

Welcome to our
Newsletter!
Winter 2018

'Scoil Ghormáin Naofa' Newsletter

Castletown, Inch, Gorey, Co. Wexford
0402-37596

email: cns.iaswx@gmail.com



Welcome note from the Principal.....

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of our first term and what a **jam-packed term** it has been! I am most grateful to all of our staff who go above and beyond their job descriptions to make school life at Scoil Ghormáin Naofa the most **vibrant and stimulating learning environment** possible.

Since the last newsletter, we have engaged in a number of **fun learning activities**. There was an emphasis on **sustainability** (detailed in the Green School section) and also a focus on **Science/ STEM**. We are very grateful to our dedicated **Parents' Association** whose fundraising enabled us to welcome the **Lismore Science workshop** to our school. Classes engaged in science experiments, explored life and conditions in Antarctica and 6th class were engrossed in a CSI forensic assignment! Our teachers too have been upskilling in their knowledge of STEM having undertaken the first of three extra-curricular training sessions as part of the **Discover Primary Science Award**. We were delighted to welcome one of our parents, Mary Allen, to work with our children on the **International Hour of Code**. Mary's work in Microsoft enabled this project and we are very grateful to her. The children had a ball! We are well on the way to achieving our **Discover Primary Science plaque** for all that we have undertaken. Thanks to Ms. Whittle for coordinating.

Another highlight of the term has been the **Mini 7s victory** for our boys. We have **made history** with our second win in a row and placement in third consecutive final. For a small school, we are well able to hold our own against **over 70 teams from the county**. This is in no small way due to the dedication of both Mr. Breen, Michael Kavanagh and Carmel Duke and I am very grateful to them for all they do. See Mikey Kinsella's report in Students' Corner for an excellent account of the winning match. To mark this **momentous achievement**, we held a **civic reception** for our boys. They were presented with medals in front of parents, grandparents, club members, siblings and class mates. There were speeches from Mr. Breen and Michael Kavanagh. Chairperson Joe O'Shaughnessy gave a great **motivational speech** and we are grateful to have such encouragement from a real **GAA legend**! We hope that this experience will be a lasting memory for our boys.



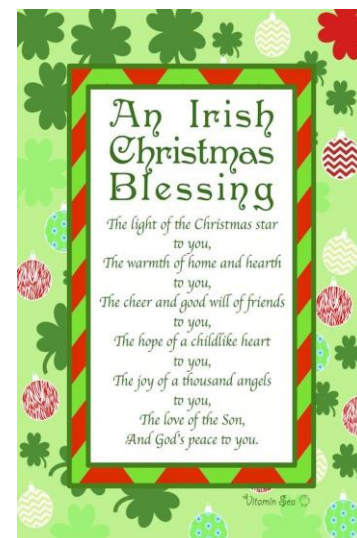
As we go to press, our classes are preparing for the annual **Christmas concert** and I am really excited to see it! There will be a nativity piece, carols, poetry, humour and drama and again I thank all involved in creating this memory for our families. The Christmas concert will take place on Wednesday 19th December at 7pm in the church. We thank **Fr. Eugene McCarney** for the use of the church for this event and wish him and all the priests involved in our school a very merry Christmas.

It gives me great pleasure to let you know that **Mrs. Hearne** has had a beautiful baby girl, Eileen. We wish the Hearne family all the best as they celebrate their first Christmas together!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who support the great work that is going on in our school. We welcome **parental and community involvement** and are always open to looking at new ways for you to become involved. I hope that you all enjoy a **restful and peaceful Christmas** and that Santa is good to all our little scholars!`

Emer Russell

Reflection



Dates to Remember

School Closes for Christmas;

Friday 21st December at 12 noon

School Re-opens;

Monday 7th January

***Primary Language Curriculum;**

Friday 25th January

***NCSE training in ASD;**

Friday 1st February

***School closed for both**

Meet the Staff 2018/2019

Ms. E. Russell: Principal

Ms. A Gilmartin Ryan: Deputy Principal & S.E.T.

Ms. L. Whittle: Junior & Senior Infants

Ms. J. Hearne: 1st/2nd Class

Ms. N. Ní Shúilleabháin: 3rd/4th Class

Mr. N. Breen: 4th/5th Class

Ms. N. Byrne: 6th Class

Ms. Morris: ASD class teacher

Ms. M. McDevitt /Ms. P. D'Arcy: S.E.T.

