

St. Attracta's Senior School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16
Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise Áth Cliath 16



Nuachtlitir Eanáir January Newsletter
2017

FÁILTE ARAIS!

We welcome you back to a new year, new hope and new experiences. We're delighted to report lots of hard work in all classes and excellent behaviour throughout the school. We continue to promote kindness throughout the school, but we do have to work at it! Please tell us if your child is experiencing difficulties in school and remember there's a Worry Box in all classrooms – don't be afraid to use it boys and girls. We remind all parents who may have questions, queries, comments or concerns, that they are always welcome to drop in and meet with Iníon Uí Mháirtín and the other teachers. A problem shared is a problem halved! Unfortunately, we cannot solve all problems, but at least if we know about them, we can do something about it. We look forward to working with you in the coming term.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Muireann Máirtín, Príomhoide.

SENIOR SCHOOL APPLICATIONS:

Don't Miss the

DEADLINE!

The closing date for receipt of completed applications for places in the Senior School for the academic year 2017/18, is 2.30p.m. on Friday, 27th September 2017. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management, in accordance with the school's enrolment policy, which can be accessed on the school website at www.sasns.ie. The school will

hold an 'Open Day' for all new parents in May but in the meantime, we welcome all new applicants to make contact with the office, where we will be happy to help.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications for places in the Junior School for September 2017 is Friday, 20th January at 3.00p.m.

DON'T WORRY – BE HAPPY!

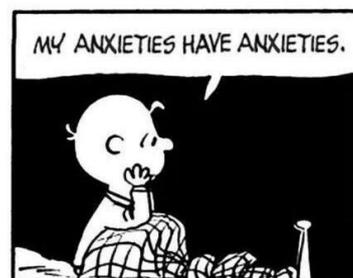
Following on from concerns expressed by children, teachers and parents about increasing levels of anxiety in everyday life, we have arranged what promises to be a very helpful and insightful talk for parents on the topic of anxiety.

When is it on? Tuesday 7th February at 7.30p.m.

Where is it on? Senior School Hall

Who is the Speaker? Stuart Wilson (see below)

Stuart Wilson is a Behavioural Psychotherapist specialising in youth and adolescents and he is the Founder of Zestlife Counselling, a therapy centre serving families within the Irish community in Dublin and nationwide. He is Co- Founder and CEO of not for profit ZestyKidz Children's Charity working with vulnerable children in Ireland and overseas. He and his wife, Magi Wilson, were recipients of the National Pride of Ireland award for 'special recognition' for their work with vulnerable children in 2015.



OUR CHARITY CHAIN

The Meadowbrook branch of the **ST. VINCENT DE PAUL** would like to thank all families who donated so generously to their Christmas toy & food appeal which was held in school throughout December. We also managed to raise €600 for this local charity. Go raibh míle maith agaibh! Before Christmas, we raised a further €700 for **BÓTHAR** and in so doing we managed to send chickens and an in-calf heifer to Africa as well as funding a water filtration system!!! The response to both collections surpassed all our expectations. Well done to all the boys & girls who rummaged in pockets and down the back of the sofa for lost coins for this very worthy cause!



Thanks also for all the donations of hats, scarves and gloves for **SIMON**. True kindness! We'll continue now to collect Coppers for Computers – every cent makes a difference!

SUNDAY CHOIR

Well done and thank you to all the boys and girls who turned up at our Christmas Eve Children's Mass and sang their hearts out. It was great to see the new members from all classes as well as those children on whom we can always rely when it comes to Sunday Choir. We hope this will be a new beginning for the choir and for Ms. Neville and Ms. Roycroft too. Hallelujah!



HEALTHY EATING



Following a mixed response to the issue of Friday treats, we've decided to phase out the Friday treat on a gradual basis. As and from next September, there will be no Friday treats, but in the meantime, all children should understand that if a parent allows a treat on a Friday, it should only be a small sweet treat and only for big break. And let's remember that there are many ways to stay healthy and as an Active School, we know what to do!

WET DAY GAMES

Over the next few weeks, we would welcome any used (but in good condition) **WET DAY GAMES**. If you're doing a Spring Clean or a post-Christmas clear-out, we would be delighted to accept any board games, puzzles, decks of cards, jigsaws etc.

which are in very good condition but no longer being used by your children. These will be used when the children are confined to the classroom on a wet day. Recycle them to us and we'll put them to good use. Drop them in to the class teacher any day! Go raibh míle maith agaibh!



PAIRED READING

Our **Paired Reading** project throughout the school will recommence from next week onwards. If any parent can spare half an hour on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday afternoon, please let us know and we'll partner each parent with a specific class. This scheme worked brilliantly last year and the children really benefitted from it.



