



## End of Term Principal Message

As we approach the end of the first term of 2023/2024, I am filled with immense gratitude and pride reflecting on the collective achievements of our school community. To our incredible students, your passion for learning and commitment to excellence has been the driving force behind our accomplishments this year. I am continually impressed by your creativity, kindness and determination in pursuing your academic and personal goals. 2023 for example as seen a remarkable set of Junior Cycle results. Student uptake of higher level subjects (Maths, English and Irish) sits far above national averages, while optional subjects like Art and Music boast high levels of Distinctions when compared to national averages. Additionally, subjects like Geography, Spanish and Graphics see a high proportion of top grades when compared to the national set of results. Students then have also excelled in other subjects like business, history, and home economics this year.

In terms then of other areas of school life, sport continues to grow with teams now taking to the pitch and earning big victories in Junior and Senior boys and girls Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer and GAA. We've also had popular new clubs established this year by staff and students alike such as our Origami Club, The LGBTQ+ and Allies Group, Lego Club, Table Top Club, Music Club and Model United Nations (MUN) Club to name a few. All of the club and sporting news then is reported on by our new Student Press Team! Students have also had the wonderful opportunity to broaden their horizons this term by becoming involved in overnight trips away such as our Spanish Exchange, Carlingford trip and the Royal Russel MUN. Themed Weeks such as Maths Week, European Languages Week ...

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## Ice skating

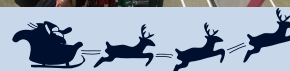
The LGBTQ+ ally group began a new Christmas tradition today by inviting the OMG group from East Glendalough School to connect and build friendships on the ice at the Wicklow Christmas market. ETSS Wicklow can't wait to invite more schools to connect next term on new exciting events.



## The Winter Fair

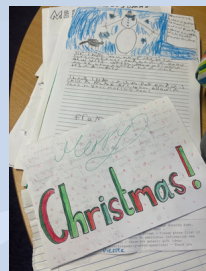
The Winter Fair was brilliant, there were lots of stalls, with even first years selling different things. As well as the student stalls, there were outside retailers selling Jewellery, baked goods, sweets, handmade items and much more.

ETSS Wicklow was festively decorated with Christmas decorations covering the corridors, hall and classrooms. The winter fair started at 4.00pm with a quiet autism hour before opening to the public until 8.00pm. We would love to thank everyone inside and outside the school for all their hard work in organisation of the fair and its huge success!



## Care Package

This year our new first years in ETSS Wicklow wrote letters, made cards or drew pictures for elderly people in nursing homes around the east coast for Christmas. Instead of maybe having no cards these sweet elderly people got our cards and beautiful pictures. Though a small gesture it makes a big difference. The students received some heart warming replies from nursing home residents following their participation in the carepack.ie kindness initiative. We hope they have a great Christmas and wish them nothing but the best.



## Parent Christmas Wreath Making Workshop



Parents enjoyed a lovely festive Wreath Making workshop with our HSCL Ceire, where they were able to enjoy some mince pies and coffee while they created some amazing door show stoppers. Well done to everyone on your beautiful creations! Ceire looks forward to welcoming parents into the school in 2024 for some more exciting parent events!



## Butler's Chocolate Factory Trip

The 5th Year Business students kicked off Enterprise week with a trip to Butler's Chocolate Factory, where they learned all about the production process and the history of Butler's chocolate. They were also treated to some delicious treats and painted their own chocolate Santa Claus to take home with them.



## ETSS Wicklow Christmas Bake-Off

ETSS Wicklow's 3rd annual Christmas Bake Off was a great success this year and happily judged by all our staff. Gold went to Odhran O'Reilly's iced sugar cookies, Silver went to Ava Leane's decorated chocolate Biscuit cake and Bronze went to Jack Dunne's homemade mince pies. Well done to all our festive bakers we were blown away by the talent this year.

## St.Vincent de Paul Selection Box Drive

The selection box drive was a really special idea from the student council. Each class had to collect as many selection boxes as they could. These selection boxes went to the St. Vincent de Paul drive for people who may not get anything for Christmas. It was a really good thing to try and do. The class that collected the most selection boxes won a takeaway of their choice. The Hyde Class enjoyed some Dominos pizza on the last day of school. Thank you to everyone involved in the organisation of the project.





