



## St. Louis Grammar School

### In this edition . . .



**Laura Barton's Inspiring Story**



**Wonderful Fundraising Efforts**



**Ulster University Talented Athlete Talk**



**Broad Spectrum of Sports on St Louis PE Curriculum**

### . . . And Much More

### Prizegiving Successes Celebrated at St Louis

We were delighted to be able to recognise the successes of many of our students at our Senior and Junior Prizegiving events. This year, our guest speakers were past pupils, Caitlin Sands and Connaire McGreevy.

Connaire spoke fondly of his time in school and recounted some of the memories from his time in school. The successful businessman told a packed hall how his journey hasn't been a linear one. Rather, his path has woven and rambled, setbacks and tragedy threatened the course of Connaire's post-school life but always, his drive, hard work and determination ensured he found a way to succeed. These were, he said, qualities that his time in St Louis helped develop and which had stood to him through his adult life.

Caitlin, an engineer, specialises in biomedical design and is at the frontline of exciting new developments that could help to dramatically increase the availability of cutting-edge medical science and procedures in poorer countries across the world. Her message to the pupils was a simple one though – to persevere. Caitlin said, "Keep going. Success often grows quietly from the effort you put in every day. Stay curious, stay organised and stay open to learning. You have more potential than you realise."



**Students honoured at Senior Prizegiving pictured with Mr Martin (Principal), Mrs Stokes (Year Head), Mr Daniel Curran (Board of Governors) and Mr Connaire McGreevy (Guest Speaker).**



**A Selection of Prize-winners at Junior Prizegiving pictured with Mr Sloan and guest-speaker Caitlin Sands.**



## NI Water Visit to St Louis

Pupils at St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel, recently enjoyed an informative visit from representatives of Northern Ireland Water. The session focused on how to be a responsible consumer and the importance of protecting this vital natural resource.

During the talk, pupils learned about the water cycle and gained valuable insights into how everyday actions can make a real difference in conserving water and safeguarding the environment.

As part of the visit, every pupil received a reusable water bottle, encouraging them to make sustainable choices and reduce single-use plastics.

A special word of thanks goes to Mrs Morris, Head of Home Economics, for organising this engaging and educational event.



## From St Louis to Michigan: Laura Barton's Inspiring Study

St Louis Grammar was thrilled to welcome back former student Laura Barton, who captivated students with an inspiring account of her year studying at Alma College, Michigan through the prestigious Study USA programme.

Laura began by explaining the selection and recruitment process, offering practical advice for those considering this remarkable opportunity. She encouraged students to embrace every chance for travel and learning during their university years, reminding them that experiences beyond the classroom can shape their future in extraordinary ways. Her presentation painted a vivid picture of life at an American college. Laura spoke warmly of the academic challenges and cultural discoveries that defined her year abroad. She described the thrill of joining the Alma College cheerleading team as a flyer, the excitement of attending an American football game, and the joy of exploring new cities, including unforgettable trips to Chicago and Miami.

Laura also shared the generosity she encountered from American families and fellow students, particularly during Thanksgiving celebrations, which gave her a true sense of belonging. She laughed as she recalled trudging to class in snow boots through two feet of Michigan snow, a stark contrast to Ireland's milder winters. Her message was clear: opportunities like Study USA are life changing. They offer not only academic growth but also cultural immersion, personal development, and memories that last a lifetime. Laura urged students to apply for programmes like this and take every chance to enrich their university experience and broaden their horizons. St Louis Grammar extend a heartfelt thanks to Laura for returning to St Louis to share her journey and for her continued engagement with our school community. Her story will undoubtedly inspire many of our students to dream big and seize every opportunity.

## Non-Uniform Day Fundraiser for Ben's Journey A Huge Success



The community of St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel, was delighted to be able to present a cheque to Mr Niall McAleenan for £1,800 after a recent non-uniform fundraiser for Ben's Journey to First Steps.

Mr McAleenan's son, Ben, has Pitt-Hopkins Syndrome - an extremely rare neurodevelopment condition. We were delighted to be

able to make a donation towards Ben's journey. Additionally, monies raised at our 'St Louis Got Talent' Christmas extravaganza were split between Ben's Journey and SVDP. Several other successful charity fundraisers have been organised recently as St Louis proud record of helping those in need continues.

