

SCOIL SHINSIREACH NAOMH ATRACHT ST. ATTRACTA'S SENIOR NATIONAL SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

14ú Feabhra 2017

It has been a busy term so far and our mid-term break is just around the corner! We started the month with Catholic Schools Week and the week started with a Mass celebrated by Fr Liam. Throughout the week we learned about St. Brigid and St. Blaise. this year, the theme for the week was 'Caring for our Common Home', which emphasised our connection to and dependence on the environment and on the need to cherish and protect it in every way we can. This is closely linked to our Green School's focus for this year - Global Citizenship.



We also celebrated the wonderful gift that is our Grandparents and we want to say a great big thank you to the many grannies and grandads who turned up on Wednesday for a cuppa and a chat and a little bit of 'Getting to Know You!' They are great supporters of young children and they have nurtured and passed on the gift of faith to new generations. So, go raibh míle maith agaibh!

CAKE SALE COMING UP!

We'll hold our second cake sale of the school year this Friday 17th February and we look forward once again to the wonderful creations of our young bakers! In order for the Cake Sale to be a success we'll be looking for 3 or 4 parents from each class to give a few hours on the morning to help out. Please give your name to the class teacher before Friday. This time the proceeds will go towards buying educational materials for all classes – new books, new science and maths materials and new noticeboards which are livening up our corridors!



CREDIT UNION TABLE QUIZ



The first round of the Dundrum Credit Union Table Quiz took place on Saturday 28th January, where our wonderful pupils did us proud. Their general knowledge is astounding and their behaviour was excellent as they represented the school! Thanks to Mr. Coughlan for organising and preparing the children and to the children themselves for their dedication. Both teams put in a great performance, finishing in 4th place. Our teams are listed below. Maith sibh go léir!

Junior Team: Thomas Sutton, Andrei Miclos, Callum O'Kelly and John Fallon

Senior Team: Donal Kelly, Abigale Kelly Dunwoody, Tiarnán O'Kelly and Callum O'Neill.

MUSIC TO OUR EARS!

We've had a few wonderful days with Paul Maher from Simply Music learning about rhythm, composition, timing and of course boomwhackers!



And as for song-singing - pupils from 3rd class will sing in the Córfhéile festival for school choirs, which takes place in the National Basketball Arena in March. The songs they have chosen are *Getting to Know You*, *Beidh Aonach Amárach* and *Under the Sea*. We wish them all the best! Go n-éirí libh!!! The National Children's Choir is also working very hard preparing for their next session with our neighbouring schools. That will take place on Tuesday 28th February after the mid-term.

PAIRED READING

We now have about 10 parents who have volunteered to help with our Paired Reading programme, starting after mid-term. We will send a note home to those parents letting you know what's happening and for anybody who is interested we'll hold a short meeting on Thursday 2nd March at 9.00a.m. to explain how the programme works. We'll then start with the children the week after.



MID-TERM BREAK

St. Attracta's Senior and Junior Schools will be closed from Monday 20th – Friday 24th February for our mid-term break. Bainigí taitneamh as an mbriseadh meán-tearma.



MANGAHIGH

MangaHigh online maths resources were such a big hit with pupils, teachers and parents during Maths Week that we have decided as a school to pay a subscription for all pupils until September 2017. Pupils can log in with their existing passwords. Teachers may also from time to time set MangaHigh homework. We hope the boys and girls will enjoy this activity and learn lots. Thanks to Ms. Rafter for organising it. So log on boys and girls and make maths fun!

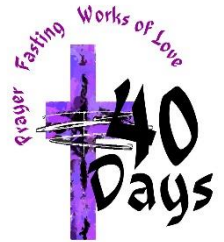


LENT

Lent is just around the corner and we will join with the parish community for our Ash Wednesday Mass at 10.00a.m. on Wednesday 1st March and every Monday after that. All parents are very welcome too!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO SOMETHING SPECIAL DURING LENT?

Starting Thursday 2nd March and every Thursday thereafter from 8.00 – 9.00, why not join with the Folk Group for a few moments of quiet reflection, prayer and music? This Lent the Folk Group (including our 5th and 6th class pupils) will lead some lovely prayers, reflections and music aimed at young people - but all are welcome too, so why not row a little closer to Jesus by spending some time with him. Make it part of your Lenten resolution - looking forward to seeing you there!



TRÓCAIRE BOXES

All children will soon be given this year's Trócaire boxes. Many parents and teachers remember filling those Trócaire boxes when they were at school themselves. The purpose of these boxes is to give some of our loose coins to charity instead of to ourselves. Remember that boxes must be returned to school before the Easter Holidays. Check out Trócaire's website to learn more: www.trocaire.com.



QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

We had an excellent response to our November questionnaire to parents and the responses were very encouraging. The information collected will be used to inform our work in the future. Thank you for your input. Some preliminary results are as follows.

Of those who responded to the questionnaire, 94% participated in the **Book Rental scheme** and of those, 99% thought that €25 was a fair price for the scheme and 97% were happy with the condition of the books.

94% were familiar with the school's **Homework Policy**. Of those, 87% felt their child got the right amount of homework, 8% felt the amount of homework given was too much, while 5% felt the amount given was too little.

73% of parents said they always helped children with homework, while the remaining 27% said they sometimes helped with homework. This suggests that pupils get a lot of help and support with homework, so thank you!

In relation to our **Healthy Eating Policy**, just over 50% of parents thought we should stop treats on a Friday, while just under 50% thought we shouldn't. Following this mixed response, we've decided to phase out the Friday treat on a gradual basis. However, in the meantime, all children should understand that Friday treats should only be a small treat and only for big break.

With reference to Parent Teacher meetings, 93% of parents considered November a suitable time for Parent Teacher meetings. We choose this time of year for Parent Teacher meetings in the Senior School, as we feel it gives plenty time for children to improve on any areas of concern. It also allows parents the opportunity to meet with the teachers early in the year, as we do not have the same opportunities to meet with parents on a daily basis as in the Junior School. 99% of parents said they were happy with the arrangements for the meetings and that is confirmed for us by the fact that we have full attendance by parents at the meetings. It is also testament to parental commitment to their children, a support which we – as teachers – really appreciate.

In relation to **Confirmation clothes**, 60% of respondents said they would like the children to wear their own clothes, as opposed to albs or a school uniform.

