

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



Nuachtlitir Eanáir/Feabhra

January/February Newsletter

2014

Dear Parents,

As we approach another mid-term, we are delighted to report lots of hard work in all classes and excellent behaviour throughout the school. The yellow copy has never been as underused and even the entries in the yellow copy are mainly for silly and immature behaviour. Hopefully children will learn from their mistakes!

Sadly where we do have problems from time to time is with bullying, which is unacceptable in any form! In particular, we find exclusion can be extremely hurtful, particularly if it is carried into cyberspace. Even if it seems trivial to one child it can be serious for another. Too often the culprits say they were 'only joking' or 'didn't really mean anything by it'. This isn't a good enough excuse! All we ask is respect for one another and to remember that kindness counts but you do have to work at it! Please tell us if your child is experiencing difficulties in school. If we don't know about a problem, then we can't fix it. If we do know about it, then there's some hope we can make life a little easier and a little happier for your child. Help us to help them!

Le gach dea ghuí,



Muireann Máirtín, Príomh Oide

NEW SCHOOL MOBILE PHONE

We have bought a new mobile phone in an effort to reduce costs on our phone bill, but we find parents don't always return our calls as they don't recognise our number, which is 085-8726262. Please put this number on your phone so that you can recognise it as our school mobile number.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Catholic Schools Week took place during the last week of January and it was marked in the school by many events both inside and outside the classroom. On Monday and Wednesday we went to Mass, we're designing new covers for our prayer book, some classes started meditation, we celebrated Grandparents Day and many classes made St. Brigid's crosses. Go raibh mile maith agat to Maria, Karen and Maeve who visited our classes and helped us learn more about our faith.



CREDIT UNION TABLE QUIZ

The first round of the Dundrum Credit Union Table Quiz took place on Saturday 1st February and we were very well-represented by our wonderful pupils whose general knowledge is astounding. We didn't progress to the next round but they did us proud and some teams were just pipped at the post! Perhaps next year? Thanks to Mr. Coughlan & Mr. Maguire for organising and preparing the children. The teams were as follows:

Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4
Dylan Byrne Troy Ajimokum Adam El Mesery Finn Maguire	Max Colgan Anna Hanley Zoe Doyle Sam Murray O'Brien	Colin Dyer Grace Priestley Ronan O'Connor Julie Lhuillier Clara Gorham	Alex Ivers Isabel McDermott Sam Taylor Michael Asubisong



6TH GREEN FLAG FOR BIODIVERSITY



As you all know, the Junior and Senior schools are currently working towards our 6th Green Flag, which we hope to receive in 2015. The children are busy in their classrooms, keeping a diary of the changing seasons in scrapbooks, doing projects on bats, bees, pollinators, trees etc. and are currently taking part in a competition to find a Biodiversity Code or Slogan for the school. You the parents might be able to help here. The winning slogan will have no more than 10 words, be catchy, even rhyming and presented on an A4 sheet of paper, or larger. The ideal slogan will be illustrated with some themes from biodiversity and the environment. Closing date is next Monday, 10th February and the winner will be announced at Assembly on Tuesday.

Later in the year we hope to do a 3D habitat map of the school and the plants, trees, mini-beasts etc. around us. Some parents have already volunteered to help out with this. If you would like to help also, with architectural or artistic expertise, please contact Ms. Doyle in the Senior School.

SCHOOL FUNDRAISING – BINGO NIGHT!

It's time to start thinking about our next fundraiser which will be organised by the Parents' Association. More news coming soon but please put Thursday 13th March in your diary This year both schools will benefit from the proceeds, so let's go for it!



MUSIC TO OUR EARS!



Yesterday and today, as part of our music curriculum, Paul Maher from 'Simply Music' will bring his music performance technology workshop to St. Attracta's Senior School. Third class pupils are really enjoying the Simply Music programme, which is based on the three strands (listening, performing and composing) of the Primary Curriculum for Music. It culminated in a live performance this afternoon which was absolutely fantastic.

And as for song-singing - pupils from all classes will sing in the Córfhéile festival for school choirs. The children will perform in the National Basketball Arena in March and we wish them all the best. The songs they have chosen are *I Whistle a Happy Tune*, *Mol Uí Mhaileoin* (*Molly Malone as Gaeilge*) and *I Will Follow Him* from 'Sister Act'.

A MESSAGE FROM MEADOWBROOK DLR



Maureen in the swimming pool has asked us to mention to parents not to park in the bus parking bay directly outside the swimming pool. It seems some people are parking in the bus bay and when school buses arrive in the morning they have nowhere to park. Your co-operation in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

CAKE SALE COMING UP - HELP! HELP! HELP!



We'll hold our second cake sale of the school year on Friday 14th February with pancakes on the menu once again as well as 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. This time the proceeds will go towards buying maths materials for all classes.

SAINTS ALIVE!



We googled St. Blaise yesterday and learned he was the patron saint of those with throat troubles. (Apparently this comes from a legend that a boy was brought to him who had a fishbone stuck in his throat. The boy was about to die when Saint Blaise healed him). Yesterday we had our throats blessed by two of our parishioners. Thanks Joe and Annette for calling in to us. Teachers in particular love to have their throats blessed as our voices are so important to us.

We celebrate St. Valentine's Day on Friday 14th February. Why not google St. Valentine and learn more about him. He's the patron saint of Happy Marriages, Love and Young People. The remains of St. Valentine can be seen in Whitefriar Street Church in Dublin.

ENROLMENT 2014/2015

The closing date for receipt of applications for enrolment in the Senior School for the academic year 2014/15 is Friday 14th February. Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made by the Board of Management, in accordance with school's



enrolment policy, which can be accessed on the school website at www.sasns.ie. If you know somebody who would like to join our school, please tell them to contact the school immediately and we will send out a registration form. The school will hold an 'Open Day' for all prospective families in May but in the meantime, we welcome all new applicants to come and view the facilities on offer at our school.

