

HIGH



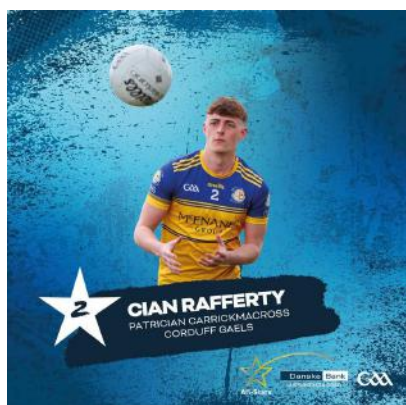
TIMES

SECOND YEAR BASKETBALLERS FALL JUST SHORT IN ALL-IRELAND 'A' FINAL

Another piece of PHS history was made this term as our 2nd Year basketball team became the first junior team in the school to win an All-Ireland bronze medal in A Schools basketball. The boys were narrowly beaten in their All-Ireland semi-final by an excellent Coláiste Éanna side, but they showed tremendous fight, determination and skill throughout the campaign and have done themselves and the school proud. Having won the All-Ireland 'B' title last year, stepping up to A Schools level was a huge challenge. To reach an All-Ireland semi-final at this level is an outstanding achievement. Well done to all the players and to their fantastic coaches, Ms Tinnelly and Mr McKeown.



ALL-STAR AWARDS



Winning an All-Star award is always a huge achievement, so to have representatives on two teams this year is a real honour for our school.

Cian earned his All-Star award at corner-back after another outstanding year in the PHS jersey. He played a key role in our Danske Bank MacLarnon Cup success last year and was also part of the Monaghan Minor team that reached the All-Ireland Final.

Just a week later, we were delighted to hear that Fionn, Harry and Hugh had also been selected on the Monaghan Post Primary U14.5 All-Star team. What a year it has been for PHS football!



ENTERPRISE



Congratulations to 1st Yr Oisín Marron who represented PHS in May in the Student Enterprise National Final in Mullingar. Oisín makes and sells a variety of jams and chutneys and his company is called *Oisín's Jams & Jellies*. Oisín's stall was very busy throughout the finals and he had a lot of interest from the public and from the media- so expect to hear lots more from this budding entrepreneur in the coming months and years!

LENTEN SERVICE



At the end of Lent, our First Year students gathered for a special Lenten Service reflecting on the themes of kindness, compassion and community. The service gave students an opportunity to pause during the busy school term and think about the importance of supporting others and showing gratitude in everyday life.



VOLLEYBALL



Our PHS volleyballers rounded off another great season by winning the Volleyball Ireland Beach Volleyball competition in April, enjoying plenty of fun, sunshine and fantastic team spirit along the way.

JUDO CHAMPION



First Year student Nikolas enjoyed an outstanding Easter break on the judo mat, competing in four major championships and returning home with medals from every event.

Nikolas claimed silver medals at the All-Ireland Judo Schools Championship in Dublin, the Galway Open and the All-Ireland Judo Championship. He then added a bronze medal at the Northern Ireland Open Judo Championship in Derry to round off a remarkable run of success.



HEAD PREFECT

EACH YEAR, WE ASK OUR HEAD PREFECT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FINAL NEWLETTER OF THE YEAR. THIS YEAR, CIAN HAS CHOSEN TO WRITE A POEM, REMEMBERING HIS YEARS IN PATRICIAN HIGH SCHOOL.

Ré Órga by Cian Rafferty

*Well I didn't see much future
When I joined the Christian Brother School,
With the auld fella in the place and a mask on my face,
By God, I felt like a right old fool!*

*No doubt we were the minions of the halls,
We were prone to the senior pranks.
Where was Room 28? None of us knew!
Not until we progressed up through the ranks.*

