



Dear Parents,

We have had a busy few weeks since our last newsletter and we are delighted that our Whole School Evaluation in February went so well, with high praise received from the Department of Education inspectors. Both pupils and teachers enjoyed a well-earned rest over the mid-term. Since then, music has featured high on our activities. 3rd and 6th class pupils enjoyed Paul Maher's **Simply Music** sessions, while 4th and 5th class pupils sang their hearts out as we hosted two other schools as part of the **National Children's Choir** practices.

We have now begun the season of **Lent and preparation for Easter time**. We join the parish community every Monday during Lent at the 10.00a.m. Mass and the Sunday choir sings under the direction of Ms. Neville and Ms. McDonagh. The parishioners love to see the children coming to Mass and we invite you along also. We know lots of children have made Lenten promises and we encourage them to keep them.

Our 5th class pupils have started Bible Explorer – an annual treat - while our 6th class pupils have started French. A Safe Cycling course will start next week for 6th classes, both French and Cycling helping to prepare our pupils for secondary school.

We also have lots of exciting events coming up between now and Easter so we look forward to your continued support in the weeks and months ahead. Our next big thing - **E-Safety for Pupils and Parents** - takes place this Wednesday and we would love a huge turnout of parents in the evening. (See below)

Le gach dea ghúí,

Muireann Máirtín, Príomh Oide

E-SAFETY – BE AWARE! KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE ON THE INTERNET



Pupils' Talks – Rang 5 agus Rang 6
on Wednesday 4th March at 11.00 and 1.00p.m.
(A contribution of €2 per child is requested)
and on the same evening for parents....

Please come and join us for
E-Safety and Your Child
at
7.30p.m. on Wednesday
in the
Senior School Hall



Presenters from E-Safety will talk to parents about

- keeping your child safe on the internet
- what happens on mobile phones, digital media and the latest technologies,
- what's going on out there and the fallout when children don't know what can happen in the long-term
- how to use the internet wisely and safely and
- what your children learned about in the morning sessions

We are constantly taken aback by how far ahead of us the children are. This is why we encourage parents to attend Wednesday night's talk on Internet Safety. Our aim is to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially amongst our children.

'Let's create a better and safer internet for our children'.

BULLYING – WHO ME?

Our school has a strong anti-bullying policy and we have put a great deal of work into preventing bullying. In our experience the most common forms of bullying are name-calling and exclusion. Sometimes children find it easier to go along with the exclusion or laugh at the name-calling than to stand up and say it is wrong. Sometimes it's hard to believe your own child might become involved. We now ask all parents to support the school in telling the children how unacceptable this behaviour is. While we cannot force children to be friendly with other children we can insist that all children treat one another with respect. Please talk to your child tonight and if we can help in any way please let us know. In recent years, much of the hurt and upset experienced in senior classes is smartphone and internet-related and this is why we have organised E-Safety talks for our senior pupils.



SEACHTAIN NA GAELIGE ... LABHAIR GAELIGE LINN agus GAELBHRATACH



Beidh Seachtain na Gaeilge ar siúl ón **18ú – 20ú Márta 2015**. We hope to have great fun with all our Seachtain na Gaeilge activities and a Seisiún mór ceoil on Friday afternoon where each class will sing a lovely amhrán as Gaeilge. Beidh an-spraoi againn! But Gaeilge is not just for Seachtain na Gaeilge. It's part of our culture and heritage. It's part of what we are!

Tá an-iarracht á dhéanamh againn Gaeilge a úsáid sa scoil, sa chlós, sa seomra ranga agus mórthimpeall na scoile. Tá na páistí go hiontach agus ba mhaith linn Gaeilge a labhairt le Mamáí agus Daidí freisin. We are making every effort to use Gaeilge more and more in school, in the yard and in our activities, outside as well as inside the classroom. Once again we'll have our **Maidin Caifé** (Coffee Morning) for parents on Friday 20th from 9.00 – 9.45a.m. when you can resurrect your cúpla focal in a fun way. We'll all make that extra effort to speak Irish.