SNAs: Carmel Duke, Finola Quirke, Fiona Byrne, Sharon Power, Angie Barnes

Siobhán Geoghan is our Secretary

School email address:

cns.iaswx@gmail.com



School website address:

www.castletownnationalschool.ie

School Twitter account:

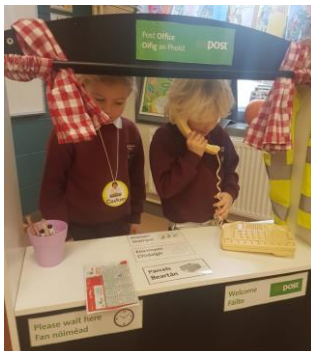
[@castletown_ns](https://twitter.com/castletown_ns)

Class News:

Ms Whittle – Junior/Senior Infants

Wow, Christmas has certainly come fast! Since our last newsletter, the infant classroom has been busy! The Junior and Senior Infants have enjoyed learning about **An Nollaig as Gaeilge**, **Advent in Religion** and creating **beautiful Christmas art** in preparation for the Christmas holiday.

Aside from these Christmas preparations, the class have also been working hard in all areas of the curriculum this term. In **Aistear**, we learnt all about the **Post Office**. We role played the post office in our **socio-dramatic area**, decorated stamps, wrote cards and pretended to deliver post in the **small world area**. The children thoroughly enjoyed the topic and worked so well in their groups.



In **Maths**, Junior Infants have been learning their numbers and the Senior Infants have explored ways to make 3, 4 & 5. In PE we have been **walking to London**. Who would have thought it would take so long!?? We hope to make it there soon! The children love getting out and **exercising daily** and have been eager to learn about London and share their knowledge with the class. In Science, we experimented with **floating and sinking** and made butter as part of **Science Week**. Both classes have worked very hard this term and I can't wait to see what learning takes place in term 2. *I'd like to wish all the children and their families a very Happy Christmas!* Ms. Whittle

Mrs. Carroll – 1st/2nd Class

Over the last two months we have been **working very hard** for Ms Carroll and have shown her our brilliant work in reading, writing and Maths. In **Gaeilge** we have been learning all about **Bia** and how to ask for our food in a restaurant. Our winter theme has been covered in many areas, including the interesting science workshop where we learned all about **Antarctica** and how the animals keep warm. We even drew our very own **baby penguins**! We also learned about the different types of trees and how they look very different in winter.



In PE we have been very lucky to have our rugby coach, Mick, teaching us **how to move and pass** the rugby ball as well as helping us to keep active during the winter. We recently took part in the **winter writing competition** where we wrote instructions for the reindeer on how they can get ready for the busy night ahead. We are busily preparing for our **Nativity piece** for the **Christmas Concert** and can't wait to show you!

Well done to all in 1st and 2nd class for their hard work!

Curriculum News

Since Hallowe'en, we have been focusing on the written genre of **Procedural Writing in Literacy**. Each class is looking at writing through this medium; be it a recipe or list of instructions and the conventions that go with it. As we went to press, our judges had the unenviable task of selecting winners from each class. Senior classes had to write the procedure for the **perfect Christmas day**, whilst junior classes wrote a list of **instructions for the reindeer to follow on Christmas Eve**. Infant classes drew pictures of Mrs. Claus following a mince pie recipe or the elves following instructions on how to assemble a toy, thus introducing them to the genre in an elementary way.

1st-6th class have been enjoying **rugby coaching** each Friday with Michael Bolger from Gorey Rugby Club. Michael has a great way with the children and the classes are always universally enjoyed. It is great to give children a flavour of different sports.

As part of our ongoing commitment to **School Self-Evaluation**, each class is engaged in the ongoing **Physical Literacy Programme** through PE. More details in the Active Flag section



Interactive learning with Lismore Mobile Science Workshop



Q: Why is it always cold at Christmas?

A: Because it's in Decemrrrrrrr !

Q: What can you get if you eat Christmas decorations?

A: Tinselitus !

Q: How do elves get to the top floor of Santa's workshop?

A: They use the elfator !

Q: What do sheep say to each other at Christmas?

A: Merry Christmas to ewe !

Q: Who says oh, oh, oh?

A: Santa Claus walking backwards !

Q: Which Christmas carol do parents like the most?

A: Silent Night!

Class News contd.:

Ms Ní Shúilleabháin – 3rd & 4th Class

We have had an exciting and busy term. We began with a spectacular performance in the **National Opera House** at the “**Sing Out Loud**” concert. It really was “**The Greatest Show**” and we enjoyed being stars on the stage. Well done to all the children- you were fantastic!