## Football

The boys and girls have had a very eventful year for football and they have been working very hard on the training pitch. History was made with the first ever girl's team playing their very first match, with their league campaign beginning after Christmas. Highlights this term included the Junior Boys recording a famous cup win against Cistercian College from Galway and the first years travelling to play a cup match in Oriel Park. Thank you to Office 365 for sponsoring our football kits and to Wicklow Rovers for the use of their pitch and training facilities. Thank you to Craig, Francisco and Tony for coaching all of the different teams. Best of luck to the first year team whose league campaign will be in full swing when they come back from the Christmas break. ETSS Wicklow welcomes students of all abilities to join the football teams. Anyone interested in joining should speak to Craig, Francisco or Tony in the new year.

**By Harry Kavanagh.**



## Lunch Time Sports With Andrei

Lunch time sports with Andrei takes place from 1.00-1.45pm, which is our big break here at ETSS. Lunch time sports takes place every full school day. It consists of a designated basketball area, a volleyball court, Badminton and Table Tennis. Every Monday at big break, Francisco does football out on the green in front of the school. Most students at ETSS Wicklow enjoy sports at lunch time as it is very enjoyable.

Prahad Raguram is head of lunchtime badminton club. He started the club because of his interest in badminton. We started it 2 months ago and do badminton club every Thursday at lunch time. From January we are having new teacher Richard come in to teach us badminton. We are also going to play matches against other schools.

**By Prahad Raguram**



## GAA Football

The girls 1st and 2nd years Gaelic team won the first Gaelic match in ETSS Wicklow history. They beat Enniscorthy CC. 8-6. We hope there is lots more wins coming for our school. The boys & girls have been working very hard at training. A massive thanks to Claire for coaching the girls and boys teams.

**By Harry Kavanagh**





## Basketball

Our 1st and 2nd year boys basketball team showed excellent teamwork in their first ever match. It was a nail biting battle unfortunately they lost out by one basket in the end. Very well done to all players! We conclude with the U16 girls' basketball competition with an exceptional performance in our final match of the season.

The efforts and dedication were truly incredible, marking it as our team's best performance so far. Especially in the last quarter, we achieved our highest score of the season, being the best way to finish the year. Thanks to our phenomenal sponsor for providing us with our amazing jerseys for our inter school matches. Congratulations to the girls and a massive thanks to our sponsor Ross Hertherington at Ecopet. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

**By Hollyanne Armstrong -1st year**



## Self Defense Club

The self defence club has been a massive success this year, we have had an influx in members bolstering our numbers to the high 20s. We've helped create a positive atmosphere and build confidence within students. We've also begun training Ali for a charity fight in March. We've also been working on building confidence in self defence with the girls in our school, to help them understand their true abilities. And hopefully we'll find the next Katie Taylor.

**Caleb, Andrei and Ali**



## Volleyball

Our ETSS Wicklow volleyball team just finished it's U'16 championship. Our boys managed to reach all the way to the quarter finals tournament where they lost 2-1 against Castleknock College and won 2-0 against Kilkenny College.

Our boys played exceptionally during this season and improved technically from game to game. The team was composed by: Luis (captain), Norbert, Alexandru, Attila, Filip, George, Mario, Rory, Pepe, Ollie, Naoise, Fionn and Andrei as a coach. See you all next season!



# Messages From Our Student Support Coordinators

## 1st & 3rd Year - Craig Ledwith



As we approach the festive season, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we've shared so far this year. In the classroom and beyond, you've shown determination and a thirst for knowledge that truly inspires.

First years, you have made a huge transition from primary school this year and you have made it look easy. As your Year Head, I am proud of the compassionate and bright youngsters you are becoming with each passing week.

Third years, this year marks an educational milestone like no other before, the Junior Cycle examinations. I look on with immense pride at the mature, determined young adults you are becoming.

Christmas is a time of joy, gratitude, and reflection. It's a season that reminds us of the importance of kindness, compassion, and the bonds we share with those around us. As your Year Head, it gives me great joy to see so many youngsters in our school community that will undoubtedly have a positive impact in the world.

