

Welcome to our  
Newsletter!  
November 2016-  
January 2017

## 'Scoil Ghormáin Naofa' Newsletter

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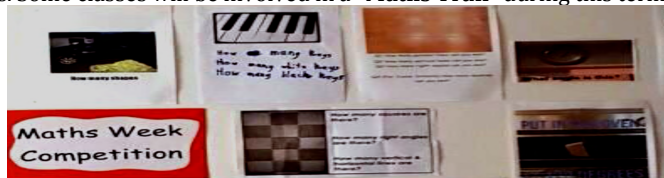


### Welcome note from the Principal.....

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Happy New Year to you all. We look forward to another busy and productive term. Last term proved to be a term to remember which culminated in the production of **five superb plays and pantomimes**. Congratulations to all involved. Thank you to the entire school community for all the support received. Your generosity will continue to facilitate the purchase of excellent resources which are of great benefit to the children.

We had a hugely successful **Maths Week** in December which was coordinated by Ms. Whittle, whereby children completed a **"Maths Problem a Day"**. The **"Maths Eyes"** programme was used which encourages children to look at Maths in the environment. Maths Week ended with a competition whereby the children designed their own maths problem using the format of "Maths Eyes". We were overwhelmed with the response from the students. Some classes will be involved in a **"Maths Trail"** during this term.



Some entries in the Maths Week Competition

There was great excitement in the school on Friday as Junior and Senior Infants started their swimming lessons. Thank you to all the parents who took the opportunity to be Garda vetted. This term I plan to invite all parents to be Garda vetted.

We are delighted to be participating in the **Food Dudes Healthy Eating Programme** which is being co-ordinated by Ms. McGonnell. We are also taking part in **10@10**, an initiative promoted by RTE's **Operation Transformation** and **Active School Flag**.

We continued to participate in many sporting activities including Gaelic Football and Rugby and have performed so well in all our competitions. 3<sup>rd</sup> Class were joint winners of the **Catriona Byrne Memorial Trophy** on December 7<sup>th</sup> and our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class mixed team won the **Rugby Blitz** on December 8<sup>th</sup>. A huge thank you to Michael Kavanagh for organizing the GAA Blitz and to all parents for their support.

There is great excitement in all classes as we begin **Drumming Classes** on Tuesday. The classes will continue for 6 weeks with Conor Moore of **Sound Out Rhythm, Gorey** and there will be a performance for parents in February. Thank you to the **Parents Council** for funding these classes.

Our **School of Excellence Award** continues in the Gardening Theme. We are excited to see all the spring bulbs burst into bloom. Thank you to all those who supported the initiative **Plant an Orchard in an Hour** and special thanks to Aideen O'Flaherty who made this application on our behalf.

6<sup>th</sup> Class under the guidance of Ms. Byrne will face the "Dragons" when they complete the **Junior Entrepreneur Programme**.

On behalf of all the members of staff and the Board of Management, I would like to thank all parents and staff for their continued support, without which, we could not flourish. We wish all students, parents and members of the community a happy and healthy 2017.

Is mise le meas,

Anne Gilmartin-Ryan.



Look at how many Shoeboxes we collected in our Shoebox Appeal!  
(See Page 4 for more details)

### Reflection

Ar Scáth a Chéile a Mhaireann  
na Daoine



*We all depend on each other*

### Staff News



We welcome **Ms. Catherine Byrne** to our school, she is a visiting teacher and will be with us each Wednesday. **Ms. Rachael Beatty** is completing her final teaching practice and joined us on 16<sup>th</sup> January for 10 weeks.

#### Meet the staff:

**Ms. Whittle:** Junior & Senior Infants

**Ms. McDevitt:** 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Class

**Ms. McGonnell:** 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Class

**Ms. Murphy:** 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Class

**Ms. Byrne:** Acting Deputy Principal & 6<sup>th</sup> Class

**Ms. Gilmartin- Ryan:** Acting Principal & Resource Teacher

**Mr. Breen:** Learning Support Teacher

**Ms. Redmond:** Visiting Resource Teacher

**Carmel, Michelle and Finola** are our S.N.A. team.

**Siobhán** is our Secretary

School email address:  
[cns.iaswx@gmail.com](mailto:cns.iaswx@gmail.com)



School website address:  
[www.castletownnationalschool.ie](http://www.castletownnationalschool.ie)

School Twitter account:  
[@castletown\\_ns](https://twitter.com/castletown_ns)

#### For your Calendar:

Mid-term Break:  
23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> February  
incl. (normal finish  
time 22<sup>nd</sup> February)

Food Dudes  
January 16<sup>th</sup> till  
Term End

Drumming Classes  
January 17<sup>th</sup> – 6 weeks

Arklow Music Festival  
March 4<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
Jnr. & Snr. Infants, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Class and 6<sup>th</sup> Class

10@10  
10<sup>th</sup> February @  
10am

## Class News:

### Ms Whittle – Junior/Senior Infants

Junior and Senior Infants had an **extremely** busy few weeks in the lead up to our Christmas holidays! Our Aistear theme over these last few weeks was **"People Who Help Us"**. This theme lead us to learning all about the Doctor's Surgery and the Post Office.