OUR CHARITY CHAIN

We would like to thank all families who supported our charities before Christmas.



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 €585 for the charity. Go raibh mile maith agaibh!

Before Christmas, we raised €533 for **Bóthar** with our Coppers Campaign and in so doing we managed to send a goat, a camel and a family of snails - (yes snails!) - to Africa. The response 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!

AND WHAT ELSE ARE WE UP TO THIS TERM?

- This year we will be working on St. Attracta's **Time Capsule** which will be buried on school grounds. This will form part of our SESE work and all classes will be involved.
- **Gardaí visited the 5th classes** in January to give a talk on Bullying and Cyber bullying. This will be followed by further talks on the Role of the Gardaí, Road Safety, Vandalism and Personal Safety. The class will then receive a Certificate at the end of the series of talks.
- 6th class pupils are enjoying **French lessons** with Ms. Gogarty and so far, the children are really enjoying themselves.
- On Wednesday 5th March, we will host our third **Maths Masters Table Quiz** for 6th class pupils in the local and surrounding schools.
- Beimid ag obair go dian ag labhairt Gaeilge i mbliana. We aim to be one of the first schools in Ireland to earn a **Gaelbhratach** in recognition of our efforts to use Gaeilge as a living language. Bígí linn!
- After the mid-term break we will start up a **Paired Reading** project throughout the school. A talk on Paired Reading will take place on Wednesday 26th February at 9.15a.m. in the Curriculum Room.
- St. Attracta's Senior School will start a **Book Rental** scheme for 2014/2015 onwards and we hope this will reduce significantly the cost of schoolbooks for parents.
- In light of Circular 0045/2013: Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which was recently published by the Department of Education & Skills, we are working on a **new Anti-Bullying policy** for the school. Ideas and suggestions from parents are invited now - please send them in to us in writing before Thursday 13th February. Once the document is completed and ratified by the Board of Management, it will be posted on the school website at www.sasns.ie.
- Our school has applied to be recognised as a Digital School of Distinction and we are working very hard to meet the targets set down. Over the past five months, we have had huge problems with the school's internet speed, Thanks to Mr. Molloy's hard work, we're now back on HEANet, we have full filtering and we comply with all DES online safety criteria.



MID-TERM BREAK

St. Attracta's Senior and Junior Schools will be closed from Monday 17th - Friday 21st inclusive for our February mid-term break.

LITERACY & NUMERACY

Our literacy project is working out really well with teachers and pupils working on the various writing genres - already we can see a huge improvement in the pupils' approach to writing (as well as their presentation) and we hope these efforts will be reflected in their results at the end of the year.

Aa Ff Gg
Ee Jj Kk Ll
Ii Nn Oo Pp
Rr Ss Tt Uu
Ww Xx Yy
3 4 5 6 7

Our numeracy project will launch in the near future and we will start again with parent, pupil and teacher questionnaires. Based on this feedback we will decide on our project for next year and we will contact you in the near future with further updates.

This year our school has been selected for the **TIMSS Project**, which measures trends in mathematics and science achievement. Our fourth classes will be involved in this project and the results will help us see how we are doing in these subject areas.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

We had an excellent response to our November parental questionnaire and the responses were very encouraging. Over the next few newsletters I will give feedback on your responses and on any actions arising out of your suggestions. The information collected will be used to inform our work in the future. Thank you for your input. Some preliminary results are as follows:

- ⊕ 100% of parents say discipline is good in the school
- ⊕ 100% of parents say there is a good atmosphere in the school.
- ⊕ 99% of parents say their children like school
- ⊕ 95.5% of parents say facilities are good in the school
- ⊕ 92% of parents say the school deals effectively with bullying while 1% say we don't
(7% didn't answer that question)
- ⊕ 100% of parents say they see a benefit to their child having a school uniform while
- ⊕ 98% of parents say they wouldn't want the children to wear their own clothes to school
- ⊕ 95% of parents say they like the school's current uniform and
- ⊕ 63% of parents say they would like Confirmation candidates to wear their own clothes
(as opposed to albs or a school uniform)
- ⊕ 75% of parents say they would like to become involved in a Book Rental scheme

A full report on the questionnaire will be issued to parents in due course.

AND FINALLY, SOME FOURTH CLASS NEWS:

This week was Catholic Schools Week. There were two competitions going on. One was to design a new cover for our prayer book and the other was to make up a new thanksgiving prayer. The third and fourth classes went to Mass on Wednesday. We had a lovely Catholic Schools Week watching bible stories and learning more about our Catholic religion. We also made up prayers and this is one of them: **THANK YOU GOD**

Thank you God for the food we eat
Thank you God for beds that are neat
Thank you God for the meat we eat
Thank you God for the friends we meet.
Thank you God for the nice pretty flowers
Thank you God for the very tall towers
Thank you God for everything I have
Especially the joy when a cow has a newborn calf.
by Anna Doyle

Biodiversity expert Dale Treadwell and Parish Pastoral worker Maeve Davidson both came to visit us this month. Dale has worked on many television shows and is an experienced wildlife expert. He talked to us about bats, butterflies, pollination and honey bees. He also gave us some information on insects and allowed us to look through his bug catchers. We really enjoyed listening to Dale.

Maeve Davidson came to visit 4th class during Catholic Schools Week. All the 4th classes came together in the Oratory so that we could talk about God and pray together. Maeve talked to us about the Our Father and reminded us that God listens to us always where ever we may be. When we left the Oratory we felt like we had learned a lot. Hopefully we will have some more visitors soon! *by Luke Ryan and Ella Proctor*