

ST MARY'S KNOCKBEG COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER



AUTUMN ISSUE 2025

FRIDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2025

Principal's message

As we move into the heart of the first term of this school year, Knockbeg College continues to thrive with energy, learning, and community spirit. The opening 9 weeks of the year has already seen tremendous activity—from academic achievements, sporting successes and community events that reflect the best of who we are as a school community.



Knockbeg's strength lies in its deep roots and the wide circle of community that surrounds and supports us. It is a community of genuine warmth and strong relationships. This was evident across a number of events, including:

The Opening Year Mass, 20-year anniversary celebration of the 2005 Hogan Cup win, Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate results, Open Evening and various 1st year events amongst others.

I want to acknowledge the superb start our 1st years have made to life here. The transition to secondary school is a big one. This year's group have come from 26 different primary schools and 4 different counties. Many thanks to the parent/guardians who have supported and worked so well with us. Good working relationships with home help us all to ensure we achieve our main objective: a holistic education for each student and fostering of a real community. I also want to credit our Leaving 2 or 6th years for their impact on school life. They have provided a sound model of student leadership within the school. I hope they feel the school's support in return as we inch closer to their Leaving Certificate exams.

There has been great excitement here in school with the start of our pitch development project. The progress in one month has been staggering and we all look forward to a start date for use in early to mid-2027. We are truly blessed with the space and size of campus available to us here. The additions of a student car-park, third special class and two new polytunnels have been great successes. Our Board of Management and staff have shown great foresight and support for these developments, always with the intent of improving the facilities and opportunities for our students.

During the midterm break we all have the opportunity to pause and reflect on the progress made so far, while also looking ahead to the challenges and opportunities that the coming months will bring. I want to take this moment to thank our dedicated teachers and staff for their ongoing commitment, our students for their enthusiasm and hard work, and our parents and guardians for their invaluable support., I encourage everyone to take time to rest and recharge. The weeks ahead promise to be just as busy and rewarding, with plenty of exciting events and learning experiences planned for all.

A SUCCESSFUL OPEN EVENING AT OUR SCHOOL

On Monday, September 22nd, our school proudly opened its doors to welcome prospective students and their families for our annual Open Evening.

The event was a tremendous success, offering visitors the chance to explore our modern facilities, meet our dedicated staff, and experience the vibrant atmosphere of our school community. Engaging presentations from both teachers and students showcased the wide range of academic subjects, extracurricular opportunities, and the inclusive spirit that defines life at Knockbeg College.



NEW PITCH DEVELOPMENT KICKS OFF AT KNOCKBEG!

Excitement filled Knockbeg on the morning of September 24th as Penturf arrived to begin work on our new pitch development. The project marks a major step forward in enhancing our school's sporting facilities, with the pitches expected to be ready for use in 2027. We look forward to seeing our students and teams making great use of these new fields in the years ahead.



OPENING YEAR MASS 2025

On Thursday, October 2nd, our school community came together to celebrate our Opening Year Mass. A heartfelt thank you to our chaplain, Fr. Dunphy, for leading us in prayer, to our talented school choir for their beautiful music, and to our RE and Art Departments for their creativity and preparation.

We are especially grateful to all the students who contributed — through readings, bringing up the gifts, serving as Eucharistic Ministers, and helping to make the Mass such a meaningful and uplifting occasion.



HOGAN CUP WINNERS - 20 YEARS ON

We had a wonderful celebration on Friday, October 17th, marking the 20th anniversary of the All-Ireland winning Senior Football team of 2005.

The event was expertly MC'd by PPU Chairman, Joe Farrell, and featured some lovely words from John Curtis (former Principal), and John Rouse and Chris Conway, managers of the victorious team.

Each player—or their representative—was presented with a commemorative picture of the squad, featuring the Leinster and All-Ireland trophies, as a lasting memento of that unforgettable achievement.



