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Welcome note from the Principal.....

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Last term was short, but a very busy and productive one here in Scoil Ghormáin Naofa. We entered the Arklow Music Festival, celebrated the Proclamation Day, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Mother's Day, World Book Day, St Patrick's Day and finished the term on a high with our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Well done to staff and pupils for working so hard and achieving so much. The Staff and Board of Management are grateful for the continued support received from Parents. Your contribution is valued and much appreciated and your input makes a positive difference to our school.

We held a very successful enrolment evening and we were delighted with the response and feedback we received. If you know of any new families in the area or families with children of school going age please send them in our direction.

As always, if you wish to discuss anything with me, you can arrange an appointment with Siobhán in the office and I'd be happy to meet with you. I hope that everyone has had a good rest over Easter and that we are all looking forward to our third and final term here in Scoil Ghormáin Naofa.

Is mise le meas, Lisa Dempsey.

Catholic Schools Week & Grandparents' Day

Catholic schools week took place from January 31st – February 6th 2016. This annual event calls on Catholic schools to give expression in a special way to a particular aspect of Catholic education. This theme of Catholic Schools Week 2015 was 'Catholic Schools: Challenged to Proclaim God's Mercy'. The children had an opportunity each day to participate in Catholic schools week during their religion time.

On Wednesday 3rd February we celebrated **Grandparents' day**. This provided us with a lovely opportunity to remind our children the important role grandparents play in their lives. We had a very enjoyable day, one that will hold great memories for both the grandparents and children in the years to come. Many thanks to the grandparents, parent and relatives who visited us in the school to experience some of the present and give us an insight into some of the past.



We think our Grandparents are.....



Our Bible Stories

Proclamation Day

Our School spent a memorable morning on the 15th March which was Proclamation Day. This occasion created a great excitement around the school and all the classes were busy learning about 1916 in the weeks prior. New Proclamations were drawn up; instruments were played; Irish songs and poems were learned; art displays were created and Irish dancing was practiced.

We are very grateful to those who attended to celebrate the occasion with us and who helped us to raise the flag. We began our celebration by watching a DVD created by last year's 5th and 6th class about **Liam Mellows**. This reminded us that Castletown is steeped in history, particularly in relation to this era. Following on from this, each class performed a piece of poetry and/or song for our audience. We were blessed with the weather as we all assembled outside to raise the flag at 12 noon alongside all the schools in the country. This was a very proud moment for all school staff and pupils as they sang **Amhrán na BhFiann** whilst the flag was raised outside the front entrance. Many thanks to Mary Kenny who raised the flag with the assistance of her granddaughter, Aibhín. Mary has many stories relating to this time and members of her family were directly involved in the Easter Rising. Afterwards a Ceili Mór was held in the school grounds. With over 100 children taking part; it was magical. Well done to all the boys and girls who were so good during the ceremony. Also a special thank you to our Parents' Council for providing refreshments afterwards.

Reflection:

"Eochair feasa foghlaim"



"Learning is the key to knowledge"



For your attention:

If your child is **absent or late** for school please remember to contact the office or send a note explaining the reason for this absence or lateness with your child on their return. This is important as we are obliged to make returns to Túsla regarding attendance and absences at the end of each term.

Also please send a note if **homework is not completed** or **uniform is not being worn** etc.

Maintaining these lines of communication with the class teacher is important in ensuring that your children have the best possible experience in our school.



Aibhín & Mary Kenny raise the Tricolour!

Class News

Ms McGonnell – Junior/Senior Infants;

The Junior and Senior Infants were delighted to see their friends again after the Easter holidays. They were all excited to share their news with each other. Everyone is refreshed and ready for work again.

The children enjoyed many activities last term. They performed their poem 'Running Away' in the **Arklow Music Festival**. This was a great experience for the children and they were delighted to come very highly recommended in their competition. Congratulations to Ms. Byrne's Class on their success. The children from Junior Infants to 2nd enjoyed celebrating together!



