

Golfing Success at Mourne Golf Club



Congratulations to Year 11 student, Shea Malley, who achieved a very impressive 2nd place finish at the 'Juvenile Annual Home Winners and Trophy Winners for the Season' event at Mourne Golf Club. Maith Thú, Shea



Eva's 'Poster For Peace' a Standout Entry

Eva Graham (Year 10) is presented with her prize by Mrs Grant (Head of Art), Mrs McGreevy and other representatives from Newcastle Lions, for her superb piece of work which was selected for the Ireland final in the International Peace Poster Competition. Mrs McGreevy was full of praise for Eva's work, which was selected as the winner from over 250 entries across seven schools and wished her all the best in the next stage of the competition. Fabulous stuff, Eva!



GOAL Jersey Designs Recognised

Pictured above are Eoghan Small and Shea Devine (Year 9) and Eva Graham and Sammy Briciu (Year 10) being presented with their prizes by Sarah O'Malley (GOAL) for being selected as the top entries in the GOAL 'Design a T-Shirt' competition run in conjunction with our 'Jersey Day' fundraising event. Eva's entry was also selected for the online GOAL competition. Well done to all who submitted designs and especially to our winners!

Bog Run Fun

Congratulations to Caitlin and Rebecca McComb who took part in a 5k Bog Run, raising money for the Cancer Fund for Children back in October. The T-shirts weren't as yellow at the end of the course, though the girls were still smiling as widely. Along with the staff from Eurospar, Newcastle Road, Kilkeel, the girls completed the event and helped raise the huge amount of £939.03.

Our admiration goes out to all involved.



St Louis Goes To Italy



On Monday 10th October 2024, a band of intrepid adventurers departed St Louis, Killeel, and headed off on their inaugural 'Sun' trip to Italy. The group left in the early hours for Dublin Airport, and after a smooth flight, arrived, mid morning, in Naples. The first visit of the trip was to La Fabbrica della Pasta di Gragnano - Pasta Factory, where the touring party learnt all about the origins of 'Naples' pasta, had a tour of the production factory, tasted the pasta in its raw form, and visited the museum. The group then had time to purchase some of the wonderful produce of the factory and fill their cases with different homemade pastas. The group then made their way along the beautiful coast to their Hotel in Piano Di Sorrento where the group were greeted with fresh homemade pizza outside in the fabulous Italian sun!

During the trip, the group were lucky enough to tour the amazing Amalfi coast, taking in the breath-taking views and stopping along the way at famous photo spots for once-in-a-life-time snaps, even 'celeb spotting' in Positano. The morning was then spent in Amalfi town where we visited Cathedral of Sant' Andrea before sampling the world famous lemon sorbet, served inside a full lemon. The group then departed on the Amalfi ferry to Salerno to make their way back for a pizza making workshop. During the workshop the group learnt about the history of the dough, the correct size of an 'Italian' pizza and that when it comes to toppings, less is more! The sampling at the end was certainly one of the highlights of the trip.



The third and final full day was a busy one, first stop Mount Vesuvius, one of only two active volcanos in Continental Europe which stands about 1281 metres tall. The group hiked up to the top and walked around the crater learning about the history of eruptions, truly fascinating! The final stop was Pompeii, one of the most significant proofs of Roman civilization. Here we had a guided tour of the ruins, spending time in the Large Theatre and Odeon and the Amphitheatre... a once in a lifetime visit of this famous historic site.

The evenings were spent at the local beach, in the warm seas, on the Bay of Naples.

Miss McGivern, Mrs Speers, Mrs Lynch and Mr Brown organised the trip. and ensured those travelling had a memorable experience. It has become poignant as it was Miss McGivern's last trip with the school, but in her words hopefully it can be "one to add to the St Louis trip calendar". A whole school Mass celebrating

Technology Department Discover The Magic Of Munich

The recent school Technology trip to Munich, Germany, was an unforgettable experience! The travelling party kicked off the adventure at the iconic Allianz Arena, home of Bayern Munich, where they marvelled at the stadium's cutting-edge design. The students (and staff) availed of the opportunity to walk down the steps as if entering the field to play a major match – a unique experience indeed. Next, the group explored MotorWorld, a paradise for car enthusiasts, showcasing an impressive collection of classic and luxury vehicles. A visit was also included to Marienplatz and the town square, soaking in the vibrant atmosphere and historical architecture. Finally, our intrepid explorers delved into the history and innovation at the BMW Museum, one of the world's leading automobile manufacturers. Each stop offered unique insights into the intersection of technology and engineering, making the trip both educational and inspiring.

This trip was facilitated and led by Mr Boyle, Mr Monaghan, Mrs Cunningham and Mr Martin. We thank all of our staff who help organise trips, both overseas and at home, to help add to the St Louis experience for our students.