For the **Post Office**, we really enjoyed playing in our very own Post Office along with creating our own stamp designs, writing cards to loved ones at home and also writing letters to one another within the classroom. We learned all about the journey a letter takes when we post it and we tested how long it takes our letters to be delivered. We found out it only takes **ONE DAY** for it to be delivered! We couldn't believe it!

Science week came and went and our class got in to the spirit by completing lots of fun experiments! We tested a range of different items to see which would sink and which would float. It was lots of fun, even if it did cause a huge mess! :D One of our favourite experiments was making butter. We all loved shaking our tub of cream until it made some butter. It tasted delicious too!

In SPHE we learnt all about the **Safe Cross Code** and how to cross the road safely. We enjoyed singing the song and playing the Safe Cross Game. We were able to use our Safe Cross Code when crossing the road for our Christmas play practices.

Our Christmas play, **A Wiggly Nativity**, was a huge success. After all our hard work and lots of practising we were so happy to perform in front of all our friends and family.

It's hard to believe we are in Term 2 already but Junior and Senior Infants are fantastic workers and I'm sure they're all ready to learn **even more** over the next few weeks!!



### Ms. McDevitt – First/Second Class

As a new year begins we have lots to learn in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class. We have just about recovered from all the rehearsals of our **Christmas play 'A Christmas Story'** and our teacher has told us many times that she was very proud of us on the night of our performance. Before our holidays we were learning about winter and made a lovely **display of snowflakes** which each of us made ourselves and didn't lose any fingers along the way while cutting out.



Our theme now is **Space** and we are learning about our planet 'Earth' and all the other planets in our solar system. We all came up with a special sentence to help us remember the order of the planets from the sun and we also went on a space adventure in class to learn about all the planets. We are learning how important the sun is to us and are going to carry out some experiments to see what would happen to plants if they had no sunlight. We are now looking forward to taking part in the **Food Dudes** programme and are going to try our best to at least try our fruit and vegetables every day. Teacher will be doing spot checks on lunch boxes during the coming weeks and we will try to be healthy with only a small treat on a Friday.

2<sup>nd</sup> class are busy preparing for their **First Holy Communion** and had a **Grandparent's Mass** on Saturday night last, it was lovely to have lots of grandparents at mass and for those who were not fortunate enough to bring their grandparents we know they were with them in a special way. Well done to all the children they were excellently behaved and made their teacher very happy.

### Ms. McGonnell's 3<sup>rd</sup> /4<sup>th</sup> Class.

The children had a lovely few weeks off and are ready to settle back to work. It was a busy time coming up to the Christmas holidays. We started to rehearse our play **'Cinderella Rockerfella'** in early November. The children enjoyed the opportunity to show their dramatic skills and perform on the big stage and thankfully all their hard work paid off. There was lots of work going on behind the scenes also and 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Class would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Carmel in particular for all the help and advice she gave us with costumes and props.

## Curriculum News

### Science Week

This term marked our **second Science Fair**. Science Week is always great fun in Castletown with each class taking part in fun, interesting and informative experiments throughout the week.



The children enjoyed getting involved in these **experiments** but they also love seeing what all the other classes have gotten up to. Our Science Fair was a great way for the children (and parents!) to engage with science in a **fun** way.

### Paired Reading

Paired reading will resume each week from **1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class**. Thanks to the dedicated parents who give their time each week to support & enhance the reading ability of our children!



If you would like to **get involved** please leave your name with Siobhán in the office.

### Junior Entrepreneur Programme

Running over a 12 to 16 week period during the school year, the Programme **nurtures creativity, independence and problem-solving** among pupils of all abilities, helping them develop their own individual business skill sets in collaboration with their classmates.



This is the first year our school has been involved and wish **6<sup>th</sup> class** the best of luck in this exciting and beneficial programme.

### In-Class Support Initiative

This initiative will begin this week in 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> class. It will then be introduced to 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> classes and will continue for this term. This Literacy Initiative will **promote and develop literacy skills** in all classes. To facilitate this, each class will have one to one and half hours each week, using excellent literacy resources, in groups of 6 children and will be implemented by four teachers.