Arklow Music Festival



Fun with Jago Blocks!

The children were taught two dances for **Seachtain na Gaeilge** – Shoe the Donkey and The Walls of Limerick. A céilí took place after the flag was raised at the 1916 Ceremony and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thank you to Ms. Mc Devitt for all her hard work in organising the céilí.

As part of the SPHE Programme, the children are participating in The Mighty Mouth Programme. This programme emphasises the essential role of tooth-friendly foods and drinks, and of supervised regular effective tooth brushing. This theme will be further developed in our play. We are delighted to have some new resources for our play – Jago blocks and a Play Theatre. They really added to our theme 'The Opticians'. The children are enjoying their swimming lessons in Arklow each Friday.

Ms. Byrne's 1st/2nd Class

We had a very exciting start to the New Year. We started off our term with our wishes for 2016. We hope that our fairy godparents are working hard on making our wishes come true. Ms. Brennan came to our classroom and taught us for 5 weeks. It was really fun and interesting and we learned many new things based around the theme of **"The Arctic"**. We especially enjoyed making our dioramas.....we created a scene in a shoe box! We even made snowmen during P.E. We learned all about Tom Crean. We learned how to write a letter. We used our imaginations and took on the role of Tom Crean writing to his mother. We were very sad to lose one of our classmates, Vincent Wyble, in February. He has moved to Co. Clare. We wish him all the best of luck and happiness in his new school. We sent 26 letters to Vincent this week and are eagerly awaiting his reply.



School Book Fair



Celebrating our win!



Pizza Party!

Our most exciting news has to be winning **first prize** in The Arklow Music Festival. We performed the action poem **'Concerning Mike Teavee'**. The adjudicator complimented us on facial expression and tone of voice and we are very proud of our performance on the day. We were very happy to be crowned 'class of the month' in February. Thank you Ms. Dempsey, we really enjoyed our pizza. We also really enjoyed the raising of the flag, especially the céilí afterwards. We didn't realise we were such good dancers. What can we say; we really are a talented bunch!!

2nd class made their **First Confession** on Wednesday 13th April at 7 p.m. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the boys and girls from 1st to 6th class who help us in our preparations by coming to various masses and events to sing.

"Green School" Programme:



We are all waiting patiently for the decision on our **Travel Flag** and hoping all our hard work has paid off over the past two years. We hope to do a spring clean-up in the next few weeks around the school linking in with the village clean-up for Spring. We are also going to start a small wildflower garden at the bottom of the field which will also help us get on the way towards our Biodiversity Flag. We had a wonderful talk from **Biodiversity Ireland** about bees and the effect they have on our environment and how important they are.

"Active School Flag" Programme:



The school has been very active since Christmas with continued GAA and rugby sessions. As well as this we have introduced **Fun Fridays** (see below). The whole school from Infants to 6th Class participate in mixed groups doing a variety of activities at eight stations with the ninth station being where the children have a well-deserved rest. Having a mix of ages is great as the older children help improve the skills of younger children.



It's nice socially too for everyone to mix and get to know each other.

Ms. McDevitt's sister, Edel has also joined ASF and holds a dance class on Thursday's after school. Ms. McDevitt also led a whole school céilí on the yard for 'Seachtain na Gaeilge.' It was great fun and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Thank you! The ASF committee are working on getting an after school activity going also.

Well done to Ross Arnold 6th class who represented the school recently in the county Hand Ball tournament. It is the first time we have had a student represent the school in such an event.

Finally we are well on the road to getting our **Active School Flag** we just have a few more boxes to tick.

Thanks to all for your support and help,
The Active School Flag Committee.

