

# ARDGILLAN NEWSLETTER

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## An Introduction from Ms. Ní Mhurchú

Dear students, staff and parents,

I wish you and all of your families a very happy new year. It hasn't been the best start to the new year for any of us but here's hoping things will improve in the coming months and that 2021 will be a better year for us all.

It is a difficult time for everyone at the minute and I want to sympathise with our families who have experienced sickness and bereavement over the past few months – our thoughts are with you and your loved ones.

It is an especially challenging time for our school community due to the uncertainty about state exams and when schools will reopen. However, the move to Distance Learning was much smoother this time around and great credit is due to our students and teachers as they continue to work together online in innovative and creative ways.

We look forward to welcoming you all back to Ardgillan as soon as it is safe to do so and in the meantime we will continue to help and support our students in any way we can. Continue to work together and to do your best. You are all representative of the future of our country and I am very hopeful that there is a bright future ahead when I see the resilience, positivity, creativity and determination you have all shown to date. I miss you all in school and I am thinking of you all.

*Keep dreaming, keep hoping and keep believing!!*

Ms Ní Mhurchú

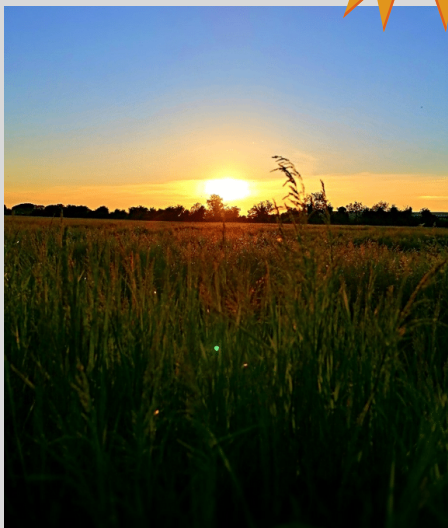
Photography Competition Winner  
'My Lockdown Life'



**1ST**

Chloe Styles

## Photography Competition Runners-Up



Jake Lynam



William Leonard



Ellen Brogan

# STUDENT SUBMISSIONS



## “Never Stop Hoping for a Better World, and Not Just One that is Far Away”

*an essay by Emily Cathcart*

If you were able to ask yourself on New Years Day 2020 where you saw yourself in 2021, I am sure that the answer would not have been 'in the middle of the third nationwide lockdown due to a pandemic'. And if the pandemic has taught us -as students- anything, it is that nothing in life is certain. Not even the Leaving Cert is certain. I can only confidently say one thing, which is this; these times are hard on everyone. They may even get harder still, and there is no one to blame and very little that you can do about it. That is not to say that there is nothing you can do to make life a little easier. There is joy to be found in this seemingly endless crisis, if only you hold onto hope, hope for a better world.

As students of all ages across Ireland face the prospect of a return online learning, it is with a markedly changed attitude. In the first lockdown we started off with a naïve joy at the idea of a few weeks at home. As the situation progressed, there was bread baking, 5km runs, zoom table-quizzes, and an undeniable sense of being 'in it together'. This time around I sense despair and hopelessness creeping in. We are more aware of what awaits us; overdue work piling up, tensions at home, loneliness and a lack of motivation. I can't tell you that these things will be easy, but you will get through them. And there are things that you can do to help yourself and to help others.

But there are also smaller things you can do. Savour every bite of your next meal. Step outside and let the morning sun touch your face. Take a single deep breath. Remember that if all you did today was survive, that is enough. You are enough.

When you think of all the days stretching before you, each the same and with no end in sight, life can feel hopeless, meaningless. You have to give it meaning. Sometimes helping others is the best way to rebalance ourselves. You are not alone in your struggles, even though it may seem as if everyone else is 'coping' far better than you are. Try to be honest, and vulnerable about what you are going through with those around you. It will encourage others to share their own struggles. Remember that your days do not have to be empty. Discover new loves and new passions. Listen to a new type of music, write a terrible novel or watch an old movie with your family. The days may seem endless but they do not have to be empty.

Above all, never forget that one day life will be better. The time will come when you can spend time with your friends, go back to your dance or music classes, and not worry about face masks and hand sanitiser. Those times will return. However, do not let the rose-tinted glass of hindsight fool you into believing that life was not hard before all of this began. Life has always been hard, and it always will be, but just in different ways. There is no version of life without suffering of some sort. It may seem depressing to realise, but it is not. If you stop trying to avoid suffering, or if you stop waiting for your life to be without suffering, then you can accept your situation as it is and work to make life a little better. Life can be better, and not just in some unknown future. Your life can become better, today.