Science Week was very interesting this term. We loved our **Antarctic Science Workshop** and learned lots from experiments about body temperature and surviving in freezing conditions. We also conducted our own **Egg- Drop Experiments**. Using materials including bubble wrap, lollipop sticks, balloons and sponges, we made contraptions designed to protect an egg when dropped from a height- the results were very messy indeed!

In History, we completed projects about **The Ancient Romans**. We delved into the fascinating world of Roman Emperors, Villas, The Colosseum, Aqueducts and the Roman Army. The newest member of our class is a life- sized Roman Soldier! In **PE**, we are **running to Rome** also- we should arrive there in time for Christmas! It has been great to get active each day.



We enjoyed a morning of **Coding** on the iPads at the beginning of December. Thank you to our expert in this area **Mary Allen** (John Allen's mother) from Microsoft for her enthusiastic workshop on this- we all enjoyed it.

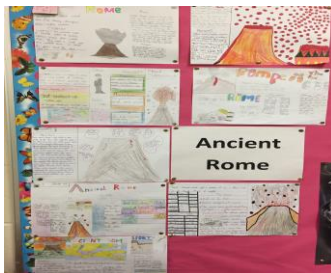
This term we have been also working hard on the basics! **Tables, Mental Maths, Reading, Irish Verbs, Handwriting and Neatness** are all so important and 3rd and 4th have made good progress. Keep up the great effort!

The theme of **Winter** has inspired some very **creative poetry and art** in our classroom. Our **Jolly Penguins** are looking fab on the wall. We have made **Advent Promises in Religion** and our candles remind us daily that Advent is a time for preparation and mindfulness.

We are so excited about Christmas and cannot wait to perform “**The Night before Christmas**” at the school concert. Enjoy your break everyone and see you in the New Year!

Mr. Breen – 4th & 5th Class

Our class have had a very busy term in school with lots of **great experiences**. They have all worked extremely hard and here is a little reminder of some of the things we have been up to in 4th and 5th class.



The children have been really enjoying their writing genres over the past several weeks. They created very interesting and impressive Christmas procedures. The class have been tackling **multiplication, money and fractions** in Maths and have shown great improvements during our table shootouts. Science proved to be very interesting as we completed several experiments during and in the lead up to **Science Week** along with a **discovery science workshop on Antarctica**. We have also enjoyed **Rugby** where the boys and girls have shown **excellent team work and co-ordination**. They also put fantastic work into preparations for our Christmas concert and showed very impressive dramatic skills. The class are certainly looking forward to a **well-deserved break**.

GAA News

The boys had a very busy and eventful first term on the playing fields. They reached the **Rackard League A quarter final** for the second time in the school's history and narrowly lost out to a very strong Ballindaggin side. The mini 7s team once again were victorious for the second year in a row. They fought their way through several tough group stages to reach the final against a very skilful Glynn side. They put up a great fight, however they were no match for Castletown and their never give up attitude. The boys deserve **huge credit** for what they achieved for their school and for the way they represented the school each day they took to the pitch.



The teams showed great attitude, discipline, work rate and team work during each and every game and training session.

Again I would like to thank all who help out with the GAA, especially the parents for their great support and for providing transport to the games, Carmel, Ms. Russell, Kevin Morris and Michael Kavanagh for all the organising, training and support throughout the term.

We are looking forward to the **Rackard League and mini 7s hurling competitions** in the New Year.

Niall Breen

A report on the Mini 7s final

It was a great match with Fionn and Conor flying up the midfield. When the high ball went up everyone was relieved when Fionn caught it. The ball went to Joseph but was intercepted by a player from the Glynn team. The first half score was 1-2 to 1 goal, in favour of Glynn. As we jogged off of the pitch we got a roaring from Mr Breen and Mick Kavanagh. In the second half the ball was down at the Castletown half but it was no match for Kyle Fegan, Mikey Kinsella and Diarmuid Brady in the backs. In the last five minutes we knew what we had to do. Mikey caught the ball and booted it up to Joseph, who crossed it to Dylan Bealin, who put it in the back of the net. Castletown were in the lead by one point. Glynn had hit it to their forward but it was no match for Fionn and Mikey who quickly shut him down. The final whistle blew and there were celebrations from everyone supporting Castletown!