Ms. Dempsey's 3rd Class definitely earned their Easter holidays this year after a busy and productive second term. At the beginning of the year we set out our hopes and wishes for 2016. We hope they come true! In English we commenced "**Station Teaching**" at the start of the year. This involved the students working in small groups of 5 or 6. Our stations focused on reading, grammar, writing and digital literacy using our iPads. We really enjoyed this method of learning and look forward to using "stations" across other subjects in the future. The Book Fair was a very enjoyable experience for us. We visited the **Book Fair** each day and Ms. Dempsey read us excerpts from a variety of books. We celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge in style and we really enjoyed the céilí mór outside in the playground. At the moment we are learning '**Tóg Amach Mé**' from Coláiste Lorgan and we look forward to performing it at an assembly soon.



World Book Day 2016



Feb Class of the Month!

In Maths, we took a very hands on approach to learning about **Fractions**. We used real bars of chocolate to show different fractions. Who knew that Maths could be so tasty??

Mark from Wexford County Council visited us to tell us all about **Bio-Diversity**. We had never heard of this word before so we were very interested to find out that it is all about how plants and animals get along together. We will be working on this as part of our next Green Flag so watch this space. We were fascinated by the events of the 1916 Rising and how brave all the leaders were. The Proclamation Day was a very special day for us and we were very proud to sing the song **Grace** and **Amhrán na BhFiann** as part of the flag raising celebrations.

We loved having our Grandparents in to visit for Grandparents' day as part of Catholic Schools Week. We set up card games and our Grandparents joined in with us and some of them showed us new games! One of our highlights from Term 2 was the **Peace Proms Concert**. We spent many hours preparing for this concert, learning song words and actions. This was an amazing experience for us as we performed on stage alongside the Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland in the Hub Kilkenny. The children were highly commended for their excellent behavior at the concert. Well done to all involved!!

In February we were crowned **Class of the Month** and we really enjoyed celebrating this with a Class Pizza Party. We are looking forward to another busy and happy term ahead.

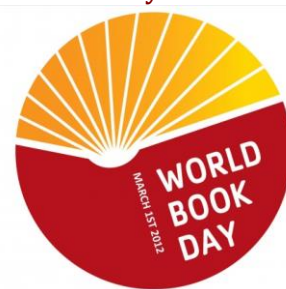
Ms. Whittle- 4th and 5th Class;

Another term has come and gone, and it was just as busy for 4th and 5th class as all the other terms have been! Lots of learning took place across all areas of the curriculum. In particular, we had loads of fun in English! Station teaching was introduced and we enjoyed every minute of it, especially because we got to use the iPads ☺

World Book Week brought with it the opportunity to share with the class our favourite books of all time. We put together some brilliant book reviews that are very informative and artistic. We were all so impressed with the front cover artwork our classmates created. To end World Book Week on a high, we all dressed up as a character from our books! Our costumes were so brilliant that we had to walk the **catwalk** to show off our costumes to the rest of the school. We loved being in the spotlight! 4th and 5th class were visited by Mark (See below) who spoke to us all about **Biodiversity**. We learnt about bees, the fascinating life they lead and the important role they play in the pollination of plants. Mark showed us a bee hive and talked us through the steps of how honey is made. We were all shocked at how much work goes in to one jar of honey. Before we finished up, we all got to plant sunflower seeds. We took them home and some of us have even started to see ours grow.



Scholastic Book Fair & World Book Day 2016



World Book Day 2016 was celebrated in Scoil Ghormáin Naofa with a school book fair and book related activities across many classes. Events to mark the day included pupils from 4th and 5th class dressing up as their favorite book character and Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time during the school day. The book fair once again proved to be a great success and raised **€1119** in commission which we can use to spend on books from Scholastic. **Thank you** to all who supported us by buying a book at the book fair.

"Seachtain na Gaeilge"



We celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge in Scoil Ghormáin Naofa with lots of events in all classes. Our corridors were decorated with pupil's lovely art work and all pupils took part in Céilís on the yard during the week. Our Irish culture and language were celebrated and culminating in the raising of our Irish Flag on March 15th.