An G-Factor which involves poetry recitation or song-singing as Gaeilge will take place on Thursday and we promise the pupils a great afternoon. So... a lán sport agus spraoi as Gaeilge.... The children are so enthusiastic, we invite all parents – if they can – to use the 'cúpla focal' with the children and with us. Bain triail as! Give it a go!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO SOMETHING SPECIAL DURING LENT?

STARTING TOMORROW on TUESDAYS from 2.30 – 3.00p.m.

JUST FOR A MINUTE WITH JESUS

A FEW MOMENTS OF QUIET REFLECTION, PRAYER & MUSIC

This Lent we will spend a little bit of time with Jesus after school each Tuesday for the next four weeks. Our children will lead some lovely prayers and reflections, meditations and music – aimed at young people rather than adults. But parents are welcome too – why not join us on your way home from school? Read the poem on page 43 of the Prayer Book and you'll know what it's all about. Grow a little closer to Jesus by spending some time with him. Make it part of your Lenten resolution - looking forward to seeing you there!



GOOD FRIDAY – THE WAY OF THE CROSS

We are looking for children in 5th and 6th class – boys and girls – who will not be away on holidays at Eastertime to volunteer to take part in a dramatisation of GOOD FRIDAY on Friday 3rd April. Please encourage your child to participate in this venture and if your child is interested, tell him/her to go directly to Ms. Neville before Friday of this week and to express their interest. Practices will take place outside of school hours.



TRÓCAIRE BOXES



All children have by now been given this year's Trócaire boxes. Many parents and teachers remember filling those Trócaire boxes when they were at school themselves. Your loose coins are most welcome. Remember that the boxes must be returned to school before the Easter Holidays. Check out Trócaire's website to learn more: www.trocaire.com.

'If you don't think like I do, and you can't convince me to think like you do, that's okay.

We can still be friends.' - Pope Francis

CAKE SALE – THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!



We held our second cake sale of the school year on Friday 13th February and it was a great success! The crepes alone brought in €410, with the raffle and the fabulous cakes bringing the total to €1807. Thanks to everybody who was involved in organising or helping at the Cake Sale and to all our little bakers who baked and ate so many cakes on the day!

Go raibh mile maith agaibh go léir!

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential factor in each child's learning and I would like to congratulate the 66 pupils who have had full attendance so far this year! The highest number of pupils with 100% attendance is in Mrs. Clifford's class while the best overall attendance is in Mr. Coughlan's 4th class.



We would like to remind all parents that under the Welfare Act, the school is obliged to obtain a written note from parents which states the dates and the reason for the absence, If you have forgotten to supply notes for any absences this year, please send them in to your child's teacher at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

WORLD BOOK DAY

We are delighted to be celebrating the 18th World Book Day in Ireland on **Thursday 5th March 2015**. The main aim is to encourage children to explore the pleasure of books and reading by providing them with an opportunity to have a book of their own. This may sound like a very simple idea, but unfortunately, many children do not have access to books in their homes.

Here in St. Attracta's €1 book tokens will be given to all pupils to encourage them to buy books. Pupils will enjoy an extended Drop Everything And Read session and the library will be a hive of activity. Together, we can help children to develop a love of books and reading: reading for just 10 minutes a day can make a huge difference to a child's future. We do that every day of the week at DEAR time!

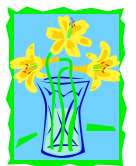
Children's literature and books play a fundamental role in developing children's academic engagement, development and life chances, providing the framework and stimulus through which to deepen their understanding of themselves and the world around them, through empathising with characters and situations in high quality stories. **As always, happy reading!**

What else can you do at home?

- The habit of reading bedtime stories to your children is a valued one and remember that even into sixth class, some children love that ten minutes quality time with mum or dad.
- And why not check out www.worldbookday.com/world-book-day-ireland for great competitions and giveaways as well as news, information and reading resources.