JUNIOR CYCLE RESULTS



There was great joy and excitement at the school on Wednesday, October 8th, as over eighty of our students received their Junior Cycle results for 2025.

Students and their parents gathered for a special celebration to mark this important milestone in their academic journey. The occasion was filled with pride and a strong sense of achievement as students reflected on their hard work and dedication over the past three years.

FIRST YEAR ANNUAL TRIP TO BIRR

On the 8th and 9th of October, our First Years set off to Birr, County Offaly, for the Annual Wellbeing Outdoor Activity Trip. Over two fun-filled days, the Knockbeg boys took on archery, the maze, gorge walking, and forest orienteering.

It was a wonderful opportunity for students to bond with their new classmates, embrace teamwork, and enjoy the great outdoors. A fantastic time was had by all!



TRIP TO THE ZOO

On Tuesday the 21st of October our third-year students travelled to Dublin Zoo as part of their CSPE CBA.

They attended an informative conservation talk, learning about the importance of protecting endangered species and the role we all play in caring for the environment.

A great opportunity for active learning outside the classroom!



L2 TRIP TO GLENBARROW

On Friday, 17th and Tuesday, 21st October, our Leaving Certificate Year 2 Geography students, accompanied by their teachers Ms. Geoghegan and Mr. Murphy, visited Glenbarrow Waterfall in County Laois as part of their Leaving Certificate Geography field study.

The students carried out an investigation into the geomorphic processes of erosion and how these processes contribute to the formation of a waterfall. It was an excellent hands-on learning experience, linking classroom theory with the natural landscape.



SCIENCE WEEK GONE WILD

As part of Science week our First Years had an unforgettable visit from Dave's Jungle and got up close with some incredible creatures:

Seamus the 12ft snake

Sharon the tarantula

Spike the alligator snapping turtle

Keith the chameleon

A huge thank you to Dave's Jungle for bringing science to life in such an exciting way. The lads were absolutely fascinated!



FIRST YEAR LITURGY

Our First Year Liturgy took place on Friday the 19th of September, celebrated by Fr. Dunphy. It was a very special occasion, bringing together our new students, their parents, and teachers in prayer and celebration. A huge thank you to the readers, musicians, and everyone who helped make the liturgy so meaningful.



TRANSITION YEAR

Our Transition Year students enjoyed all that Gaignamanagh has to offer on the 8th and 9th of September. Over 50 students spent two action-packed days taking part in activities such as kayaking, hiking, soccer, and a boat trip on the River Barrow, with an overnight stay in eight-man tents at The Hub.

The trip served as an induction to TY, a team-bonding experience, and an opportunity to form new friendships. The lads returned tired but happy — exhausted from their adventures yet filled with a great sense of accomplishment.

The highlight for many was the karaoke night, which provided plenty of laughs and unforgettable performances!

A big thank you to the teachers who accompanied the group — Mr. Knowles, Mr. Downey, and Mr. Murphy — for helping make the trip such a success.

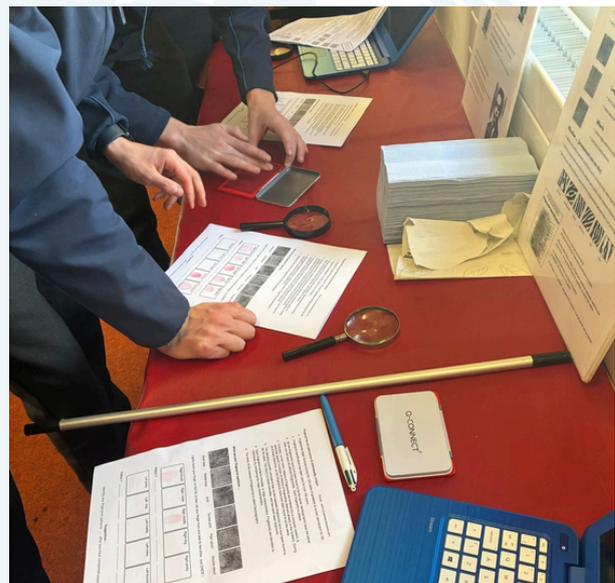


TRANSITION YEAR

Our Transition Year students spent two fascinating hours on Wednesday, 22nd October, delving into the many conspiracy theories surrounding the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The engaging workshop gave the lads the opportunity to study fingerprints, ballistics, and gunpowder residue, gaining real insight into the forensic side of historical investigation.