## Ulster University Visit Encourages Young Athletes to Excel



Students from Year 13 and Year 14 at St Louis recently gained valuable insight into combining sporting ambition with academic success when Dr John Farrell from Ulster University delivered an informative presentation on the Ulster University Talented Athlete Scheme.

The audience included students representing a wide range of GAA clubs from across the Newry, Mourne & Down area. Dr Farrell explained that the Talented Athlete Scheme is designed to support young sports performers in gaining access

to a quality university education while continuing to compete at the highest levels in their chosen sport. The scheme recognises the significant commitment required to perform at elite level and the impact this can have on examination performance. For the 2026–27 academic year, successful applicants to the scheme may receive a two-grade reduction in entrance requirements, or the equivalent across other accepted qualifications, for full-time undergraduate courses. The scheme is open to students across all degree disciplines at Ulster University.

Students were also informed about the extensive academic and sporting support available, including mentor support, access to performance sport services, tailored fitness programmes, performance skills workshops, university merchandise, and sports club or Sports Centre membership opportunities. In addition, participants may apply to the Ulster University Dual Career Programme, which further supports students in managing both academic study and high-level sport.

## New Senior Prefects Elected at St Louis

A new batch of Senior Prefects have been elected in St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel. The new Prefects, pictured with Mr P Rafferty (Head of Year) and Mr E McGlue (Vice Principal), act as ambassadors for the school, support the Student Leadership Team in their work and also act as contact points for any students who wish to talk to them. In taking on the mantle of this role the students develop important skills such as working as part of a team, assisting junior students in their day to day school life and understanding the responsibility their position carries. The Senior Prefects have already established themselves in these important roles in the academic year to date and we wish them continued success in their roles.





## Wide Range of Sports on PE Curriculum Celebrated



**Another Perfect Shot**

Students at St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel, are fully embracing the opportunities to engage in a wide range of sporting activities through a varied Physical Education (PE) programme and a wide range of extra curricular offerings.

In PE pupils are afforded the opportunity to engage in Crossfit training (Conquer fitness), Basketball (Mourne Basketball Club), Table Tennis (Mourne Table Tennis Club) and Boxing (Colin Quinn) as well as multiple Gaelic sports and a variety of Track and Field disciplines. Further to that, the afterschool activities offered include Gaelic football for boys and girls, with Danny Magill now employed as a full time Games Development Officer, Camogie, Hurling, Athletics, Netball, Golf, Basketball and a soccer team has been introduced this year.



**Pe Boxing Lesson**

This distinctive blend of sporting offerings makes the PE and extra-curricular offering at St Louis both appealing and unique. Head of PE, Mr Niall McAleenan, said, "The students are very fortunate to have such a wide and varied programme of sports available to them, along with energetic, knowledgeable and caring coaches to guide their learning. I would like to thank Mrs Allen, Miss O'Hare, Miss King and Mr Reilly for all their efforts with students during PE classes. We are also grateful to the other members of staff who support our PE programme and extra-curricular sports, giving their time so willingly for the benefit of our students. Our aim is to make PE and extra-curricular sport a fun, engaging and inclusive learning environment where every student has the opportunity to excel and be themselves."



**Six County Minor Representatives for the 2026 Season**



**Six St Louis Students  
Selected for Down Minor  
Panels**

We are extremely proud of our six students who will represent Down at minor level this year across three codes - Football, Ladies Football and Camogie. Earning the chance to represent Down is a huge honour but one that is won over months and years of hard work, dedication and disciplined training.

All six pupils have been exemplary in their commitment to our school teams over the years and we have no doubt they will each be a huge asset to their respective County squads. Well done to all.

Pictured are Adam Corrigan (Longstone), Josh Rafferty (Atticall), Shayna Sloan (An Riocht), Clara Annett (Ballymartin), CJ Trainor-Harrison (Longstone) and Ross Austin (Cumann Pheadair Naofa).