

Rice College Ennis



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December 2024

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

Another term has passed, and as we break up for the holidays, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you and yours a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

We have had a very busy approach to Christmas – our TYs held a Christmas Market, and helped Fr. Tom celebrate the festive season at the Cathedral. They also went ice skating, among other activities.

On Wednesday night last, we held our annual Christmas Concert in Glor – a showcase of the variety of talent in Rice College. The students were a credit to themselves, their parents, and our school. A special word of thanks to the many staff members who helped ensure it ran smoothly – in particular Ms. Brooks, Ms. Hanrahan and Ms. Foley. Thanks also to the staff of Glor – we are so lucky to have such a venue in our town.

Matches have been played and won (and one or two lost!). Football, soccer, badminton, basketball, golf, athletics, rugby, hurling...all have featured on our extra –curricular calendar. Team sports are an excellent way to develop a variety of skills vital for the working world – leadership, collaboration and cooperation, teamwork. The staff who foster these sports in Rice College are to be commended for their commitment to the holistic development of our students.

We have also participated in public speaking, developing and nurturing another very different but equally valuable skillset.

In August the class of 2024 received excellent Leaving Certificate results. I congratulate them and wish them well as they navigate their way through the early adult years. Congratulations also to the recipients, more recently, of the Junior Cycle results.

Our library is up and running, and open two/three lunchtimes per week. I am very thankful to Feargal and the team at The Ennis Bookshop for their support of our endeavours in this area. He has supplied books and reading lists which are a fantastic aid to our plans to develop interest in literary activities. See our website for the latest Recommended Reading List!

We have continued to work on our SSE plans this term – currently our area of focus is wellbeing and communication. We now have digital display boards across the campus to highlight upcoming events and celebrate student and school achievements. We will be surveying all stakeholders in April – your contribution as parents/guardians is invaluable and I thank you in advance for your cooperation with same.

Early in this term each year group attended mass in St. Joseph's Church, celebrated by Fr. Joy and Fr. Tom, and two weeks ago some of 1st Year students accepted the Pledge to abstain from alcohol and drugs – they were presented with Certificates by Fr. Tom...congratulations to one and all. The vision of Blessed Edmund Rice, which recognises the “uniqueness of each individual in caring communities where holistic development is nurtured” is of utmost importance in Rice College.

Our Student Presidents this year are Eimear Lavelle and Tadgh Mullooly. Representatives from each year group meet regularly with the Presidents and Ms. Chambers, and then meet with myself in the interest of the student voice.

The wellbeing of all students and staff is a priority. The Pastoral Care Team meets weekly – the aim is to ensure that every student feels welcome and safe in Rice College. It is vital that everyone is aware of who to approach should they need to talk – in school, any staff member will listen and advise. More specifically, Ms. Culligan, Ms. Whelan, Ms. Hanley and the Year Heads can be contacted, in person, or via Teams. The suggestion highlighted around the school on posters etc is to text “hi” on Teams to any member of the Pastoral Care Team and he/she will follow up asap.

Should you, as parents/guardians feel it necessary to get in contact please feel welcome to do so. Year Heads are easily contactable, or Ms. Culligan can be reached at cculligan@ricecollege.ie.

We have continued to review and update policies – ratified this past term were the Pastoral Care Policy, Critical Incident Management Plan, and the Homework Policy. Going forward we will be looking at Health & Safety, our Digital Learning Plan, and the AEN Policy.

An AGM of the Parents’ Council was held recently. The Chair this year is Ms. Rachel MacManus, the Secretary is Verna Mamba. Their next meeting will be in January – all parents are encouraged to attend so that the Parent Voice is acknowledged. Christmas Reports for all year groups will be available on VSWare from this Friday, December 20th. For Junior Cycle students, in some subjects, the result may be in the form of a CBA (Classroom Based Assessment) – these results will be released at the end of January. Christmas holidays will begin on **Friday, December 20th**. In order to facilitate transport for all schools in the area **classes will finish at 1.15** on that day. We will **return to school on January 6th at 9.00am**, as per our calendar.

Once again, best wishes for the festive season – wishing you all a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2025.

Yours sincerely,

Louis Mulqueen

Principal