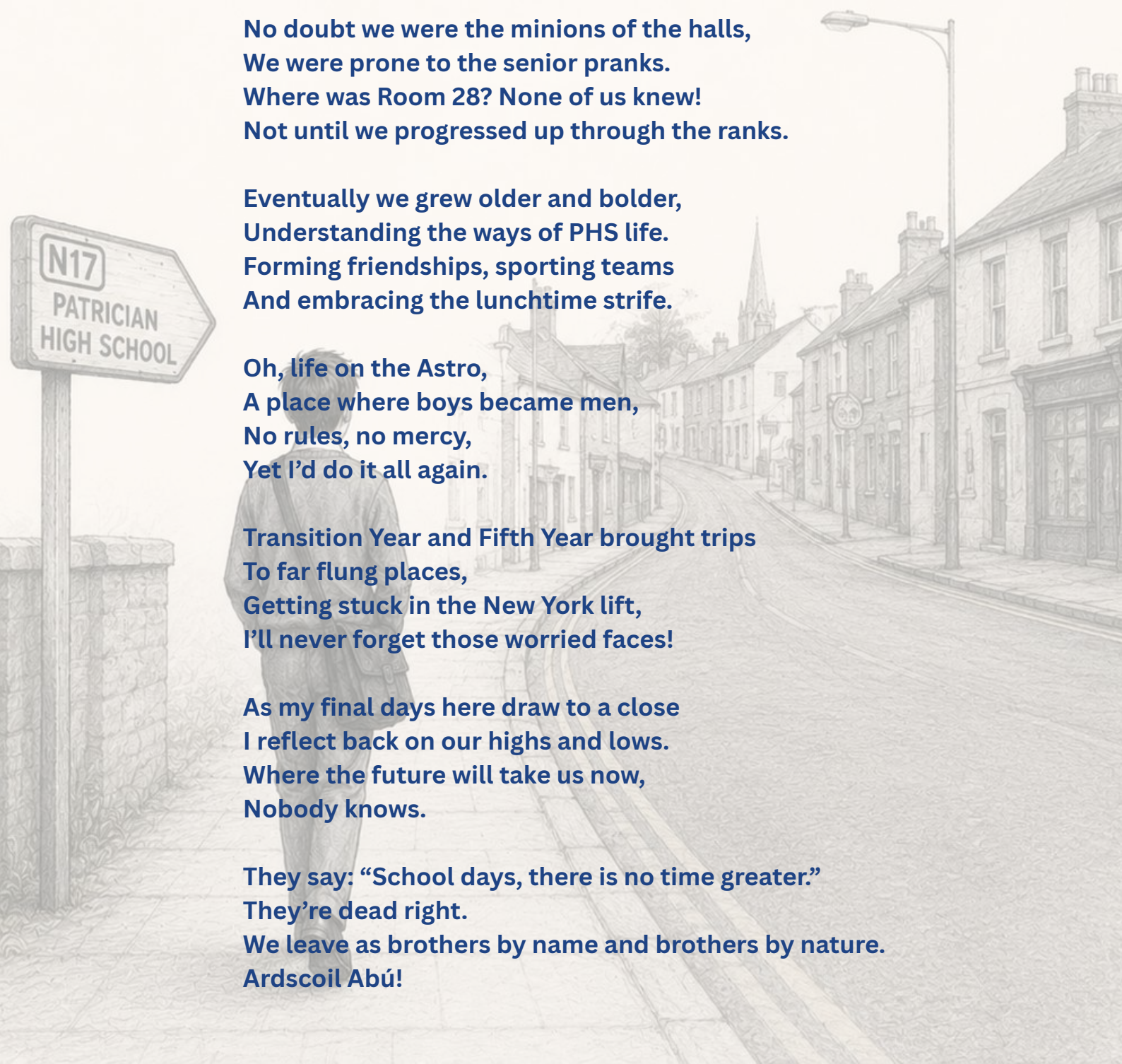
*Eventually we grew older and bolder,
Understanding the ways of PHS life.
Forming friendships, sporting teams
And embracing the lunchtime strife.*

*Oh, life on the Astro,
A place where boys became men,
No rules, no mercy,
Yet I'd do it all again.*

*Transition Year and Fifth Year brought trips
To far flung places,
Getting stuck in the New York lift,
I'll never forget those worried faces!*

*As my final days here draw to a close
I reflect back on our highs and lows.
Where the future will take us now,
Nobody knows.*

*They say: "School days, there is no time greater."
They're dead right.
We leave as brothers by name and brothers by nature.
Ardscoil Abú!*



FORMER HEAD PREFECT, AND CURRENT UNIVERSITY UNDERGRAD, **AARON TIGHE** RETURNS WITH SOME WORDS OF ADVICE FOR THOSE STRUGGLING WITH THE DEMANDS OF THE LEAVING CERT. GUESS WHAT? IT'S ALL WORTH IT IN THE END!