Visits were made to many iconic Munich landmarks



Student Successes Recognised at Senior Prizegiving

At the Senior Prizegiving, Principal, Mr Kevin Martin, welcomed current senior pupils as well as past pupils to recognise their achievements in the 2023-24 academic year and reflected on how St Louis has, “For generations, prepared students for the future.” Mr Martin acknowledged the calibre of St Louis students saying, “Students are considerate towards others and very willing to help those in greater need, the spirit of service is alive and well in St Louis.”

Past pupil and guest speaker, Geraldine Foley, was then introduced. Geraldine has lived a fascinating life, sailing over 180,000 miles and visiting over 40 countries around the globe and living for decades on board her boat along with her partner, Peter, who she met at university.

Geraldine spoke glowingly of her days in St Louis and how the nuns, at the time, inspired her and the other girls to go out and give of their very best. She recalled, “From the nuns, there was always the encouragement to go that extra mile ... I just took it a bit more literally than they intended.” Geraldine praised former staff member, Mrs Anley, as being the person who inspired her to get into sailing as she brought students to Killowen to take to the water. “I was very quickly hooked on everything to do with sailing and revelled in the challenge of learning to harness the wind.” She studied law at UCD but, “A month after graduation I set sail from Carlingford for what might now be considered a gap year—except it lasted for thirty years.”

With everyone hooked on Geraldine’s story, she told of some of her adventures, but her focus was always on delivering a passionate message to those assembled. She concluded, “Aim high, and if you have a passion go for it, you’ll only regret what you don’t do! Go on, harness the wind, follow your dreams.”



Past Pupil, Declan Curran, Encourages Students to Persevere in Speech at Junior Prizegiving

St Louis Junior Prize giving was held this week with past pupil, Declan Curran, returning as guest speaker. The event was opened by Head Girl and Head Boy, Emma Quinn and Shane Quinn, who were followed by the school Trad group.

Principal, Mr Kevin Martin, congratulated all the award winners and emphasised how the educational experience at St Louis is one that, “educates the whole person, going beyond the academic side, which is so important, by realising that there are many other aspects to life which are also very important.” He cited the wide ranging extra curricular offerings that are available in the school and the opportunities pupils get to go on trips, attend talks and workshops, and immerse themselves in the community while studying in St Louis.

Guest speaker, Declan, then came to the stage and offered the students lots of brilliant advice, and his key messages were to have no regrets and to build resilience. “Don’t fear rejection, embrace it. If I told you that you were twenty rejections away from achieving something massive, you’d fly through the twenty to reach it, don’t let rejection stop you,” said Declan, citing his own most recent film, ‘Dear Imelda’ as an example. The acclaimed short film has made it into four film festivals - but only after being turned down by 32. Declan encouraged the students to be ambitious and adopt a “what’s the worst that can happen?” approach when opportunities arise. No matter how ambitious something may seem, “the worst that can happen if you reach out to contact someone is they say no or don’t reply and then you’re no worse off than if you didn’t contact them.” said Declan.

Declan recalled with much fondness his time at St Louis, where his love of film began, and reminded all the students of the importance of working hard and being dedicated to your studies. He recounted some of his memories of the six enjoyable years he spent in St Louis, the friendships he formed in his time at the school, and how the caring, positive ethos of the school shaped and formed him as he moved into adult life.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon where some of the achievements of students over the course of the academic year were recognised, and everybody left the hall feeling inspired following the words of wisdom from the speakers.



East High Comes to Kilkeel as High School Musical is St Louis Show 2024

St. Louis Grammar School has a long tradition of school shows, and another chapter was woven into that rich tapestry with the production of High School Musical this year. The cast and crew put a huge amount of work in and it showed over the course of four stunning performances—a matinee for local P7 pupils in feeder Primary Schools and three evening shows which were showcased in front of packed halls and thrilled audiences. The fabulously choreographed singing and dancing sequences were incredible. The energy and enthusiasm