CREDIT UNION TABLE QUIZ



Good luck to our pupils who will represent the school at the first round of the Credit Union Table Quiz this Saturday 21st January. We'll let you know how they get on!

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Catholic Schools Week takes place at the end of the month. The whole school will celebrate Mass on Monday 30th January (a reminder will follow) We'll also celebrate St. Brigid's Day and Grandparents' Day in recognition of all our Grandparents do to pass on the faith to their children and grandchildren. St. Attracta's Senior School would like to invite grannies and granddads to join us at 10.30a.m. on Wednesday (St. Brigid's Day) for a cup of tea and a chat in the curriculum room, where they will be joined for a little while by their grandchildren.



ALL THINGS TECHNOLOGY & KEEPING YOUR CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE

- Having achieved Digital School of Distinction status last June, we are pleased with the progress we have made with our e-learning plan and with developing our pupils' computer-literacy. However, we are always challenged financially as technology dates very quickly and we are constantly trying to keep up to date with what is most beneficial for the children. Our next challenge was to ensure that all Classrooms would have fully functioning **interactive** whiteboards and this was a daunting prospect for us as to upgrade would cost approximately €3500 per Classroom! It was with great relief therefore that finally, long-awaited funding for Information Technology has been announced by the Department of Education and Skills. This will go a long way over the next four years to progress what needs to be done in a planned way.
- Before Christmas we had a good turnout at our talk by Cybersafe Ireland on how to protect our children online. The aim of Cybersafe Ireland and of St. Attracta's Senior School is that we want children to take advantage of all that technology has to offer in terms of education and enjoyment, but without putting themselves or others at risk.



We promised to keep parents updated on developments via our newsletter. You can check out all the latest information on www.cybersafeireland.org. This month we are attaching Cybersafe Ireland's own newsletter to our own and from now on we will copy useful articles into our newsletter.

By now also you will all have received a copy of our Acceptable Internet Usage Policy and we thank you for returning them signed so promptly. As an additional safeguard we assure you that the children do not have unsupervised access to the internet at any stage during the school day. However they are really enjoying all that the computer room has to offer – and that's thanks to your fundraising efforts and support to date.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION:

The Boards of Management of the Senior and Junior schools wish to thank all those who have contributed to the Voluntary Contribution. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. If you still wish to contribute, your donation will be very welcome at any time, in whatever way and with whatever amount is possible for you and your family.



BINGO NIGHT JUST AROUND THE CORNER – PARENTS' ASSOCIATION WILL BE IN TOUCH!

GARDA VETTING for ALL PARENT VOLUNTEERS

The Garda Vetting Process for Parents/Guardians who volunteered in both schools prior to the beginning of this school year will commence in the coming weeks. If you would like to continue to volunteer in either the Senior or Junior school in the future, your application must be submitted on or before Tuesday 31st January next. Application forms can be collected from the school office in either school.

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY:

The Board of Management is currently formulating a Critical Incident Policy in accordance with Department of Education Guidelines <https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Responding%20to%20Critical%20Incidents.pdf>. If you would like to express views on the matter please do so by email to oifig@sasns.ie before 31st January next.

SCHOOL BREAKS:

We would like to remind you of the following school closures this term:

February Mid-Term: Monday 20th to Friday 24th inclusive

St. Patrick's Day: Friday, 17th March

Easter Holidays: Friday 7th April – school closes at 12 o'clock for the Easter holidays.

Monday 10th April to Friday 21st April (inclusive) Easter holidays.

While the Junior School is closed on Tuesday 28th March for New Language Curriculum In-Service, the Senior School will remain open on that day.

PUNCTUALITY



We have noticed a number of children arriving late for school on a regular basis, coming into the classroom well after the beeps go. In one class yesterday, only 1/3 of the pupils were in on time. This is a really bad habit and so, for the next two weeks, we're asking all children to make a huge effort to get up earlier, eat breakfast sooner, stop watching television in the morning, have their uniform/ bag/lunch ready and get to school on time – let's start the new year well!

ABSENCES & ILLNESSES

- When your child is returning to school following absences please inform the school in writing as to the reason for the absence. Otherwise it will be recorded as “unexplained” in school records. There is no need to contact the school if your child is absent for a single day or two ...however for longer absences, please contact the school by telephone.
- Absences of more than 20 days in a school year are reported to the National Education Welfare Board, who will investigate the matter further.
- In the event of your child contacting a contagious illness it is imperative that you contact the school in order to allow us to inform other parents.

DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER?

We have noticed that a number of children who need to ring home don't know their parents' mobile number. While we have numbers on file, we ask you to ensure that your child has up to date mobile numbers for parents written in their homework journal - just in case! Try to get them to learn one number they can call.