By Mikey Kinsella, 6th Class

Class News contd.:

Ms. Byrne – 6th Class

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir! Once again, we have had a very busy term since our Halloween edition of the previous school newsletter. We are enjoying the **Run around Europe challenge** set by the active school committee. We are currently on route to Madrid, Jesús's hometown, and we still have a few kilometres to go! We became forensic scientists for a day and solved a murder mystery. **Sing Out Loud** was a wonderful experience and we know that we are very lucky to be able to say that we performed on the stage of the Wexford Opera House. We are exploring Irish stories and vocabulary for Christmas and looking at traditions in other countries. Our focus in English has been procedural writing and we are confident that we now know how to have **the perfect Christmas Day**.....chocolates, presents and Christmas movies are a big feature! We are looking forward to our performance in the church next Wednesday and have been busy learning **lyrics in four languages**. Well done to Laura and Aaron who have mastered the Kerry Polka. A huge thank you to **Mary Allen** for our session of coding, which we really enjoyed.



Winter art has been fun with puffy paint and chalk pictures. Well done to all of 6th class who presented their **J.E.P. ideas to Garrett and Sandy McCabe** last week. We are eagerly awaiting their verdict and look forward to Showcase Day in the new year. In November, we made a special **Garden of Remembrance** for all our loved ones who are no longer with us. 6th class continue to prepare for their Confirmation and the next mass will be celebrated on Saturday 12th of January. Finally, I must take this opportunity to say a **very fond farewell to Jesús Reyes**, who came to us in September from Madrid. We will miss your friendship, humour and overall positive contribution to our classroom. We will definitely stay in touch. **Safe trip home Jesús.**

Ms. Morris' Class

We have had a very busy time in our class since Halloween! We have had a few visitors to our room including a **Mad Scientist** who did some amazing things which the boys loved! The **Elf on the Shelf** has also visited our classroom and while he can be a bit cheeky at times going places that he shouldn't he is keeping a close eye on the class and encouraging the boys to do their best work each day! We have really enjoyed having the **rugby coach** come in to play rugby with us on a Friday morning! The boys have shown some **great skill, speed and enthusiasm** and it is a great start to our day on a Friday! The boys enjoy following their schedule which includes **dancing along with Maximo** every morning. They are now dance masters at the Chicken Dance and this week's dance of **Twist and Shout** is going down a real treat! (Myself and the SNAs are learning a few new moves also!)



Now that the rain has arrived the boys are loving having play time over on the big yard. There is a lot of space there to run around and feel free! Visits to the sensory room are a much welcomed break and the boys enjoy going in there to **chill out and relax** for a while after some hard work in the classroom. Some of the class also like **visiting the library** and looking at and picking out different books.

The boys have worked extremely hard since September and I am **very proud of them** and of how well they have done. They are very excited for Christmas and they thoroughly deserve their holidays and a good rest! I look forward to seeing them all back again in 2019 for another term of great work!

Music and the Arts

I have loved the sounds I have heard over the last few weeks as classes prepare for the **Christmas concert**. There is nothing quite so innocent as the **sound of children singing carols**. Ms. Byrne's class have been learning pieces on **tin whistles** which is a fantastic accomplishment and I can't wait to hear their performances. As we go to press, our classes are finalising Nativity pieces, traditional and humorous poems, drama and song for our concert. What a talented crew we have both in our teaching and student community! Our **SNAs** have been busy working to supply costumes and props and most importantly giving quiet **words of encouragement** to those children who may feel a little overwhelmed when it comes to performing in front of a crowd. I am always proud to see the **personal touch** that is afforded to each **individual student's needs** here at Scoil Ghormáin Naofa

International Hour of Code

The Hour of Code is a **global movement reaching tens of millions of students** in 180+ countries. The objective is basically to empower children to code which can improve their attitudes towards, and self-confidence with, computer science. By taking them on an adventure through the **Minecraft Voyage Aquatic**, an adventure by land, by boat and under the waves using the Minecraft world they know and love, students of all ages and any experience level can learn the **basics of coding and understand key computer science concepts like loops and conditions.** Mary Allen

HOUR
OF
CODE



Students' Corner

A word from the Debating Team

Debating has been so much fun! The topics have been challenging, the **rebuttals** have made us think on our feet and have improved our team work. I would love to say HUGE thank you to Ms. Ní Shuilleabháin, Ms. Byrne, Ms. D'Arcy, Carmel and Ms. Russell for supporting us. Thanks to 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class for letting us practice for them. The Loreto debate was tough, the other team had some great points but we were **victorious** by just one point! The debate against Tara Hill was very tough but Tara Hill won by three points. Debating has taught me to be more confident with words. Debating has taught me that I can be **persuasive with words**.

Being captain of the team has been an amazing experience which I will forever remember. Being on the debate team has made me feel so happy! The meetings have been fun so it doesn't feel like work!

I, on behalf of the debate team, thank you for your support! We are looking forward to our next debate. Merry Christmas and a happy new year!