In conclusion, it is clear that the days of lockdown ahead of us will be hard, but we are not wholly powerless in improving our situations. There are ways to make life better for ourselves, and for others. Life is not perfect, it never was, and it never will be. Stay hopeful about those better days, and not just the ones that are far from now.

“...if all you did today was survive, that is enough.  
You are enough”

I am a sixth-year student myself, so I'm not going to tell you to just keep a positive attitude and do your work on time. I am a student, so I know that there will be some days when you just won't be able to do your work. There will be days when getting out of bed will be your biggest struggle, not your higher-level maths homework. That is why you must prioritise looking after yourself. It is the basic things, the things you are sick of being lectured about that are the foundations of your wellbeing. Get as close to eight hours sleep as you can, fuel your body with healthy food and keep active.

### A Selection of Artwork made by our First Years





# FEATURES + COLUMNS

## a riddle for you...

*I am something people love or hate. I change people's appearances and thoughts. If a person takes care of themselves I will go up even higher. To some people I will fool them, to others I am a mystery. Some people might want to try and hide me but I will show. No matter how hard people try I will never go down. What am I?*

by Chloe Styles



## 2020. A Review in Gaming

by Isaac McGrath Long

With everyone being at home due to the pandemic, people needed to find entertainment at home and video games did that to perfection. The games that came out this year allowed people to forget about the events around the world, and today I will write about the games that helped to normalize the world.

The year started slow but on the 26th of March we were treated to two massive games. Those being Doom Eternal and Animal Crossing New Horizons. These games came out at the beginning of the pandemic, so it gave people something to do. People lost hundreds of hours to Animal Crossing and Doom Eternal gave people excitement to last for months. Next, we got the Final Fantasy 7 Remake in April. The remake of one of the most iconic games of all time. Fans were so excited to get a copy and they were not disappointed. The graphics look fantastic and you have a section of the original story that is done fantastically. In June we got the Last of Us part 2. The sequel to one of the most beautiful stories of all time in the Last of us 1. The hype was huge but there was so much controversy with this game that would take a thousand words to even list a small amount of controversy. But whether you were a fan of it or not, it still set new goals for what graphics and details can be in a video game.

We didn't have to wait long for new games. In the span of two months, we got Ghost of Tsushima and Hades. Ghost of Tsushima was a fantastic open world that made video games look like art and Hades was the surprise game of the year. A small indie game that to many people was the game of the year was great to see.

In November we had 3 huge events. We got Cyberpunk 2077 as well as a New PlayStation and Xbox. Cyberpunk 2077, which was first announced in 2013, was the game many people were most looking forward to in 2020. However, it didn't get a great reception as it was clearly rushed to meet a deadline, and it wasn't finished, and glitches were clearly noticeable. Hopefully in 2021 the developers of Cyberpunk can make the game what it was set out to do.

The PS5 and Xbox series X finished out the year and my word there is a lot to discuss so I'll keep it short. If you managed to get either of the consoles, you basically won the lottery. It was almost impossible to get a hand on one and so many people were left unhappy with Sony and Microsoft's handling of the selling of the consoles. Hopefully, we can get a hand on one in 2021.

That's a review of a year in Gaming. In 2021 Resident Evil 8, Halo Infinite and God of War Ragnarök are all scheduled to be released. Hopefully this leads to 2021 being a great year for video game players



## a little bit about... science

by Marcela Mahon-Mas

Science opens our minds. It allows for curiosity. We learn everything about the world around us through science. Everything, from the anatomy of the human body, to how the universe was created 13.8 billion years ago.

There are endless possibilities through science, making it a fascinating subject for all.

**Study Tip:** Condense information and stick to the facts. If you know the facts, you can't go wrong!



## TIPS FOR KEEPING WELL OVER LOCKDOWN.....

### EXERCISE!

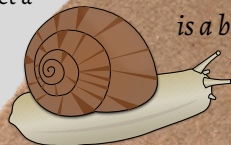
Exercising is not just for those who are extremely sporty- it's for everyone. There is an endless list of reasons why staying active is essential for your body and for your mind. But as a student, it can be hard to find the time to keep active. Doing an hour long workout is fantastic- but not everyone can fit that in. Increasing your activity by just a couple of minutes every day can improve your health, your focus and your mood. Why not try setting a timer while you work, such that for every 55 mins of sitting you are active for 5 minutes? Do some jumping jacks, do a lap of the garden, or dance around the kitchen with your dog. And if you have the time for a longer workout, check out 'PE with Joe' on YouTube, or all of the fantastic challenges posted regularly on the PE edmodo pages.



