



# HEADLINES

December 2010



The difficult weather has certainly brought challenges to school life recently. School was closed for two days and I would extend my thanks to Translink who managed to get all their pupil passengers home safely on 6 December. Two meetings with parents had to be postponed. The **Year 10 Parents' Afternoon** is now scheduled for **Thursday 6 January 2011 from 3.45-5.45 pm**.

Despite the weather our School Show, 'We Will Rock You' played to three full houses. This challenging production has been highly acclaimed and congratulations must go to all the pupils and staff involved.

Preparations are well underway for our **Carol Concert** on **Tuesday 21 December at 7.30 pm**. I extend a warm invitation to you all.

Our French Debating team and our Law Society have been busy and all those involved have benefited from being involved.

School examinations are in January and I hope that, having had a restful holiday, all our pupils will focus on their learning in the new term in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

At this time of the year we are mindful of families within our school community who have been bereaved during the last year. I would take this opportunity to wish everyone connected with our school community a Blessed and Happy Christmas and a Peaceful, Prosperous New Year.

*R Wilson (Principal)*

## ***French Debaters Win Through***



Our A-Level French debating team of Carl Mulholland, Jessica Allen, Naomi Given and Patrick Jack, (all Year 14) have made a successful start to the season by defeating Thornhill College in the first round of this year's Northern Ireland A-Level French Debating Competition, held at the University of Ulster in Coleraine.

Fighting hard to retain our title of Northern Ireland champions, we were expecting a tough contest in round one, especially when we discovered that we had to argue *against* the motion "*Le fast-food est l'ennemi de la vie familiale et de la santé des jeunes*" (Fast food is the enemy of family life and of the health of young people).

This certainly seemed like one of the hardest motions to oppose that we have been faced with in recent years.

But after some quick thinking, our team of fast-food fanatics managed to persuade the judges that a Big Mac Meal or a Chicken Fried Rice can actually bring the family together and shouldn't be treated as a scapegoat for all the problems of modern society. After a lively and entertaining debate, the judges ruled in our favour and, resisting a trip to McDonalds on the way home, we headed back to school ready to prepare for the next round in mid-December.

*Mr I Sampson*

### ***Exceptional Closure due to extreme weather conditions***

In the event that Translink advise us that they will be making alternative bus service arrangements, pupils will be asked to contact parents either by mobile phone or the school office. Should parents not wish for their children to travel by bus in inclement weather, they should arrange to collect them at school.

***R Wilson (Principal)***

### ***Year 9 Personal Development - Road Safety Life Skills***

Pupils in Year 9 receive a serious message from Constable Ian McGregor making them aware of the need to be highly visible when walking along the road.

As the Christmas season approaches, pupils need to be particularly vigilant when travelling to and from school. The visibility during dark mornings and evenings, coupled with the excitement surrounding the Christmas season, can result in serious and sometimes fatal accidents at this time of the year.

***Mrs J McCluskey***



### ***Ulster Grammar Schools' Swimming Gala***

Congratulations to all fifteen pupils who took part in the Ulster Grammar Schools' Swimming Gala in Bangor on Saturday 20 November. Eleven personal bests were achieved. Evan Donnell came ninth and tenth in the intermediate boys' backstroke and breaststroke respectively, Pearse Kealey came ninth in the intermediate boys' breaststroke and Daniel Irvine also came ninth in the boys' butterfly. The intermediate boys' medley relay team (Evan Donnell, Joel Stirling, Daniel Irvine and Pearse Kealey) also swam in eighth position. Well done to everyone. The pupils listed were excellent ambassadors for our school.

**Girls:** Alberta Kelly, Naimh Little, Ellen McAuley, Cara McLaughlin, Anna Stewart, Naomi Stewart and Jill Thompson.

**Boys:** Evan Donnell, Daniel Irvine, Pearse Kealey, Alex McLaughlin, James Miller, Dillon Moore, Keelan Nelson and Joel Stirling.