As we welcome a new year, let's carry the spirit of Christmas with us—cherishing every opportunity to learn, grow, and spread kindness. Embrace the challenges ahead with the same determination that has defined our first term together.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with endless possibilities.

## 2nd, 4th & 5th year Shauna O'Toole



It is safe to say that it has been a busy first full term and I've no doubt that everyone is looking forward to the Christmas holidays.

I couldn't be prouder of how well all of my year groups have settled in this year so far. 2nd years, you have embraced the jump from 1st to 2nd year and the advancement of the curriculum. You have become such a vital part of our school community and you embrace all extra curriculums. TY's, you have most certainly been a busy bunch since the beginning of term! You have worked well and been very proactive in engaging with the TY curriculum. We hope to see this continue for the remainder of the year.

5th years, you have certainly been hit with a bang going into 5th year, from using textbooks, to heavier workload, to more tests and studying... a big change from TY! But you have all taken it in your stride and I couldn't be prouder of the young mature adults you are becoming.

I wish you all a wonderful and well deserved Christmas break and looking forward to seeing you all in 2024!

## A Focus on Attendance

In January as a school we are putting a strong focus on the importance of regular good attendance. Consistent attendance is important for learning, review, and preparation for ongoing assessments and projects. Student Support coordinators will be awarding those students with good attendance with prizes in monthly class draws.





## Spanish Exchange

On Wednesday 22nd November, all of our students were very excited to go off to Spain. We all had a lot of energy getting ready to take the bus to Dublin Airport. Overall it was a great day of travelling and when we got the school in Spain we had a very warm welcome from all of our families and teachers Gemma and Angels. Everyone seemed to settle in to their host families homes well.

The next day was a nice start to the trip as we had a great activity in the morning and then got an interesting tour around some of the sights in Terrassa. We visited Terrassa Modernista, El Mercat and a Wool Factory that has been turned into a Science Museum. After this we had a nice afternoon with our Spanish students and then went for the rest of the day into Barcelona. When we were on our way in, it was very exciting and it was just amazing see the architecture of the Sagrada Familia. We had a great tour from inside to outside, but no one could believe the amazing detail put into it. After this we had a lovely time shopping and exploring!

On the Saturday we had a great time in the morning singing Happy Birthday to Lily and Alex before we headed off to Mount Tibidabo. This was a good chance for us to let off some energy and enjoy fun rides, great views and just have a good time!

After the first few days I think we were all tired with everything we were doing but we had a great time with our families on Sunday; from watching matches, exploring new towns, shopping, and much more. On Monday, we woke up with a lot of energy to take a cable car to Monserrat. We all weren't ready for a hike down a mountain but we all had a bit of a laugh and it was a lovely day with some great views.

I think we all had run out of energy by this stage but all of us were sad to be leaving the next day. We had a great workshop learning about traditional Catalan dance before heading back to the airport. We would like to thank Sheena, James and Sue for their help with organising the trip and looking after us so well for the week. When we got back to the school we were all very happy to see our families! To finish, I would like to say that this was a really great trip and I can't wait to see what the future years bring with our French and Spanish Exchange's!



## ETSS Careers Week



"If you can't see it, you can't be it!". This week, parents and friends of the community shared their career and college experience over 25 workshops. We had careers in canine nutrition, social work, football, art, business, apprenticeships, languages and more! Colleges like TUD, Trinity, NCI, DCU, BIFE, SCFE helped our senior cycle students explore course options and pathways.

Stacey, our Guidance Counsellor, is available for vocational appointments in the new year!



## Stand up Week

November 6th-10th was Stand Up Week and there were tons of LGBTQ+ activities going on! For example, there was education about sexual orientation and gender identity during tutorial throughout the week.

As for other fun things that happened, there was an LGBT mural drawn around the school and there was also a crosswalk representing the pride flag colors painted at the school entrance! On the Friday, the whole school wore clothes with the colors of the pride flag according to their year. (1st year red, 2nd year orange, 3rd year yellow, transition year green and 5th year blue). Our school is making a great effort at supporting all students no matter their culture, background, race, religion and sexual orientation, so it's a big step in that direction!