Class of the Month!

"Class of the Month" is going down a treat in Scoil Ghormáin Naofa with all classes striving to win the prestigious award. Teachers have noticed a remarked improvement across all classes in relation to respect, health and safety, good manners and overall good behavior. The competition is very close at the end of each month, often with only a single point separating the classes.



Our Winners so far!:

November: Ms. D'Arcy's 5th and 6th Class

December: Ms. McGonnell's Junior and Senior Infants

January: Ms. Byrne's 1st and 2nd Class

February: Ms. Dempsey's 3rd Class

March: Ms. Whittle's 4th and 5th Class

Ms. Whittle- 4th and 5th Class contd.;



Getting ready for the catwalk!



World Book Day

Of course we couldn't let the term go by without learning all about the 1916 Easter Rising. We learnt all about the **seven signatories** of the Proclamation and the sacrifice that the rebels made for Irish independence. We were thrilled to commemorate the centenary through song, artwork and the flag raising ceremony. As if all this wasn't enough, our class ended the term by winning **class of the month!** It was hard earned and well deserved and we are all looking forward to our pizza party! (Even teacher 😊)

Ms. D'Arcy- 5th and 6th Class

Debating: We thoroughly enjoyed our **debating** on the following topics 'Refugee's should not be allowed enter our country' and 'Religion should not be taught in school'. The children had to either agree or disagree with these motives, research and compile a convincing debate using facts and figures to back it up. When all the background work was done the students presented it to the class in teams. The most convincing debaters with well researched points and very good deliveries were **Jack O' Gorman, Ailbhe Rowlands, Daniel Proctor, Áine Cunningham, Priya Daly o' Toole, Ross Arnold, Holly Weadick and James McCarthy.**

Station Teaching: We began station teaching in February. The children in small groups have a different task to complete at each station such as listening skills, comprehension, grammar, reading and iPad educational games.

Eason's Spelling Bee: We competed in the Eason's Spelling Bee in March. The children displayed great spelling talent. The competition was based on a knock out system until one child was left. The last speller standing was Jack Higgins. Jack participated in the County Final in Bunscoil Loreto on Tuesday 5th April. He got to the fifth round, which was super. **Well done Jack!**

Novel: We began reading our class novel in January. The novel, titled, '**The Guns of Easter,**' is about the events of a boy aged 12 during Easter Rising week. It tells the story of the Rising from his point of view. The children really enjoyed it and learned lots about the Rising while reading and analysing it.

Gaeilge: Bhaineamar taitneamh as cluiche gaeilge gach Aoine. D'fhoghlaim an rang go léir dán gaeilge, An tEarrach agus Is Fuath Liom na hÉadaí seo. Rinne siad dramaíocht gaeilge ón scéal gaeilge.

Bhí siad ag caint as gaeilge i rith Seachtain na Gaeilge.

Maths: The children have been busy and very diligent trying to get their heads around decimals, fractions and percentages. We feel we may have mastered them now.

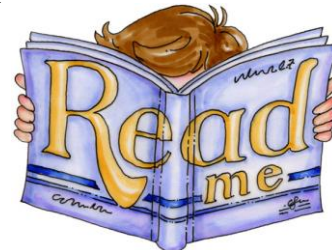
SPHE: We were very excited to begin the pilot **SPHE programme** called 'All together Now.' Scoil Ghormáin Naofa is one of just a few schools taking part in this pilot programme and we will be named as participants in the study and research when it goes public to all schools. The programme covers issues such as bullying and discrimination, attitudes in relation to respecting diversity and difference; and the fostering of dispositions of respect and inclusion in society today.



Everyone enjoying the Ceilí on Proclamation Day

Paired Reading:

Paired reading takes place each week from Infants to 2nd class. Thanks to the dedicated parents who give their time each week to support and enhance the reading ability of our children! If you are free to give of your time please contact Siobhán in the office.