By Erin Cunningham, Debating Team Captain



Green School Flag

Since Hallowe'en, we have been looking at **sustainability**. We were delighted to welcome **Marvin the Magician** to our school to teach us about the importance of not just **recycling**, but **reducing** and **reusing** also.

He communicated this in such a fun way, using **puppetry, magic and humour** to **entertain** the children in the process.



To build on this, we ran a **Christmas decoration competition**, whereby children were challenged to create a decoration using recycled materials found in their homes. The results were astounding. Ms. Gilmartin Ryan had the task of selecting winners and noted that the standard was so high with the quality of the decorations being excellent. Our overall winners were Izaak Kilroy, Charlotte Walsh and Freya Molloy. We hope that this encourages children to **think twice** before they dump rubbish in future.

As part of our Green School and Science endeavours, our junior infants embarked on an **educational field trip** to the **Wexford Wildfowl Reserve** to learn about the birds that we associate with Christmas.

Ms. Mc. Devitt and The Green School Committee.

Active School Flag

The committee were busy organising the **Active School Motto competition**. They went through many super entries and with great difficulty narrowed it down to just a few. The winning entry was **Shane Ivanoff** with the motto, '**Any Shape, Any Size, Everyone Can Exercise.**'

In 2nd place was Charlie Church with the motto, 'It doesn't matter what Style, being Active is Always Worthwhile' and 3rd Ciara O' Connor with the motto, 'If you Want to be Great be Active and Participate.' Runners up were: Julie Ivanoff, Rachel Wolohan, Siofra O' Connor, Kitt Kavanagh, Jessica Foley, Patrick Fanning. All winners were awarded with **sporty prizes**. Well done to all.

At the moment all classes are taking on the challenge of '**Run Around Europe.**' Each class will run/jog/walk around the yard the distance from Ireland to their chosen country/City in Europe. Ms. Whittle's class is running to London, Ms. Carroll's class is running to Belfast, Ms. Ní Shuilleábháin's class and Mr. Breen's class are running to Rome and Ms. Byrne's class are running to Madrid. This is not an easy challenge but a **great winter activity**. All classes are doing so well!



Our **playground leaders** are doing a brilliant job also. Since our return after mid-term they have been playing playground games at lunch times, (Mon-Thurs) with Ms. Whittle's junior and senior infants. They are using the **yard markings** and different resources such as hoops, cones, beanbags etc... and the children love it. Our leaders are Rachel Wolohan, Siofra Higgins, Erin Cunningham, Dylan Treacy, Aaron Halford, Laura Hope, Aedin Condren, Shayla Donnery, Sofra O' Connor, Usha Daly O' Toole and Louise Foley.

Don't forget the St. Stephen's day run in Castletown for young and old!

Be Active!

Ms. D'Arcy and The Active School Committee.

A word from our Board of Management

The Board of Management intends to commence fund raising for the **development of a general purpose (GP) hall** for the school. It would be envisaged that this would provide a **space** for children to engage in indoor **PE** lessons, stage **drama** and **musical** events and provide a **function area** for the school. As a school with such a keen interest in Physical Education and the Arts, we are most certainly disadvantaged by not having a GP hall. To this end, we will be asking parents, families and community members to **come on board to help our campaign** to raise funds. This will not be an easy task. There is little provision made for school development by way of grants so it will fall to us to raise the majority. In the New Year, we will seek to establish a **committee to spearhead the campaign**. We would welcome those with expertise in accounting, fundraising, building, development, grants, or a passion and drive to see this project through to join our group!

Our first fundraising venture will be a **Golf Classic**, organised by board member Noel Ivanoff. Details will be announced in the New Year.

If you would like to come on board, we would love to hear from you. Please contact a board member or Emer for more details.

The Board of Management would like to take this opportunity to wish all our families a healthy and peaceful Christmas.



A word from our Parents' Association

We would like to wish our children, teachers and parents a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year. We kicked off the school year with our **Halloween School Disco** at the Golden Anchor which was an outstanding success and had an outstanding attendance on the night. Thank you to all the parents, teachers and most importantly our children who supported us- great fun all round. Because of our fund raising efforts on the night, we were able to support the visit of **Science Workshop** in November last which the kids really enjoyed! But lots more fund to follow in the new year.

We will hold our **next PA meeting in January 2019**. The final date will be confirmed early in the new year. We have lots of events to look forward to in the new year such as Grandparents Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Communion Celebrations, Croghan Walk and Sports Day. Again we would really welcome the **continued support** from all of our parents during these events.

Finally a big thank you to Emer and the teaching staff for all their continued help and support.

Margaret Tallon, Chairperson