There are days when it feels like the Leaving Cert will never end. Your life seems like it will be an endless cycle of notetaking, essay-writing, and nail-biting. You imagine that every morning will be spent on a bus to school thinking about exams, every evening in study sessions preparing for exams, and every night spent in exam nightmares about a surprise Shakespeare question or the Anglo-Irish Treaty. You might start to wonder if all of the hard work is really worth it. And then, one day, it all ends. You walk out of the classroom of your final exam, and you will be free. All of a sudden, a glorious summer begins, made up of holidays to islands your parents are terrified of, Debs nights, results nights you may struggle to remember, and a summer job to finance all of it.

Your hard work pays off on a sunny morning at the end of August when your results come through. College comes calling; you'd heard whispers of what it might be like. It quickly becomes apparent they were true. Tearful departures to student accommodation are suddenly replaced by lectures, lunches, and late nights with people you met three hours ago.

A friend group of four counties broadens with new friends from four continents. Your roommates and course-mates come from all over the country and the world, and you meet people with the most radically different experiences from your own you could ever imagine.

The academic experience itself enthrals you. Lectures on everything from calculus to elections to Thomistic philosophy. Some of them you'll hate, but most of them you'll love. Tutorial debates and discussions with people who challenge and probe you. Some of them you will also hate, but you'll quickly find yourself more confident, more knowledgeable, and most of all more argumentative. Doors start opening beyond the lecture halls. Internships and placements in jobs that you're passionate about, learning about what you want to spend the rest of your life doing. Extracurriculars like debating, sports, and college writing allow you to hone your lifelong passions and discover new ones. International exchange sends you halfway across the world to America to study, travel, and discover a new culture. A journey you began in a classroom in Carrickmacross will bring you to a college auditorium in Philadelphia, the White House in DC, and a sports arena in Chicago.



Visiting Washington while spending a semester in Pennsylvania



Schols Award time under the Campanile

As all of this is happening to you, those who soldiered with you through the Leaving are going through the same experience. You'll rendezvous in pubs and restaurants in Carrick and it will be like you never left. As the fog of time grows and the hallucinogen of nostalgia grips, you may even begin to reminisce on those days in school and how they felt like they'd go on forever.

So today, you keep working. You study and revise and prepare for the impending exams, because you know what awaits you on the other side. You know that it won't go on forever and that all of this will end, perhaps even a little bit too quickly.

Then the rest of your life begins.

1 SCAN
Scan the QR code to visit our website

2 JOIN
Create your account

3 PLAY
Pick 4 numbers

JOIN OUR SCHOOL LOTTO
YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE!

4 PAY
€2.50 for 1 line
€4.00 for 2 lines
€5.00 for 3 lines

5 DRAW
Every Thursday at 8pm

6 WIN
Match 4 numbers to win the JACKPOT!



Thank you!

<https://www.ourfundraiser.ie/org/patricianhighschool>

ROBOTICS



Our TY students recently represented the school with great enthusiasm and skill at the VEX Robotics Competition, held at the headquarters of Combilift in partnership with Monaghan County Council. Competing against schools from across the region, the team performed exceptionally well and reached the semi-final stage of the competition.

RORY'S STORIES



In March we welcomed Rory's Stories to the school to speak to our senior students. Rory spoke openly and honestly about his struggles with mental health and his difficulties during his time in school - he highlighted the importance of resilience, perseverance, and trusting your instincts in finding the right path to success.

