

CGS NEWS

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2024 Families First School of the Year for the Northern Region



Hockey Tour to Valencia

Now that we've settled back into term, we've finally had time to reflect on what was a truly wonderful few days in Valencia. The tour was packed full of unforgettable experiences. We learned how to make local paella, explored the city on a bike tour, and visited Oceanogràfic, the largest aquarium in Europe. A real highlight was watching the FIH Pro League, seeing the Netherlands (world number 1) take on England — an incredible experience for our players with some able to meet and greet afterwards. On the pitch, the girls competed against Spanish teams, while off it they fully immersed themselves in the local culture — including shopping (of course!). Some of the girls even plucked up the courage to speak Spanish, which was fantastic to see. There were plenty of laughs along the way, with beach time, volleyball, and evenings spent playing games — with 'Grab the Mic' proving a standout, especially when a few teachers and students got rather competitive.



#proud

Most importantly, the tour was about friendships, confidence, independence, and shared memories. An incredible experience from start to finish, and one that will stay with everyone for a lifetime. *Thank you to all staff, students, and organisers who made the tour such a success we are already counting down to the next one!*



Cambridge Offer

CGS is delighted to learn that Year 14 pupil **Matthew Withers** has been offered a place at **Cambridge University** to study **Design (architecture, engineering and material sciences)**. Matthew studies Art, Mathematics and Physics A Level at CGS. His passion for Design has developed over the last number of years through many of his subject choices at GCSE and A Level, including Technology and Design. *CGS wishes this very driven young man every success.*





Ulster Rugby selection

Congratulations to our very own Tom Ferris in Year 10 who has been selected for the Under 16 Ulster Development Squad in Rugby, and who has been training with this group of elite young players since September 2025. Tom has successfully made it through two robust and competitive selection processes. He will attend further coaching sessions under the watchful eye of some of the Ulster coaches before the Summer Training Squad is announced. This is a huge achievement for a player so young, especially as Tom is playing with others who are almost a full year older than him. *Congratulations, Tom! #Proud*

World Book Day 2026

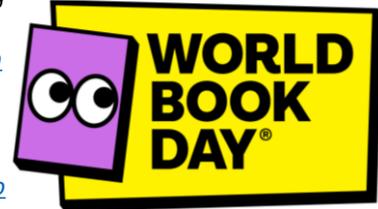
World Book Day 2026 is on 5th March! To help encourage your young people to enjoy reading for pleasure, pupils in Key Stage 3 will receive a World Book Day Book Token! Check with your child if they have received their token, have a look at the £1 book selection, take it into a shop and swap your £1 Book Token for a free World Book Day 2026 book – easy! You may find that the most suitable book for ‘Secondary Readers’ is AGAINST ALL ODDS by Nathanael Lessore. However, if your child would prefer, the Book Token can be exchanged for £1 off a full price book/audiobook (as long as the book/audiobook costs at least £2.99). Your World Book Day £1 book can be redeemed at local participating stores, including Carrickfergus’ own The Secret Bookshelf.

You can find additional participating retailers on the link:

<https://worldbookday.com/books/participating-retailers>.

For more information, please visit the World Book Day website:

<https://www.worldbookday.com/books-and-tokens/books/>



CGS PRESENTS

PRE-LOVED BOOK SALE

Celebrate World Book Day with a eco-friendly book sale of previously loved books! Need a new novel for Reading for Pleasure? Desperate to dive into a beautiful new world? Check out our fantastic selection!

When? Break and lunch: Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th March
Where? Room 1: Senora Claver’s room

Book prices will range from £1-£4

Safe Internet Day – Feb 2026

Before half-term, staff spoke with pupils in all year groups about the responsibilities of using AI technology correctly, and specifically about the impact and consequences of creating explicit AI generated images and how to report them. AI can be a really useful tool when used correctly, so it is important that our pupils understand the possible pitfalls and how to avoid them. The UK Safer Internet Centre has produced a list of Top Tips for Parents/Carers which can be accessed via this link.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026/top-tips-for-parents-and-carers>

The NSPCC also has come useful links for parents when talking about artificial intelligence with children.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2025/artificial-intelligence-safety-tips-for-parents/>

SAFER INTERNET DAY

Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI



A CGS Dance Champion

Huge congratulations to CGS pupil Layla Groves, who competed in the recent Galway Irish Midland Dance Championships and is now the Age 12 category 2026 champion! Layla, who dances for Royal Tara Dance Academy, then followed up the Galway success as she claimed the title of Age 12 North Coast champion, which took place in the Carrick Leisure. *A fantastic run of competitions, showing how Layla’s hard work and dedication shone through! #proud*

Government & Politics Dept

Year 13 Stormont Trip



The Year 13 Government and Politics class were hosted by the NI Assembly Education Service, for a visit to Parliament Buildings recently. The pupils attended the Public Gallery, received a presentation on the work of the Assembly, met with a committee clerk and with a number of MLAs, who took their questions. Two of the MLAs (John Stewart and Cheryl Brownlee) the current Government and Politics class met are former pupils of the subject at Carrickfergus Grammar School. The Assembly Education staff invite all local parties to send a representative to speak to school groups and it is an excellent opportunity for our pupils to hear and question a range of views. Along with John Stewart of the UUP and Cheryl Brownlee of the DUP, the pupils met and discussed local politics with Danny Donnelly (Alliance) and Matthew O'Toole (SDLP).

Alliance Youth Summit



Fair
Education
Alliance

Making education
and life chances
fair for all young people



On the 17th February, Year 13 pupil Nadia Mackiewicz had the pleasure of attending the Fair education Alliance Youth summit in London on behalf of the #IWILL organisation. She had engaged in public speaking training, alongside sessions about votes at 16 and youth voice, as well as engaging with Labour MP Peter Swallow and Green Party Leader Zach Polanski. *Well done, Nadia!*

U13 Rugby Latest



Well done to the U13 team which travelled to Roughfort recently, to play Belfast Royal Academy and Ballymena Academy. The boys started strongly against Ballymena Academy, scoring seven tries thanks to Stanley M.(2), Samuel S.(2), Zayd M., Finn B. and Alfie Y. Joel N. converted five of the tries to bring the final score to 45-7. In their second game, the boys continued where they left off scoring a further six tries - Jake M.(2), Jack M., Samuel S., Alfie M. and Finn B. Joel N. added four conversions. *Thank you to all the supporters who made the journey to cheer on the boys!*



Dates for your diary

Monday 9th March: Year 13 Parent-Pupil-Teacher Consultations via video call 3:50pm to 6:20pm.

Monday 16th March: Staff Development Day – no pupils in school.

Tuesday 17th March: St Patrick's Day – no pupils in school.

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