School Tour 2016:

This year all classes are going to '**Let's Go' School Tour** in DCU on Monday 20th June. It promises to be a great day out for all the children. Details of fees will follow soon.



Arklow Festival News:

Yet another busy time with the Arklow Music and Drama festival. All students who entered represented their school in the best way and did us proud. Eight students entered the Dán Gaeilge competition from Ms.D'Arcy's class and were extremely successful. The students were Conn Kinsella, Jack O' Gorman, Jamie Kavanagh, Eimear Wolohan, Priya Daly O' Toole, Lauren Maguire, Jack Higgins and James McCarthy. We had a first place, joint 2nd places and three highly commended students. Well done to all students!

There were many solo verse speaking entries and they were all fantastic also. It has been said by many commentators that the standard this year was extremely high. We had many winners in these competitions as well; too numerous to name.



Well done also to Ms. McGonnell's Junior Infants who came 3rd and were Highly Commended for their performance in the Action Poem Category and to Ms. Byrne's 1st and 2nd Class who came 1st for their performance in the Action Poem category. Drama and Speech and Language are alive and kicking here in Scoil Ghormáin Naofa!

Ms. D'Arcy- 5th and 6th Class contd.

History/Geography/Science: We have been learning lots of interesting things in the above subjects. To name a few things; we have learned about the Easter Rising and on **International Women's Day** in March we focused on the contribution of Cumann na mBan to the Rising. We are currently exploring Wexford's participation in the Rising. We explored change and continuity in Geography focusing on transport and an example of Science work we explored Sound.



Our Easter and St. Patrick's Day Art Work

Texaco Art: Some students put great effort into the Texaco art entries this year. The standard of art in Texaco is always extremely high however it is a great achievement just to enter this highly acclaimed competition and take serious time out to study a piece and recreate it in an artistic format.

6th class continue to enjoy the magazine, **Primary Planet** and in February 5th and 6th entered a competition to create a cover for the March issue with the theme, 1916 Rising; Priya Daly O' Toole's entry was printed and there may be more of our students pieces printed in the April issue.

On **Grandparents Day** the children made St. Brigid's Day crosses using reeds and rushes. We invited the grandparents to help us make them.

The children made lovely **Mother's Day** collages also. Using descriptive words from magazines and newspapers, coloured paper, flowers, glitter and other decorative materials.

They made **St. Patrick's Day** pot of gold and rainbow pictures and constructed Easter bunny brown paper baskets in which they got a nice treat the last day of term.

Finally, 5th and 6th also did pictures based on the Rising for our flag raising ceremony.

Drama/Music: We enjoyed creating Slapstick comedy scenes in January. We worked on our Dán Gaeilge in February. Instead of entering the Arklow Festival this year 5th and 6th class are doing a play based on the events of the 1916 Rising and hope to perform it on the actual 100 year commemoration in April. Serious rehearsal and panic is now ensuing!!!

We learned 'It's a long way to Tipperary,' and the 'Foggy Dew.' The later we performed for the flag raising ceremony.

Dán Gaeilge participants



Sports All Stars:

The Rackard League Hurling Competition begins this week with boys from 4th, 5th and 6th classes. We will face matches against Gaelscoil Mhoshiolog, Ballygarrett and Kilanerin. Best of luck to all the boys representing our school in this competition. In our match on 12th April we drew to Gaelscoil Mhoshiolog and will play Kilanerin on Wednesday 20th April. Thank you to Mick Kavanagh and Collie Byrne for all their great trainings!



The Rackard League Camogie Competition begins this week also. Girls from 4th, 5th and 6th classes will be taking part. We will face matches against Kilmuckridge, Monageer, Kilrush, Ballygarrett. In our first match we beat Gaelscoil Mhoshiolog. Best of luck to all the girls representing our school in this competition.