LONDON SCHOOL TOUR

The London school trip was definitely one of the highlights of my year so far. We travelled over on the 10th of February, and from the start it was brilliant. On the first night, we went to the West Ham vs Manchester United match. I wouldn't usually be a big soccer fan, but going with a great group of lads and experiencing the atmosphere made it one of the best nights I've had in a long time. The passion in the stadium was unreal, and singing along to the West Ham bubble anthem was hilarious.

The last day was probably my favourite. The Science Museum and river cruise were good, but Madame Tussauds and the London Dungeons really stood out. The Dungeons especially kept everyone on edge while giving a glimpse into old London and the story of Jack the Ripper. More than anything though, the best part was having the craic with lads I wouldn't usually mix with. It's a trip I'll remember for years.



ST PATRICK'S DAY



Ms Rogers and her team did tremendous work in March for our first ever participation in the Carrickmacross St Patrick's Day Parade. It was a historic occasion for the school and our students represented us brilliantly throughout the day, bringing great energy and community spirit to the parade.

FROM PHS TO GOOGLE - WE CHAT WITH PAST PUPIL FINN MCDUFFIE ABOUT LIFE IN A BIG TECH FIRM, IDENTITY AND LIFE AFTER THE LEAVING CERT



Hi Finn! Bring us up to speed on what you've been doing since you left PHS in 2006!

20 years in a few hundred words. I'll keep it to my career mostly for this bit. Here goes, dear reader.

I didn't achieve a glowing Leaving Cert. I did quite well. But I was just shy of the grades for Law in Dublin. I got my seventh CAO choice; LLB in Law and European Studies, in the far off land of University of Limerick (UL). And that was the best thing that could have happened.

UL had it all. Academia, clubs and societies, and amazing people; many still fast friends. I'll never forget that first Criminal Law lecture. Professor McCutcheon shocked us with some particularly gruesome case law and I instantly loved the subject. People are so interesting. You wouldn't believe the sort of stuff that's been before the courts.

Within a few years I'd thrown myself into a thing or two, from Kayaking the Shannon to leading the Debating Society, to becoming Editor of the University newspaper, *An Focal*. I sold more ads than we'd ever sold, in order to pay for my passion project; the extensive (and expensive) all-colour reformat and rebrand I wanted for the paper. After a year running and transforming *An Focal*, we'd won The People's Choice Award and TV3's Student Newspaper of the Year.

This leadership and sales experience came in handy later. All of these experiences did. Doors closed and opened. Paths emerged. In Third Year, I remember working for a law firm in Dublin. Seven months taught me I was not a corporate lawyer nor did I wish to be. Door closed. But I recall the Google-branded bicycles passing along the Grand Canal to work each morning and thinking, that might be a cool place to work.

An opportunity to interview for Google came up because of the newspaper work. Five interviews later (including the question "how many airplanes are there in the sky right now") and I'd landed a job there aged 22.

Since then I've worked in Google's ads business with UK clients 9-5, but I've also met my partner, come out, married, grown up, travelled, bought a house, renovated it, got a dog, lost a parent, grown up a bit more.. there was a pandemic and a financial crash or two in there at some stage as well, and the living has taken place in the in-between.

There'll be a lot of our readers interested to read an inside view of life in a tech multinational. What's it REALLY like?

Behind the glass walls and the primary-colored logos?

It feels less like a corporate office (trust me, I've worked in those too) and more like a university campus. Yes, there are free snacks and micro-kitchens etc, but they aren't just for show - they are usually where a lot of work happens or connections are made. Everyone here is highly specialized and when that happens, and you run into a specific problem that's out-of-field - you're only as good as your network.

So you'll be at the barista and end up in a five-minute chat with an engineer or a team director that completely changes (or at least, provides clarity) on how a problem gets solved.

They like to say how frighteningly smart people are in these big tech companies. That's true, but some are incredibly astute or show deep emotional intelligence. Most seem to have a baseline of ownership and responsibility (which is excellent because you can rely on them), but then they also seem to have another superpower or two hidden up their sleeve (it's usually languages - there are people around me who have 5+, but it could also be that they're a lead guitarist in a band or that they have three children and can hold down a job in Dublin. That, to me, is a superpower.) They're usually quite generous with their time and ideas, I've found. Which is a relief as I'm often the dumbest in the room. It's not all perfect, mind. It's fast, it's intense, it's an American multinational. It requires a lot of patience, flexibility and adaptability. But it's never boring.