***Miss M Doherty, Miss C Johnston & Mrs C Sanchez***

### ***Ulster Schools' Judo Champions***

Rebecca Cuckoo (Year 13) represented Limavady Grammar School at the Ulster Schools Judo Championships held in Donegal at the weekend. She achieved a fantastic double, winning gold in the U17 over 63 kg category and in the U20 under 70 kg category.

Schools and Colleges, from all over Ulster, competed to obtain a gold or silver medal which is the qualifying standard for entry into the All-Ireland Schools' Championships being held in Dublin in January 2011, when the best schools and colleges from the four provinces will compete for the top prizes. Rebecca has now qualified to represent her school and Ulster in both categories.

Well Done Rebecca.

***R Wilson (Principal)***

### ***Mrs Cromie Meets the Authors***

On Wednesday 10 November 2010, our Library Assistant, Mrs Cromie attended the Wendy Drewlett Ireland Book Day at Bangor Grammar School. The new Children's Laureate for Ireland, noted author Siobhan Parkinson, gave the keynote address, on the importance of encouraging children to read and of trying out new authors. Also participating were well known authors, Geraldine McCaughrean, Gillian Cross and Paul Dowswell. They described how they went about preparing to write their novels and emphasised the importance of good research so that their novels were as authentic as possible, even though they were fiction.

A workshop also took place with new authors M G Harris and Kenen David, who spoke about their inspiration for writing, how they commenced their careers and eventually got published. The day was extremely enjoyable and, thanks to the support of the Parents' Association, it was possible to purchase signed copies of these authors' most recent novels. All of these novels are on display in the School Library and are available for issue.

## ***Bar Mock Trial 2010***

At the start of the year the gauntlet was thrown down to Sixth Form: Miss Wright needed highly committed and dedicated pupils (how I got in is anyone's guess) to participate in a prestigious Mock Trial Competition. She warned that it would mean a lot of hard work but would be very rewarding. Thus enthused, a group of us decided to meet this challenge head on.

We met with increasing regularity and it seemed we were an almost permanent fixture in Miss Wright's room during lunch and after school. As speeches were fine tuned and witnesses cross examined, everyone seemed to grow in confidence.

It was hard to believe when Saturday 20th November finally arrived and we travelled down to the Royal Courts of Justice in Belfast.

In the first round we defended against Aquinas Grammar. Our barristers gave particularly rousing and convincing speeches and our witnesses stayed composed under what could only be described as a ruthless cross examination. Matthew Scott, our defendant, seemed to be doing a very good job of avoiding jail!

In the next round we faced Methody and we were quietly confident that our barristers, Patrick Jack and Michael Pratt, would be hard to beat. Sure enough Patrick and Michael shocked Methody as they prosecuted from unexpected angles. Our witnesses also threw the relevance of Methody's evidence into doubt during the cross examination. The Judge complimented our team on our commitment which we all appreciated greatly.



Unfortunately we didn't make it into the final but we all had a great time and that is the most important thing. It would be remiss of us not to thank Miss Wright for giving us the opportunity, sorting all the details for us and generally keeping us on track despite the phenomenal amount of time it cost her. We must also thank Mrs Cromie for accompanying us to Belfast.

Senior Law Team: Matthew Scott, Stephen Douglas, Paul O'Hara, Michael Pratt, Patrick Jack, Jane Semple, Claire Keys, Terri Mullan, Zach Evans, Peter Devlin, Manon Bartlett, Dan Dan Khang, Ryan Butcher, Anna McNulty, Stephen Olphert, Andrew Harvey.

*Andrew Harvey (Year 13)*

## ***Citizenship NGO Day***

On 17 November, four voluntary organisations came into school to explain to Year 8 what their organisation did. The four groups were: Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities, the British Red Cross, Children in Crossfire and the Dogs' Trust. There were four workshops each lasting forty five minutes.

