

St. Attracta's Senior School, Meadowbrook, Dublin 16
Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht, Cluain Ghlaise Áth Cliath 16
Nuachtlitir mí Márta 2014 **March Newsletter 2014**

Dear Parents,

This week, we begin the season of Lent and preparation for Easter time. We will join with the parish community on Ash Wednesday and the Sunday choir will sing under the direction of Ms. Neville. After that, every Monday during Lent we will go as a school to the 10.00a.m. Mass. We invite you to join us at these special Masses at which the 6th class pupils will be singing under the direction of Ms. McDonagh, Ms. Ryan and Ms. McGuinness. Our 6th class guitarists will provide the music. The parishioners love to see the children coming to Mass. We know lots of children have made Lenten promises and we encourage them to keep them.

Our school is committed to raising the standards of literacy and numeracy of all students. In 2011, the Department of Education and Science published *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*. Our school set out to improve on the already existing high standard of literacy and numeracy in our school. This year, we focused on the writing genre and the children really enjoyed it. Next year our focus is on numeracy and in preparation for this, we will be asking parents, pupils and teachers for their opinions on certain aspects of maths in our school. Through our newsletters we will keep you updated on this latest project.

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.

Le gach dea ghuí,

Muireann Máirtín, Príomh Oide

TWO LETTERS from the BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Boards of Management of both schools sent out two notes to all parents - please check your child's schoolbag, if you haven't seen them. Last week's letter was about **safety and traffic** around the school. Today's letter is about the **voluntary contribution**.



CAKE SALE - THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!



We held our second cake sale of the school year on Friday 14th February and raised sufficient funds to pay for more maths materials and a host of story books which we use for the Building Bridges approach to teaching comprehension. The crepes alone brought in over €500, while the Cake Sale itself as well as the raffle brought the total to €1810. 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!

NATIONAL TREE WEEK

This is National Tree Week and it will be marked in a very special way in our school by a Tree-Planting ceremony on Tuesday morning at 9.30a.m. Representatives from both the Senior and Junior Schools will be involved and the event will be featured on RTÉ News Today at about four o'clock in the afternoon. We will plant a native ash tree between the Junior and Senior School and a native tree in the top field. In addition to that Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council has donated 100 saplings to us which will be planted on school grounds over the next week or so.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO SOMETHING SPECIAL DURING LENT? STARTING NEXT WEEK 5 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 start a beautiful initiative of spending a little bit of time with Jesus after school for the next six Tuesdays of Lent. 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!

TRÓCAIRE BOXES



Tomorrow, all children will be given this year's Trócaire boxes. Many parents and teachers remember filling those Trócaire boxes when we were at school ourselves. 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.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Department of Education has issued guidelines to all schools to assist in developing an anti-bullying policy and we have put a great deal of work into formulating a policy which addresses this very important issue. In our experience the most common forms of bullying are name-



calling (amongst boys) and exclusion (amongst girls). Sadly this is all too common and sometimes it's hard to believe your own child might become involved. 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. 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.

INTO/EBS HANDWRITING COMPETITION



This month we will once again enter the INTO/EBS Handwriting Competition which encourages neat legible writing. We will all be showing off our best handwriting and the pupils' best entries will be displayed in school. Keep practising boys and girls! Ar aghaidh le chéile!

BASKETBALL NEWS

Some of our 6th class boys and girls have been participating in a Mini-Basketball League over the past 5 weeks. Both the boys' and girls' teams have been doing really well and are showing great promise for the future. Thanks to all the teachers who are giving up their free time at lunchtime and after school to coach the children. Hopefully those involved will be inspired to continue this in secondary school. Maith sibh!



STARS OF THE FUTURE

Congratulations to two of our 6th class pupils! Laura Norton recently starred in the musical *Evita* in the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre. She was one of sixteen children chosen from around the Dublin area to star in the show, but she was the only child chosen to sing *Santa Evita* - solo - alongside Marti Pellow (Ms. Ryan's favourite singer!) Congratulations also to Katie Mai Teggart who received 1st class honours and a medal in her poetry recitation competition in the Leinster School of Music and Drama. We look forward to seeing Laura and Katie-Mai on stage in years to come. Maith sibh, Laura agus Katie-Mai!



SO WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING IN ST. ATTRACTA'S SENIOR SCHOOL?