## Class News contd.

### Ms. McGonnell's 3<sup>rd</sup> /4<sup>th</sup> Class.



The **Science Fair** was a great success. We tried out many experiments in class. Our **Water Cycle in a Bag** was a favourite. We hung the bags on the window and after a few days we could see the condensation. When we tipped the side of the bag the precipitation started to fall. We also looked at the difference between putting raisins in still water or 7up. The raisins in 7up danced because of the CO<sub>2</sub> in the drink. This experiment was chosen to demonstrate to other classes in the school.



We would like to **welcome Ms. Beatty** to our school. She will be teaching some lessons to 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> class for the next 3 weeks.

### Ms. Murphy 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Class

It's been a very exciting term in fourth and fifth class! Since Hallowe'en we've been extremely busy and we've been learning lots.

We finished our class novel **No Such Thing As Dragons**, and we have now started reading **The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe**. This novel is linked to our theme of **Exploration**. In History we have started studying **the life of Tom Crean**, Antarctic explorer and in Geography and Science we are learning about the **Antarctic** and the plants and wildlife there.

In English, we wrote narrative stories, having learned all about the features of narrative stories in the past few months. Our stories made for some great reading!

*Táimid fós ag labhairt as Gaeilge sa rang agus tá ár gcuid scileanna teanga ag feabhsú lá i ndiaidh lae. Bhíomar ag foghlaim faoi éadaí difriúla agus chruthaíomar geansaithe Nollag! Chrochamar iad ar dhóras an tseomra mar mhaisiúcháin don Nollaig. Féach ar an bpictiúr thíos.*

We have created fabulous pieces of art in the last couple of months. We learned about **Van Gogh** and used his work as an inspiration to create our own Winter scenes. We also studied **Henri Matisse**, the French artist, and we "**painted with scissors**" as he did. This involved cutting out shapes of various colours and sizes, and sticking them to another piece of paper. We worked on some Christmas- inspired art and even created some glistening glittery decorations while making use of used coffee cups! (See below)

We had a very successful Science week in our classroom and we carried out various experiments to help us to learn about **gravity, density and light**. (See picture below)



Our swimming lessons have now come to an end and they were a great success with some strong improvements on last year. Our football skills continue to improve with the help of our GAA coaches and we'll be focusing on Athletics and hurling and camogie in the new year.

Of course, we were very busy preparing for our Christmas concert during December. We were delighted to perform **Aladdin Trouble** for the children in our school and for our parents. Everybody worked really hard to make the show a success and we all take great pride in our performances.

As the new year begins, we hope to keep up the great work to make this term even better than the last!

**Rath agus séan oraibh go léir san Athbhliain!**

### Ms. Byrne's 6<sup>th</sup> Class

Where have the last two months gone since the previous edition of our newsletter? Well, 6<sup>th</sup> class have been very busy once again and are making the most of their **final year in primary school**. We have continued to study the work of various artists and techniques that they use to create various illusions, e.g. foreshortening. In maths, we studied shape and we integrated this with art and how shapes can work together on the page, i.e. tessellate.

## Homework Club

This very successful club continues every week on **Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday** for any student from 1<sup>st</sup> class onwards. We are **delighted with the success** of this club. Parents, teachers and students can see great benefit of getting homework completed in school and under the guidance of at least three supervisors.

## Sports All Stars



## The Catriona Byrne Cup

On 7<sup>th</sup> December, boys from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> class took part in the **annual Catriona Byrne Cup blitz** in Castletown. We had two teams taking part in the competition and both faced tough opposition with teams from Boolavogue, Ballygarrett and Tara Hill. Our 4<sup>th</sup> class team battled hard but in the end lost out only to a strong Ballygarrett team. After some tough matches, our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class team emerged as joint winners of the competition alongside Tara Hill. **Well done to all involved** and a big thank you to Michael Kavanagh and Mr. Breen for their help training the teams.



## Rugby Blitz

On 8<sup>th</sup> December, both 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class took part in a rugby blitz in Riverchapel. We had three teams representing the school and each of them showed their skill and fantastic teamwork by topping each of their groups. This meant that the Castletown teams would face each other in the quarter-finals and again in the semi-finals. With one Castletown team in the final all their classmates got behind them and in the end they emerged as overall winners. **Well done to the players involved.**



## Swimming News

**Junior/Senior Infants** Class commenced on 13<sup>th</sup> January for six weeks in Arklow Swimming Pool.



## Class News contd.

### Ms. Byrne's 6<sup>th</sup> Class

Children created projects based on 18 different European countries and we have learned about cultures, religions, food and education in a variety of countries. The children read the novel *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, based around the Holocaust and World War 2 and then watched the film. In English, we have done a lot of work based around synonyms and antonyms and are widening our vocabulary so that we can make some interesting stories in the 2<sup>nd</sup> term.