What are the challenges of being a young professional working in Dublin, and how do you cope with them?

I could bang-on about housing and the housing crisis all day. And I'm one of the "lucky ones". Alas, dear reader, you are probably Gen Z or Gen Alpha and this Millennial complaint will soon become yours. Better start saving.

It's not all doom and gloom though; it's increasingly likely that you'll have a Metro in Dublin in your lifetime. Though possibly not in mine. Thank God for bicycles in the meantime.



What are some of your best memories from your years in PHS?

There'll be some teacher reading this in the staff room, probably smiling, such was their care and decency and connection with me and with my classmates there (a couple of whom are still fast friends).

I cannot be more grateful nor more thankful to the staff and teachers of PHS for caring about us and our futures, as much as they did. I've learned in the years since that such goodness and high standards are not to be taken for granted and I have realised increasingly how lucky I was.

Right, mooshy bit over.

Foundational memory. In my first year, there was a teacher who thumped the classroom locker so hard once, that he left a dent in it which was there for years. A big impression, then, and a big grade; that same teacher helped me achieve an A+ in the Leaving Cert for that subject.

Another memory. It's 2004. A school trip to Italy, no less. It's dinner time. The whole PHS gang is sitting in the hotel restaurant, as Italian waiters bustle around us with plates of food the likes of which we've not seen before. The menu was in Italian and there was no Google translate. One of these was a mystery meat dish. And one of the boys was a horsey type.

It could have been a waiter; maybe one of the boys (or possibly even a teacher), but the possibility we were eating horse meat took hold of us; much to that boy's histrionic horror, and the waiters' enjoyment. He didn't finish his dinner.

Do you have any words of advice or encouragement for LGBTQ+ students in an all-boys secondary school?

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from their point of view; until you climb into their skin and walk around in it." - another PHS memory (Barbara Sweeney, Harper Lee).

In school, I probably had an inclination I was gay. But it wasn't until my twenties that it came into frame as a part of my identity. I use those words carefully. My sexuality was always there. I'd just subconsciously put it out-of-frame.

In school, being different felt like a liability. But it actually becomes your greatest asset. The ability to see the world through a different lens, to know adversity, to have empathy for those on the margins, to hold two sides of an argument in your mind and weigh them both up and decide for yourself. Authenticity is what the world needs now more than ever. It sounds glib, but being you is your superpower.

I remember first coming out to a close friend and her response was "I don't mean this to sound insensitive or anything, but I really don't care". No shame, no drama. It was probably hardest coming out to myself.

You can bury something. Banish it. Push it right to the back of your mind. But despite every conscious and subconscious effort, it will emerge one way or another, sooner or later. There's no right way either. In case you're wondering. And this agony aunt is all out of words.

But be brave. You've got this. All you need is love.



Trevi Fountain, Rome on School Tour in 2004

CAKE SALE



In February, 2nd Yrs hosted a wonderful Cake Sale in aid of our School Inclusion Programme, with all funds raised being thoughtfully reinvested into the programme. Lunchtime was buzzing, and everyone got to enjoy a homemade treat! The event was a great success and created a fantastic sense of community around the school, with plenty of colour, conversation and delicious baking on display throughout the day.

WELLBEING WEEK 2026



Wellbeing Week 2026 was a real highlight of the school year, with a fantastic range of activities that gave students the chance to get active, enjoy the outdoors and spend time together away from the classroom. Our 5th Years took on the challenge of scaling Slieve Foy, while the Big Brother Little Brother group enjoyed a brilliant day out in Emerald Park. TY and 2nd Year students teamed up for a selfie-orienteeering hike in Dún na Rí, combining teamwork, exercise and plenty of fun. The week finished with a hugely successful Sports Day for the whole school. With glorious sunshine and a great atmosphere, there was plenty of laughter, fun and school spirit throughout the day.