in every aspect of each performance fed down to the audience who became immersed. The acting was of a superbly high standard too, with a feeling of real emotion coming across in many of the scenes. Productions like this only come to fruition with a huge amount of effort and dedication from a significant number of people. Foremost among these is Mrs McDonagh, who has headed up so many amazing shows in her time here at St Louis. Reflecting on the show, Mrs McDonagh, who directed and co produced said, “After 5 years since our last Musical, *Beauty and the Beast* (thanks to covid), it was so nice to get back to performing on stage again and what a way to return! Looking back at the 7 Musicals I have directed here at St Louis, I wanted our return to the stage to be something fun and accessible to all ages. Back in January last year, I immediately saw the appeal in *High School Musical* and knew it would be a winner. However, as I never like to stick rigidly to a script when creativity leads to so many more fun opportunities, I started to think of ways to develop more characters. Having carelessly passed this creativity on to the next generation of McDonaghs, my daughter, Connlaodh, was only too happy to take the script and, with some cool suggestions from my youngest, Sorcha, whose knowledge of obscure Musical songs is a wonder in itself, our version of *High School Musical* started to take shape! By October, St Louis was transformed into the red and white colours of East High, and we let loose on our audiences our very own Wildcats with some very up to date references . The students all rose to the occasion and we performed to three packed audiences who responded with enthusiasm and humbled us with standing ovations. Life has now returned to normal, but a part of our hearts will always be left in our treasured memories from *High School Musical*.” Our thanks go to all - cast and crew - who worked so diligently to produce such a memorable spectacle.

in every aspect of each performance fed down to the audience who became immersed. The acting was of a superbly high standard too, with a feeling of real emotion coming across in many of the scenes. Productions like this only come to fruition with a huge amount of effort and dedication from a significant number of people. Foremost among these is Mrs McDonagh, who has headed up so many amazing shows in her time here at St Louis. Reflecting on the show, Mrs McDonagh, who directed and co produced said, “After 5 years since our last Musical, *Beauty and the Beast* (thanks to covid), it was so nice to get back to performing on stage again and what a way to return! Looking back at the 7 Musicals I have directed here at St Louis, I wanted our return to the stage to be something fun and accessible to all ages. Back in January last year, I immediately saw the appeal in *High School Musical* and knew it would be a winner. However, as I never like to stick rigidly to a script when creativity leads to so many more fun opportunities, I started to think of ways to develop more characters. Having carelessly passed this creativity on to the next generation of McDonaghs, my daughter, Connlaodh, was only too happy to take the script and, with some cool suggestions from my youngest, Sorcha, whose knowledge of obscure Musical songs is a wonder in itself, our version of *High School Musical* started to take shape! By October, St Louis was transformed into the red and white colours of East High, and we let loose on our audiences our very own Wildcats with some very up to date references . The students all rose to the occasion and we performed to three packed audiences who responded with enthusiasm and humbled us with standing ovations. Life has now returned to normal, but a part of our hearts will always be left in our treasured memories from *High School Musical*.” Our thanks go to all - cast and crew - who worked so diligently to produce such a memorable spectacle.



Golf Trip to Royal County Down for Irish Open



Back in September, 35 students were fortunate enough to get the chance to attend the Pro-Am on the Wednesday ahead of the commencement of the Irish Open at Royal County Down. It was a fabulous experience for all concerned as they got the opportunity to see some high quality golf played by some of the world's best golfers, and also to see some well known faces including the likes of James Nesbitt and Rian O'Neill. Witnessing all this on one of the top golf courses anywhere around the globe, but also one that is so close to home, was a magical opportunity and that all who went were delighted to avail of. It was a trip that was both thoroughly entertaining but also motivating and inspirational. Thanks to Mrs Gibney for organising this unique experience.

Golf Lessons Resume

Our budding golfers have been back out honing their skills on the course over the last few months. Lessons have been taking place weekly at Killeel Golf Club, and there was an internal competition pre-Christmas which gave the golfers a chance to express themselves in a competitive environment. The focus on development has been superb with students from Year 8 through to Year 14 involved. There have been lots of very notable improvements from everybody which has delighted Mrs Gibney and Mrs Downey.



St. Louis Students Star on the Sports Fields of Ulster

Senior Camogie



The senior Camogs excited the Ulster Championship in heartbreaking fashion against Lecale, but it didn't take away from a fabulous year for the girls that saw them win four of the five games they played this year. Their performances, attitude and commitment have proven them great ambassadors for St Louis.

The Year 12 Boys had another great year. Having lost out in the final last year they made it back to the semi final stage this term but lost by just two points to Carndonagh. Games against St Malachy's, Castlewellan, Virginia College, Cavan and the semi final against Carndonagh, stood out for their quality and the St Louis performances.



Year 12 Boys 2024



Year 10 Boys 2024

It was a great year for our Year 10 Boys' team who progressed to the Ulster final where they played Sacred Heart, Omagh, coming up just shy on a scoreline of 3-5—1-7. A strong group stage saw qualification secured for a quarter final. At that stage a hardworking performance sealed victory over Loreto, Milford, and set up a semi final with Patrician, Carrickmacross in sunny Mayobridge. A high quality game of football ensued that was nip and tuck for long periods, with St Louis coming under significant pressure in the latter stages, but the lads held firm and finished with a couple of scores to make the decider.