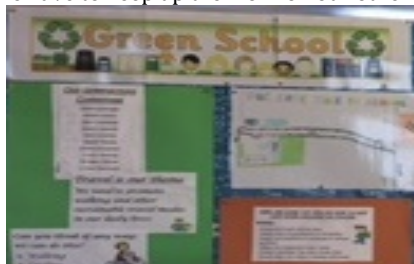
The last three weeks before Christmas were taken up with a lot of drama and music, in preparation for our Christmas play *Scrooge*. Although the theme was quite serious, we hope you all enjoyed it, as we certainly did. I want to commend 6<sup>th</sup> class, not only on their performance on the night, but also on their work ethic and behaviour to date. Keep up the good work 6<sup>th</sup> class! You are a shining example to the junior students in your school. We are now looking forward to a busy and productive 2017. We will make our **Confirmation** and take part in the **Arklow Drama Music Festival** and **Young Entrepreneur Programme**.

## Christmas Shoebox Appeal

This year, Scoil Ghormáin Naofa took part in the Christmas Shoebox Appeal and what a response we got! As a school community we gathered **76 shoeboxes**! A huge **THANK YOU** has to be said to all the families who took part. Your contribution will make a less fortunate child very happy. These 76 shoeboxes were part of a group of 8901 boxes sent from Wexford this year. 7783 of these are heading to **Malawi, Africa** and 1118 are on their way to **Eastern Europe** (see all a picture of all the shoeboxes on Page 1)

## Án Taisce Green Flag Award:

We are working quietly in the background towards our Diversity Green Flag. All the work that is happening in the garden in school is linked with our flag for next year. **Planting trees** and making plans for our **vegetable garden** for the spring. As the weather gets better we hope that we will start to make an effort to **walk, cycle, park and stride to school** again, remember we can park in The Golden Anchor carpark and walk to school. Don't forget the **rules of the road** when walking and wear your **hi-vis vests**. We have to keep up the work on our other flags to achieve our new flag next year.



## Food Dudes:

We are delighted to be participating in the **Food Dudes Healthy Eating Programme** again. The Food Dudes Programme aims to encourage the children to try fruit to **try fruit and vegetables** and come to enjoy the taste of the foods. The programme is managed in Ireland by **Bord Bia** and receives financial support from the **Department of Agriculture, Marine and the EU**. We are looking forward to our delivery of fresh fruit and vegetables on a daily basis for the next few weeks. Hopefully the children will enjoy and benefit from the programme. Below are two Junior Infant pupils, **Lillian and Tabitha**, with their Food Dude bags.



## Be Active ASAP!

The children in **1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class** have been enjoying the Be Active Programme on **Thursdays** after school. They have been playing games to improve their **football, handball, hockey and basketball skills**. Thank you to Ms. Byrne, Ms. Whittle, Ann, Linda, Claire and Steven who have given up their time so generously to help out. We hope to resume Be Active again on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January.



## The Brickx Club

Afterschool Lego Club continues **every Thursday**. Jnr. & Snr. Infants 1.40pm – 2.40pm and 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes 2.40pm – 3.40pm.



## Gorey Credit Union

Don't forget the staff of Gorey Credit Union come to our school **every Wednesday morning**. It is great to see so many of our pupils continuing to save on a weekly basis, especially the new savers from Junior Infants.



## Save the Date



### January

- 9<sup>th</sup>; School Reopens
- 13<sup>th</sup>; Junior/Senior Infants Swimming in Arklow commences for 6 weeks
- 14<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Class First Holy Communion Monthly Mass
- 21<sup>st</sup>; Monthly Confirmation Mass for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Classes

### February

- 7<sup>th</sup>; First Confession for 2<sup>nd</sup> Class
- 17<sup>th</sup>; Junior/Senior Infants & 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Class Swimming in Arklow finishes
- 11<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Class First Holy Communion Monthly Mass
- 21<sup>st</sup>; Monthly Confirmation Mass for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Classes
- 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>; School Closed for Mid-Term Break



### March

- 6<sup>th</sup>; Enrollment Evening for future students (date TBC)
- 11<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Class First Holy Communion Monthly Mass
- 17<sup>th</sup>; School Closed for St. Patrick's Day
- 18<sup>th</sup>; Monthly Confirmation Mass for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Classes
- 31<sup>st</sup>; School Closes for Easter Holidays



### April

- 1<sup>st</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Class First Holy Communion Mass
- 8<sup>th</sup>; Monthly Confirmation Mass for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Classes
- 24<sup>th</sup>; School Reopens
- 30<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> Class First Holy Communion

### May

- 1<sup>st</sup>; School Closed for May Bank Holiday
- 6<sup>th</sup>; Monthly Confirmation Mass for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Classes
- 27<sup>th</sup>; Confirmation Day for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Classes

### June

- 2<sup>nd</sup>; School Closes
- 12<sup>th</sup>; School Reopens
- 30<sup>th</sup>; School Closes for Summer