1st to 6th classes participated in **Gaelic Football** Coaching provided by Wexford GAA between January and March. All the children really enjoyed these sessions and their skills developed greatly over the weeks.

1st to 6th classes will attend **Rugby coaching** sessions provided by Leinster Rugby Council for the next six weeks. We have a great coach who encourages all the children to participate in the games and provides them with a taste of rugby.



Swimming for Ms. McGonnell's Junior and Senior Infants is ongoing in Arklow Swimming Pool. It is a great opportunity for the children. Thank you to the parents for their help and support bringing the children to these lessons.



Fundraising

Annual Golf Classic:

Our annual Golf Classic takes place on **Friday 10th June** in Courtown Golf Club. This is our single **major fundraiser of the year** and your support would be greatly appreciated. Government grants do not cover the cost of running **any** school and therefore every year schools are forced to fundraise to ensure that basic bills are met and standards are upheld. This is our fundraiser to overcome that shortfall this year and we would greatly appreciate your support. You can support us in a number of ways, you don't have to be a golfer:

- Enter a team into the Golf Classic.
- Sponsor a tee box.
- Sponsor a prize for the winners or a prize for the auction.
- Help on the day feeding our hungry Golfers!!
- Come to the Golden Anchor on the night and support the auction.



Last year was a very enjoyable day and night for all who got involved and we look forward to another enjoyable day and night this year. Please contact the office if you would like to get involved or support our venture in any way.

Student Council

A Student Council has been formed in Scoil Ghormain Naofa!

Jack Higgins, Reece O'Donnell, Gavin Kelly, Sophie Ivanoff, Mikey Kinsella and Siofra Higgins have been busy listening to their peers' ideas for a more enjoyable school environment for all. They hosted their first ever fundraiser this week to raise money for some of these brilliant ideas! (see below)

Technology hour was thought up by the children for the children and we were all really looking forward to it!



Parent's Association

We were delighted to announce the new officers of our Parent's Association in March. This will make life even more enjoyable in Scoil Ghormain Naofa for students, parents and teachers alike.

Thank you to **Rochella Kinsella, Margaret Tallon and Sarah Kavanagh** for taking on the roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Please support them in their endeavours and attend meetings to keep informed of upcoming events which your children will be participating in such as Communion, Sports Day etc.

The next Parent's Association meeting will be in the school library at 8.15pm on Wednesday 20th April

First Holy Communion:



We will celebrate our First Holy Communion on **Sunday 15th May at 11.00am**. This will be a very special day for the nine boys and girls who have been preparing throughout the year for this special sacrament with Ms. Byrne and their parents.

Don't forget Gorey Credit Union – every Wednesday!!

Awards Ceremony:

Following staff discussion, it has been decided not to hold an **academic awards ceremony** this year. We feel that this was sending out the wrong message to both parents and students in relation to standardised tests and their importance. Standardised tests are merely a snapshot of your child's performance on one day and they do not always reflect the hard work and overall ability of your child. We value all children's achievements here in Scoil Ghormain Naofa and we strive to promote the development of all aspects of the child, not just the academic. We hope that you too, when reading your child's report, will pay more attention to the comments that the teacher's make in relation to your child rather than focusing on a STEN score.

Dates for the Diary:



April

- 20th Parent's Association Meeting @ 8.15pm**
- 23rd 2nd Class First Holy Communion Mass @ 8pm.**
- 30th School Closes, May Bank Holiday.**

May

- 5th School Reopens.**
- 13th 5th & 6th class tour to see "Me Mollser" in The Abbey Theatre.**
- 15th First Holy Communion Ceremony for 2nd Class @ 11am**
- 29th Corpus Christi Mass, Arklow.**

June

- 3rd School Closes, June Bank Holiday.**
- 8th School Reopens.**
- TBC School Sports Day**
- 10th Golf Classic, Courtown Golf Club**
- 20th School Tour for all classes**
- 24th School Closes for Summer at 12pm**