## Astro-Pi

This year, ETSS Wicklow students have signed up for their second Astro-Pi competition. The mission they have been given is to calculate the speed of the ISS in a certain time slot. Astro-Pi provides students with valuable experience in coding, problem-solving, and teamwork, which are vital skills for success in the workforce. By participating in this competition, students gain insight into the real-world applications of coding and learn how to work in a collaborative environment. The two teams this year are very excited to share their work with the Astro-Pi coordinators, and to hopefully achieve some great results.

## ETSSW Model United Nations

To recap all that has happened this year for WICKMUN we have attended three conferences, those being Royal Russell MUN, RADMUN and PARKMUN. We did very well at these conferences. At PARKMUN Oscar Kavanagh and Katie O'Connor won an award for best speaker. We have a lot planned for next year including our own conference WICKMUN.

<http://www.etsswicklow.ie/mun/register-for-wickmun-2024/>



## Principal Message Continued from Front Page

Science Week and the recent Careers Week have also given students the opportunity to go beyond the classroom and explore other areas of interest. I look forward to the exciting new opportunities that the next term is sure to bring!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest appreciation to parents and guardians for your continued support and collaboration throughout this year. Your partnership in fostering a nurturing environment for our students whether through involvement in their education, in our Parent-Staff Association, or in events such as Careers Week and our Winter Fair, has been instrumental in student success this term. To our dedicated teachers, SNAs and school staff, I am sure that your tireless efforts in ensuring a safe, supportive and engaging classroom have not gone unnoticed by our school community. Your passion for a student-centred education and an innovative approach has made an indelible impact on the student experience thus far this year.

As we look forward to a new term after a very well deserved Christmas break, let us look to continue to embrace change, cultivate a spirit of collaboration and strive for excellence in all our endeavours.





## Christmas Puns!

Q: Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?

A: They keep dropping their needles

Q: How do snowmen travel around

A: By icicle

Q: what do you call a cow that lives in an igloo

A: An eski-moo

Q: What is an elf's favorite kind of music

A: Wrap music

## Christmas Jokes!

Q: What is every parent's favorite Christmas song?

A: Silent Night!

Q: Elves use what kind of money?

A: Jingle Bucks

Q: How do you help someone who has lost their Christmas spirit?

A: Nurse them back to elf.

## Christmas Recipe

Hello! This Christmas recipe was passed down from my great-great-great grandmother to my mother today and I hope you enjoy it as much as my family has!

### Nana's Oxford Lunch Cake



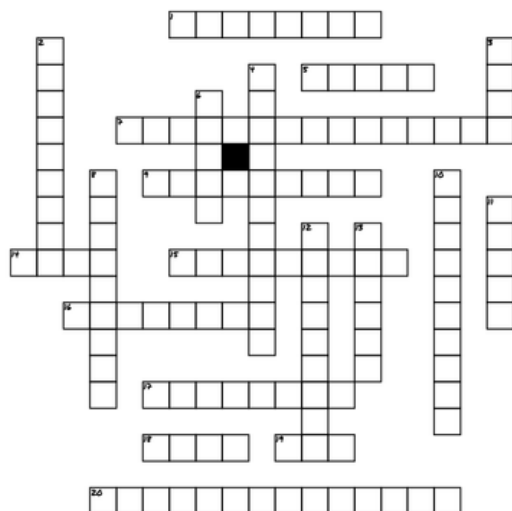
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 12oz plain flour
- 8oz margarine
- 8oz caster sugar
- 4oz mixed peel
- 5 eggs (beaten)
- 4oz cherries
- 1 oz ground almonds
- 1 orange
- 1 ½ pound sultanas
- Loaf tin - lined

1. Cream margarine and sugar.
2. Gradually add eggs beating well after each addition.
3. Fold in ground almonds, orange rind & juice.
4. Sift flour and baking powder & add into mixture.
5. Stir in fruit.
6. Bake in a preheated oven at **150c** for **3 hours**.

by Harry Kavanagh

## Christmas Games

### CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD (HARD)



#### ACROSS

1. WHO INVENTED THE CHRISTMAS CRACKER
5. PEOPLE EXPECT IT TO BE A ----- CHRISTMAS
9. WHAT IS THE MOST FAMOUS FAMILY TRADITION WHEN IT COMES TO EATING AT CHRISTMAS
9. WHAT DO YOU HANG UP ON YOUR FIRE PLACE OR BY YOUR BED
14. WHO HELPS SANTA
15. IN WHAT COUNTRY DID SILENT NIGHT ORIGINATE
16. WHAT ANIMAL IS USED TO HELP SANTA'S SLEIGH