PAIRED READING PROJECT (PRP)

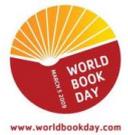
- 'My child can read but they don't like reading out loud'.
- 'My child has lost interest in reading'.
- 'My child has no confidence in their reading ability'.
- 'My child can read silently but has no fluency'.
- 'My child doesn't like books and reading'.



If any of the above describes your child, why not get involved in this year's **PAIRED READING PROJECT** which we will launch this week with a meeting on **Thursday morning 6th March from 9.15 - 10.15a.m. in the Senior School**. The greatest gift we can give our children is the gift of reading. So, come along and let's work together to help your older children read with competence and confidence. All it takes is 15 minutes a day, five times a week!

WORLD BOOK DAY

We're delighted to be celebrating World Book Day in Ireland on **Thursday 6th March**. Over the last 16 years World Book Day has become firmly established as Ireland's biggest annual event promoting the enjoyment of books and reading. 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. We want to develop a fantastic attitude towards reading and books across the school. We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents to chat to your child as they read. This will help to develop their understanding of the story and also widen their vocabulary. **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.

CÓRFHÉILE - MUSIC TO OUR EARS!

This year, thanks to Ms. Neville, pupils from all classes have entered the Córfhéile festival for school choirs. The children will perform in the National Basketball Arena this **Friday 7th March** and we wish them all the very best! The chosen songs are *I Whistle a Happy Tune*, *Mol Uí Mhaoileoin (Molly Malone as Gaeilge)* and *I Will Follow Him* from 'Sister Act'. The singers have shown fabulous commitment by sacrificing lunchtimes and play times but it will be a great experience for the children and all parents are guaranteed a great night of entertainment!



PARENTING TEENS COURSE

Following a very successful course on parenting young children which took place before Christmas, now a group of parents have organised a **Parenting Teens Course**.

Starts: Tuesday 11th March
Time: 8.00 - 10.00p.m.
Venue: St. Attracta's Senior School
Cost: €20

Sessions cover

- Building Strong Foundations
- Meeting our Children's Needs
- Setting Boundaries
- Teaching Healthy Relationships
- Our Long Term Aim



For more details call Maria@ 0863751675 or register by email to parentingstattractas@gmail.com

BINGO NIGHT

Organised by the Parents' Association, put this date in your diary!

THURSDAY 13th MARCH 2014 - BINGO! A great night and a great fundraiser is promised - just like last year! See today's note from the Parents' Association!



SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE ... LABHAIR GAEILGE LINN agus GAELBHRATACH



Beidh Seachtain na Gaeilge ar siúl ón 18ú - 21ú Márta 2014. We hope to have great fun with all our Seachtain na Gaeilge activities and a Seisiún mór ceoil on Wednesday 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 Mamaí 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 when you can resurrect your cúpla focal in a fun way and **Céadaoin Cainte** where every Wednesday the children and teachers make that extra effort to speak Irish and **An G-Factor** where auditions will be held for poetry recitation or song-singing as Gaeilge. 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! Have a look at our website during Seachtain na Gaeilge!

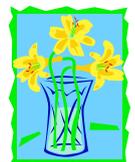
MATHS MASTERS TABLE QUIZ



This year's Maths Masters Table Quiz will take place on **Thursday 27th March** in the Senior School Hall. We welcome 16 local schools from the surrounding area. We have some fantastic prizes for the winners and runners-up, with spot prizes and lots of fun throughout the evening. Thanks to all the teachers for organising everything from start to finish. We look forward to a fun-filled mathematical evening! Start swotting Rang 6!

DAFFODIL DAY

Daffodil Day takes place in school on **Friday 28th 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.



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential factor in each child's learning and I would like to congratulate the 50 pupils who have had full attendance so far! Eight of those are in 6th class. The highest number of pupils with 100% attendance is in Ms. McKernan's class while the best overall attendance is in Ms. O'Leary's. 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!



ARTISTIC TALENT REIGNS SUPREME

Congratulations to all our fabulous artists who have done so well in the Biodiversity Competition. The standard was exceptionally high and the runners-up were Ruby Fitzpatrick, Oisín Downes, Diarmuid Flynn, Aoife Dunne and Aoise Campion and the overall winner was Megan Clarke in Rang 6.

And who was the winner of the new Prayer Book cover? Unfortunately we don't have a winner as we go to print, but we will announce that on the morning of Ash Wednesday and the Prayer Book will be brought up in the Offertory Procession.

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