DAFFODIL DAY

Daffodil Day takes place in school on **Friday 27th March** in aid of the Irish Cancer Society. All flowers and badges cost €3. So let's go yellow together and please support this very worthy cause which affects so many of our families and friends.



REMINDER!

SCHOOL FUNDRAISER - BINGO NIGHT

THURSDAY 12th MARCH 2014

7.30p.m. in Junior School Halla

Adults: €7 Children €3

A great night and a great fundraiser for both schools.

Organised by the Parents' Association,

See today's note from the Parents' Association!

Lots of Spot Prizes

(including Homework Passes for the whole class -
which the teachers definitely don't want you to win!)



NATIONAL CHILDREN'S CHOIR - DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 20th April – rehearsal in the Basketball Arena

Tuesday 21st April – performance for parents and family in the Basketball Arena

Tickets €15 per adult and €5 per child must be booked in advance through the office.



GREEN PASSPORT



All children in the school now have their Green Passports. The 6th class Green Schools' committee will be stamping these each Friday so a reminder to parents to

- make sure that you child has participated in each activity or
- send in photographic evidence

The Green Passports encourage you, your child and extended family to spend less time watching TV or playing computer games and more time exercising, playing board games, exploring the parks and the coast of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown and spending quality time with family members.

WHY NOT HUG A TREE THIS WEEK?

National Tree Week, sponsored by the ESB, kicks off this week and we focus our attention on the wonderful world of all things to do with trees. Did you know that



- While most timber can float in water, ebony, which is used for making black piano keys, will sink.
- Ash has been used for centuries for making hurleys and one hectare of Ash woodland can produce 3,800 hurleys.
- Research in North America has found that patients in hospital rooms with a view of trees recover quicker from surgery, require fewer painkillers and get home sooner
- The rarest tree in the world is the Wollemi Pine, which only grows in a tiny area made up of two small groves in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, Australia.
- The tallest tree in Ireland is a non-native Douglas Fir, at the Powerscourt Estate in Co. Wicklow. This tree measures 56 metres in height.
- The tallest native tree in Ireland is an Ash near Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. This tree is 40 metres tall - small by comparison with the tallest tree in the world, a 112m high Coast Redwood in California. To put that in context, Dublin's Spire is 120 metres high.
- The largest tree in the world is a Giant Sequoia, found in the Sequoia National Park in California. It is only 83 metres tall, but its volume is estimated at 1,490 cubic metres.
- The oldest tree in the world is a Bristlecone Pine growing in the White Mountains in California, estimated to be over 4,600 years old. Another Bristlecone Pine tree nearby was discovered to be 5,100 years old when it was cut down by a graduate students as part of his research project!

And some more interesting information...

- The pine forests in Ireland would have grown on the mountains over 5,000 years ago. However, they were gone by early Christian times in the second half of the first millennium. This is because around that time the climate got colder and wetter and the bogs began to grow, swamping out these forests. We can still find the remains of those ancient pine forests today buried in the peat of our blanket bogs.
- An Irish Law of the 8th century set out penalties for damaging privately owned trees. Penalties included the payment of cows for cutting down an Oak tree, and the payment of a sheep for cutting a branch of a Hawthorn.
- Modern Irish forestry began in 1904 at Avondale in Co. Wicklow, the home of Charles Stewart Parnell. Many different tree species from all over the world were planted within the estate to see which would grow the best in Irish conditions.
- Trees are generally regarded as the largest and oldest living organisms on Earth.
- Only 10% of Ireland is forested, compared to the EU average of 36%. The current plan is to increase the percentage of Irish forests to 17% by 2035.
- Holly and Arbutus (Strawberry Tree), are two native broadleaf trees that retain their leaves in the winter, making them evergreen broadleaves. On the other hand, Larch is a conifer grown in Ireland that sheds all its leaves (or needles) in the winter making it a deciduous conifer.

Remember: School is closed on Monday 16th and Tuesday 17th March to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.