## Cúinne Gaeilge

scríofa ag Emily Cathcart

These days of lockdown may feel as if they are **ag seilmidéal** (going at a snail's pace) but in this little corner we will bring you interesting words and phrases **as Gaeilge** to brighten them up!. Irish is a beautiful language, and it is a shame that so many students learn to resent it in school. This year, why not challenge yourself to use whatever Gaeilge you have, at home or with your friends?



'**Níl slí dhá chat chun rince ann**' is the equivalent of the phrase 'there isn't space to swing two cats' and translates to 'there isn't the space for two cats to dance'. In these times of **dúnghlasáil** (lockdown) I think it is a pretty useful one!



# SCHOOL NEWS + MORE

## My Lockdown Playlist ~ Ms. Delaney

1. **Dancing in the Moonlight**, Jübel - Always on in the background when I'm working and never fails to lift my mood.
2. **Days like This**, Dermot Kennedy - Very apt at the minute and I love Dermot Kennedy. I am still hoping I'll still get to see him this summer
3. **Fly Away**, Tones and I - I've had this on repeat for months. Blasting it out on the spin bike in the evenings gives me some motivation. Also imagining flying away to literally anywhere!
4. **Here Comes the Sun**, The Beatles - Always puts a smile on my face. It's in one of my favourite movies I rewatched recently, points if you can guess it...
5. **We Didn't Start the Fire**, Billy Joel - A random one but my history class will get it. I played it for them and I cannot get it out of my head.



**Dancing in the Moonlight (feat....**  
Jubël, NEIMY • Dancing in the Moonlig...



**Days Like This**  
Dermot Kennedy • Without Fear (The C...



**Fly Away**  
Tones And I • Fly Away



**Here Comes The Sun - Remast...**  
The Beatles • Abbey Road (Remastered)



**We Didn't Start the Fire**  
Billy Joel • Storm Front



## A Report on HealthFest 2021

by Jack Caffrey and Eleanor Quill

HealthFest is a festival all about promoting Physical, Mental and Nutritional health for teens in 4th and 5th year. Normally it takes place live at the RDS center in Dublin. This year the event organisers had to adapt by making a user-friendly website to facilitate the event online. The event took place on Wednesday the 27th January. Here is our experience of the event...

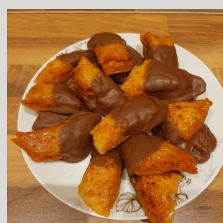
Talks were given by individuals who specialised in ways to look after your health. First up on the online festival was Greg O'Shea...best known for winning Love Island 2019, he is also a professional Rugby 7's player. Greg did a 'H.I.I.T' workout session with us. I'm sure everyone was feeling very tired after it, but it made us feel great after it.

Next up was Professor Niall Moyna. You may recognise him from Operation Transformation, but he is also Professor of Human Performance in DCU. He gave the tip to young people and teenagers, to pick up a sport that we like, and stick to that sport, as no sport is better than the other.

Next we had a talk from Dr Caoileann Murphy, who worked as a dietician on Operation Transformation for the past 2 years. The main piece of advice that she gave was to eat a variety of different foods from each food group on the food pyramid to get your best performance, both for sports and academically as well. For the 'Healthy Mind' section, Paul Gilligan and Dermot Wheelan were the special guests. Paul discussed that students in school are going through a tough time at the moment, not being able to see our peers and teachers in person, and gave three tips to cope with the current situation; 1. Back yourselves 2. Trust Others 3. Embrace uncertainty

You may know Dermot from 'Dermot and Dave' on TodayFM. Dermot mentioned the time he had a panic attack from stressing too much. Ever since that panic attack, he learned to manage his stress and cope with it better. He now meditates to handle his stress and keep mentally well. To finish off the event there was a scavenger hunt for the attendees to take part, in which they had to look for specific items. On completion the TYs received a certificate of completion.

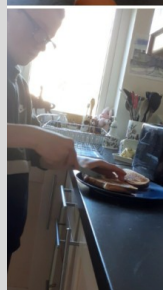
We would like to say a huge thank you to our TY co-ordinator, Ms. O'Reilly and our Year Head, Ms. Sheahan for organising this event for TY's in our school. We can say on behalf of the rest of the students in 4th year in Ardgillan Community College, we all thoroughly enjoyed this online event.



Homemade honeycomb  
dipped in chocolate made  
by Jessica Moore

## First Year Home Cook Project

The Home Cook project involved preparing, cooking and serving a nutritious breakfast or lunch for someone in their family. The dish the students cooked had to meet their family members nutritional needs. Sean Gibbons decided to make himself scrambled eggs on toast and Aisling Kenny chose to make blueberry pancakes with a yoghurt dressing. Due to covid restrictions, first years did not get the opportunity to cook in school this year at all, and so the work they have done is just amazing. Well done!