We learnt that an ethnic minority is someone who was born in a foreign country and moved to another country to live. We worked in groups and made posters showing the difficulties faced by ethnic minorities living in Northern Ireland. The British Red Cross representative told us about the spread of HIV and AIDS around the world. We were given the opportunity to discuss with each other the ways we could help those with this disease. The third workshop was held by Children in Crossfire and a woman called Grainne. We played a game of bingo about rights and saw a video about Children in Crossfire.

A lady called Cathy and her dog Jed from the Dogs' Trust showed us how to treat a dog properly and Cathy showed us the tricks Jed could do. We also were given puzzles and leaflets about responsible dog ownership.

It was good fun and worthwhile. I really liked being able to work with other members of my class and taking part in all the different activities. This was a great way to learn about the work of all these different organisations.

*Ailish Morrison 8V*

### ***Learn how to protect your child online . . .***

The online world is integral to how children stay in touch with their friends, and access to the internet is now available like never before. However, there are inherent risks associated with new technologies and it is essential for young people and their parents/carers to understand how to reduce these risks.

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre is the UK's national child protection agency (*visit [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk) for more information*). At CEOP, we believe the start of the new school year is the perfect time to speak to your child about how they use the internet and how they can stay safe online.

Through the **ClickCEOP advice and help centre**, members of the public can access guidance on a broad range of topics to help protect their children, or alternatively report a concern directly to CEOP.

CEOP's Children and Young People's programme; *Thinkuknow*, is used in schools nationwide to educate young people about how to stay safe online. As parents, you can play a fundamental role in this aspect of their education. To stay up to date with further information and advice, please visit [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents) to find information on:

- What are the risks posed to your child online?
- What can you do to protect your child?
- Where can you go if you are concerned?

We want to help you and your family stay safe online, there are some simple steps below that you can follow to achieve this.

CEOP has been working with social networking sites such as Facebook, BEBO, MSN and other major providers to put internet safety advice at the fingertips of your child, through the 'ClickCEOP' application.

**Facebook Users:** visit [www.facebook.com/clickceop](http://www.facebook.com/clickceop) to **add the 'ClickCEOP' app** to your profile and ask your children to do the same. The app is free and easy to use, and gives you immediate access to internet safety advice as well as being able to report any suspicions to us. If you become a 'friend' of the page, we will invite you to our free online safety surgeries and send you updates. By clicking on 'Add the App' on the left hand side of our Facebook page you can add the 'ClickCEOP' button on your profile.

**MSN & BEBO Users:** Look for the ClickCEOP icon on the side of every profile page. It is a default setting and provides immediate access to internet safety advice and allows you to report any suspicions.

**Web Browsers:** If you use Firefox, Internet Explorer 8 or Google Chrome, you can customize your browser, enabling users to see the ClickCEOP button, regardless of which website you're on.

By following the guidance above, you can help protect your child to ensure they are enjoying the internet safely.

### ***'Love For Life' – Year 8***

At the 'Love for Life' Project 2010 our school went to St Mary's High School as part of the Shared Education Programme. There were four different schools taking part: Limavady Grammar School, St Mary's High School, Limavady High School and St Patrick's High School, Dungiven.

The three presenters from Love for Life were called Alan, Jane and Catrina. They explained everything so carefully, making sure everyone formed their own opinion and the best part was that everyone got a chance to voice what they thought. The pupils from the four schools were put into mixed groups so it was good to make new friends.

Among the topics were bullying, true love and how we all change as we grow up in a typical lifestyle. It really made an impression on my friends and me. Thank you, Love for Life!

*Amy O'Neill (8Y)*

***School finishes for Christmas holiday on Wednesday 22 December at 12 noon for pupils. Buses will be available at 12.10 pm on the Londonderry routes. Pupils who require a packed lunch should order it through their Form Teacher by Monday morning. School reopens for new term on Tuesday 4 January 2011 at 8.55 am.***