#### DOWN

2. PEOPLE DESCRIBE IT AS THE MOST ----- TIME OF THE YEAR
3. LET'S START OFF EASY WHAT DO YOU PUT ONTO A CHRISTMAS TREE
4. WHEN WAS XMAS WRITTEN TO MEAN CHRISTMAS
17. WHAT WHITE FELLA DO YOU MAKE OUT OF SNOW
18. WHEN WAS THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CARD INVENTED
19. WHAT COLOUR IS 'DEDICATED' TO CHRISTMAS
20. WHAT CENTURY WAS CHRISTMAS KNOWN AS BEING 'POPULAR'

#### 6. THE FRENCH WORD 'NOEL' OFTEN USED AROUND CHRISTMAS WHAT IS THE ACTUAL MEANING IN LATIN

8. WHAT IS CLASSED AS BAD LUCK IF YOU DON'T KISS WHEN YOUR UNDER IT
10. IN THE SONG '12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS' WHAT IS ON THE 7TH ORIGINALLY
11. IN WHAT DECADE WAS COKE-COLA USED SANTA ON THERE ADVERTISEMENT
12. WHAT SWEETS DO YOU EAT AROUND CHRISTMAS
13. WHAT IS USED TO DECORATE THE OUTSIDE OF THE HOUSE

### MERRY CHRISTMAS

K F A M I L Y T R N K B J L H  
Y M U T J C O R B S X G O J H  
Y U P L R C A R O L S I Y I F  
Y C M R R E Q N W E E V E N N  
L H F E E P E H D N D I J G O  
S R B T D S C S S Y W N G L R  
Y I Q M T Y E R C M C G S E T  
U S T O C K I N G S J A E I H  
U T L I G H T S T G S D N W P  
L M F L I O V S M S N J S E O  
K A V F X B I Z G I I G D T L  
B S R E B Z S L E I G H X C E  
F K Y O L Q H R N S N O W R U  
X N L R J F Z C D N D E X X V  
H S T A R W S A N T A T L V M

BOW	FAMILY	NORTH POLE	SNOW
CANDY CANE	GIVING	PRESENTS	STAR
CAROLS	JINGLE	REINDEER	STOCKINGS
CHRISTMAS	JOY	SANTA	TREES
ELF	LIGHTS	SLEIGH	





## Animation Studio Trip

The Enterprise in Animation students visited Brown Bag Films' Smithfield Studios on the 14th December. This wonderful opportunity was kindly organised by student Thomas Howe's Aunt Clare Parsons, a former employee of Brown Bag. COO Cathal Gaffney generously met with students and provided an engaging and inspiring presentation about the studios creations, organisation and origins. Cathal spoke with students individually about the business side of the industry as well as the creative aspects at length, answering all students' questions with great care and consideration. It was a truly valuable and enjoyable experience for all students and staff alike!



## Gaeilge 24!

Bhí lá iontach againn Dé hAoine 1ú Nollaig ar Gaeilge24. Is éard is Gaeilge24 ann ná lá ar a labhraíonn gach duine Gaeilge. Rinneamar póstaer, aclaíocht agus d'fhoghlaim gach duine cúpla focal nua. Buaicphointe an lae ná an siúlóid cois trá gan amhras, nuair a chuardaigh na daltaí Gaeilge amuigh sa saol mór. Ba bhreá an suim sa teanga a léirigh ár ndaltaí nach ndéanann staidéar ar an nGaeilge freisin!



## Happy Christmas from the BOM

Winters' greetings from the board of management and enjoy the break. We would like to thank all the teachers. SNA's and all school staff for their work throughout 2023. And to congratulate all the students, their parents and guardians, for making ETSS Wicklow what it is- a warm hard working community; that also knows how to enjoy life and have fun. May the successes in study, sports and all the clubs and activities continue into 2024.

By Danny Haskins BOM

# MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE



### PRESS TEAM

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Oscar Kavanagh - 3rd year

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