# SPECIAL INTERVIEW

## ARDGILLAN'S CUT-CREASE QUEEN: HOLLY ROCHE

interviewed by Yoma Dodo

*For our inaugural edition of the Ardgillan Community College Newsletter, we look at one of the College's very own Sixth Year students, Holly Roche. Holly is a 17-year-old self-taught Makeup Artist and Social Media Influencer. She displays her mind-blowing makeup skills across her Instagram page '@makeupbyhollyyyy' which has amassed 28.1k followers, and her TikTok account '@hollyrochemua' which has gathered 53.6k followers. From her killer cut-creases, to her stunning graphic-liner looks, and to the countless brands she teams up with like Samsung and Inglot Ireland, Holly Roche has proven herself to be not only a treasure within the Ardgillan school community, but the entire nation of Ireland.*

**Y:** First things first, how are you and how have you been keeping during this lockdown?

H: I'm good thank you, I've just been doing makeup, doing my thing, and trying to keep up with the work, which can be kind of hard, but overall, I'm doing okay. Thanks.

**Y:** You have obviously been doing makeup for a while now, When would you say you first got interested in makeup, and why?

H: I was around fourteen, fifteen. I modelled for a neighbour who was doing a makeup course, as a favour. She did my eyebrows nicely, so I started doing my brows, then eyeshadow, then foundation, and here we are. Basically, brows got me into makeup.

**Y:** We have seen the amazing major brand deals you have done recently with Samsung, Inglot and Sosu. How were you sure you would be interested in pursuing makeup as a career and source of income?

H: I'm sure I want to pursue makeup as a career, mainly because I really enjoy and love doing it. It just makes me happy when I'm sitting down by myself, in my own company, doing my makeup. It's also great working with brands, seeing how those sorts of things work and meeting new people. I do not see the point in working a job you do not enjoy, and I absolutely love makeup

**Y:** You seem like you have made some wonderful memories doing what you love to do. What has been the highlight of your ongoing journey as a Makeup Artist so far?

H: Probably when I was picked by one of my favourite makeup artists KeilidhMUA, to be a part of her makeup master class tour around Ireland. I was one of three picked to be in the Dublin show. I got to go on stage, answer questions and speak in front of the audience. It was a wonderful experience because I had never been in front of a large crowd before, I don't particularly like them, and this was a massive confidence booster for me



**Y:** Of course, you are one of the College's Sixth Year students also, what has been the trickiest thing about balancing your role as a student and your career full time?

H: The most difficult part, to be completely honest, is to stay motivated and prioritise school when I prefer doing makeup and all I want to do is paint my face. Also managing the workload between working for brands and catching up on schoolwork, can be difficult. It is quite hard to tell you the truth.

**Y:** Okay rapid-fire question, If you could only have three makeup items for the rest of your life what would they be and why?

H: I already know the answer! Bronzer, lashes, and lip gloss. Listen, you honestly cannot go wrong with just those three. As much as I love my full glam, if I could just have my lashes and lip gloss on every day, I would!

**Y:** Finally, what words of encouragement do you have for the other people reading this who may be interested in taking a more creative approach in their future careers?

H: My biggest advice for anybody, but especially anyone going down the route of a creative job or social media is, NOT TO LISTEN TO ANYBODY! All that matters is you, and what you want to do and what makes you happy. If I had listened to some people I would not be where I am today. So, I'm glad I stuck to my guns and did what made me truly happy and I advise you to do the same.

**Y:** Thank you so much, Holly for taking this moment to share your experiences with me and everyone who will be reading, we all wish you the best of luck in your future endeavours as a Makeup Artist.

H: Thanks so much, for taking the time to interview me, I have never had an interview like this before. This was a really cool experience!





# BONUS CONTENT



## Photos from the Archives

These photos show Ardgillan staff from 2009 (the year the school opened) and from 2015. How many of the teachers can you name? Below are some more photos of life in Ardgillan throughout the years.



## Best Teacher Submission

*submitted by Snr. Martin*



Editor of this Issue: Emily Cathcart

Send your work submissions, comments or suggestions to [e.cathcart15@ardgillancc.ie](mailto:e.cathcart15@ardgillancc.ie) or [s.simonovic15@ardgillancc.ie](mailto:s.simonovic15@ardgillancc.ie)

With thanks to all students and teachers for their submissions to the student council and to Ms. Crossan and Ms. Byrne!