It was a fantastic, hands-on session that encouraged students to think critically and draw their own conclusions about what really happened in Dallas, Texas, on 22nd November 1963.



GREEN SCHOOLS

A huge thanks to Dave from Createschool for delivering another fantastic two-day workshop for our Transition Year students! Best of luck to the lads with their entry into the Rubbish Film Festival — we're looking forward to seeing their creativity come to life on screen!



ART HUB

In recognition of World Mental Health Day on Friday, 10th October 2025, Knockbeg students explored the theme of wellbeing through creativity in our Art Hub.

Students designed a series of posters and banners to promote mental health awareness, positivity, and the importance of looking after ourselves and one another.



ART DEPARTMENT

Our Knockbeg Art students have been showcasing their incredible creativity with stunning window paintings inspired by famous works like Van Gogh's *Starry Night* and Munch's *The Scream*, these pieces bring colour and imagination to our school in the lead-up to Halloween



Our Art Department continues to brighten up our corridors with the Art Hall of Fame Gallery- a fantastic way to showcase the creativity and talent of our students.

Huge thanks to our caretaker Jonathan for his help in hanging the new frames and bringing this display to life.



KNOCKBEG CROSS COUNTRY INVITATIONAL

Congratulations to all the schools and students who took part in the Knockbeg Cross Country Invitational on Tuesday, 14th October. The event was a tremendous success, marked by excellent competition, teamwork, and sportsmanship from every participant.

A special word of congratulations to our first-place winners:

- Michael Tomlinson – Minor
- Eoin Dowling – Junior
- Padraic Hogan – Intermediate
- Will Duffy – Senior



SECOND YEAR FOOTBALL

Our second-year football team have played in two championship games so far, with a home victory against Ardscoil na Trionoide Athy and an away win to Good Counsel College. They are now into the South Leinster Semi Final.



FIRST YEAR FOOTBALL

Our First Year footballers have already had several opportunities to wear the blue and white, taking part first in a Laois GAA blitz, followed by challenge matches against Naas CBS and Enniscorthy CBS.



SECOND YEAR HURLING

On Monday, 14th October, our Second Year hurlers travelled to the Laois Schools Hurling Blitz, recording one win and one loss in their two games against Portlaoise College and St. Fergal's College.



FIRST YEAR HURLING

On Tuesday, 23rd September, our First Year hurlers took part in the Laois Hurling Blitz. They played two very competitive games — securing a win against Heywood and narrowly losing out to Portlaoise CBS.

It was a great day of hurling, teamwork, and experience for the lads as they continue to develop their skills in the blue and white.



BASKETBALL



Following on from games against Rathangan, Portarlinton and Baltinglass schools. Our Senior and Junior basketball teams took on Naas CBS on Thursday the 23rd of October in the A League.

The Juniors battled hard right to the final buzzer, narrowly losing by just a single point in the dying seconds of the game.

The Seniors, meanwhile, were in superb form, powering to an emphatic 30-point victory.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Congratulations to Michael O'Hanlon, who was nominated for the Lions Club Young Ambassador Competition 2025.

Michael will be travelling to South Africa in the new year as part of the Niall Mellon Foundation and is currently raising funds in support of this project.

He attended the award ceremony on Tuesday, 21st October, in the Seven Oaks Hotel, where he was interviewed about his community and voluntary work in the lead-up to his travels.

Well done, Michael — a wonderful achievement and an inspiring example of service and leadership!

