

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

Nuachtlitir na Samhna 2014



November 2014 Newsletter

Dear Parents,

This month, we have our Parent Teacher meetings. It is a great opportunity for parents and teachers to meet about your child's application to work and progress in school. Please know that throughout the year, if you have concerns about any aspect of your child's time in school, you're always welcome to come and talk to us. The teacher who works with your child is always the first port of call. For those of you not familiar with the school, here are a few helpful hints that will contribute to the smooth running of the parent teacher meetings.



- We remind parents that you access the school through the front door and go straight down to the teacher's classroom (not to the external door).
- Please be aware of the time schedule which will be pinned to the door and knock on the door at the appointed time. Teachers will do their best to keep to the schedule but we rely on your co-operation also. If we are running a few minutes late, please be patient with us. Issues which require in-depth discussion will be followed up on by the teacher.
- Learning support teachers working with your child will be happy to meet you on Thursday afternoon or at the appointed time.

Each year as parents come and go, we issue a questionnaire on certain aspects of school life. This year we simply have a comments box in the foyer of the school. If you have any comments or suggestions on things that happen in the school, please write them down and drop them in the Comments Box. We can only sort out what we know about.



At this stage, I want to thank you for the magnificent response to our TLC (Tuismitheoirí le Chéile) appeal. So many of you offered your help with various aspects of school life and we will be in contact with you over the next week or so.



We have lots of exciting events coming up between now and Christmas so we look forward to your continued support in the weeks and months ahead.

Le gach dea ghúí,

Muireann Máirtín, Príomh Oide

AUTUMN BAG DROP FUNDRAISER IN ST. ATTRACTA'S SCHOOLS

Bag Drop Times and Dates: This Thursday evening - 13th November from 7.30 - 9.00p.m.
and Friday morning - 14th November from 8.30a.m. - 9.00a.m.



Acceptable items:

- All clean clothes (Ladies, Gents & Children)
- Paired Shoes, boots or runners
- Curtains & net curtains
- Handbags and belts
- Towels
- Clean bed linen (except duvets and pillows)

As you come to Parent Teacher meetings this week, why not drop in your bag of clothes and we'll drop them over to the Junior School.

All bags to be dropped into the Curriculum Room of the Senior School. For ease of delivery, school gates will be open on Wednesday night ONLY! Míle buíochas!

I was recently asked what our school motto means. Our school motto **Ar aghaidh le chéile** (which literally means 'Forwards together') comes to fruition when pupils, parents and teachers are working together to ensure that children are achieving their full potential. Supported by the local community and with God on our side, we will all pull together to make St. Attracta's Senior School the best it can be.

WOW! WOW! and a TRIPLE WOW!



We had a great day last Monday when we headed off to Croke Park to watch our Senior Boys' and our Girls team play their hearts out against Scoil Carmel and St. Helen's. The boys drew their match while the girls were beaten in the second half but not without giving 100% on the day. We were all so proud of them! It was a great day in the sporting history of St. Attracta's Senior School. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Cahill's Centra, we didn't have to pay the cost of transport. The icing on the cake was when our Junior Boys won their final and secured another victory for the school in blue! Well done to the teams, the supporters, the many parents who came along on the day and to all involved. We will never forget it!

Calling all girls born in 2004: Ballinteer St. John's 2004 football team are looking for girls to join for the new season. Any girls interested should call Christine on 086-3846534.

OLYMPIC HANDBALL

Thanks to Ms. O'Leary, our 5th class pupils are being trained in Olympic Handball and they are showing great promise. A 5th class handball league for boys and girls is running every Friday at lunchtime until Christmas and a boys' team and a girls' team will go forward representing the school in the Dublin league after Christmas. We'll keep you updated on how they get on.



INFORMATION UPDATES



If you have changed address or telephone number recently, please let us know immediately so that we can update contact details. Last year, one or two school reports went astray as changes of address hadn't been notified to us. Also please make sure that your emergency contacts are up to date. In the event that your child becomes ill at school, we must be able to contact a responsible adult at short notice. This information is required from all parents so as to ensure that the database is up-to-date.

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

With so much in the news about children's health, we'd like to remind you of our healthy eating policy. Every day is healthy lunch day and Friday is the only 'treat day'. It really isn't fair if some children bring in snacks on other days and so we ask for your co-operation on this. If you're running out of ideas and it's the 'same sandwich syndrome' every day, go to www.safefood.ie where you'll get lots of information on the seven steps to creating healthy, varied and interesting lunchboxes. You'll also learn lots about children's health and physical activity, supported by lots of facts and figures. Here's a flavour of what's on the site.

What are the benefits of physical activity in children?

- Agility, balance and co-ordination
- Improved self esteem and mood
- Better energy levels
- Better sleep quality

How big is the problem?

- 4 out of 5 children (ROI) and 3 out of 4 children (NI) are NOT meeting the guideline times for physical activities.

TV viewing figures

- 34% of preschool children have a TV in their bedroom
- 2.2 hours: Average amount of time preschool children spend watching TV daily

Walking to school figures

- 1981: 50%, 2014: 25%

Key tips for parents

- Replace screen time with active games
- Build activity into everyday routines
- Get involved and get active
- Children don't have to do it all at once. They can build it up over the day



NUMERACY in ST. ATTRACTA'S

St. Attracta's Senior School places great value on the importance of literacy and numeracy. This year our focus is on numeracy, and our aims are

- to raise the profile of maths in our school
- to increase pupil, teacher and parental awareness of maths in everyday life
- to provide a variety of problem - solving activities to all pupils
- to teach a variety of problem - solving strategies to all pupils



As a starting point, we have taken on a project called 'Have you got Maths Eyes?'

So what's it all about? Over the coming week, we're asking all pupils to create a poster for a school-based competition. There will be one winner per class, from which we will select a top five to represent our school. All entries are to be in school on/before Friday 14th November. Each entry must have the pupil's name, class teacher and date of birth. Pupils are encouraged to print their entries so that we'll have a stimulating display but may send them to the following email address if they're unable to print at home: attractamathseyes@gmail.com. Details of the poster competition will be explained by teachers who will visit the website and show pupils examples from the shortlisted entries from previous years. What can you and your child do?

- Encourage your child to view the website www.haveyoutgotmathseyes.com where there are examples of how to create the poster using Powerpoint or Word document (This requires clicking on *enter the competition link*.)
- Ask pupils to take photographs and save them.
- Having saved the original photo, each pupil can add a tagline/question. They should be creative in their efforts rather than copying examples already on the website.
- Print the photo/poster and bringing it into school.
- Where your child doesn't have access to printing, paper etc., teachers will help.

Guidelines for saving photographs and posters are as follows:

- You should use a camera that will produce a photograph in as high a resolution as possible (when saved it should be less than **2MB in size**).
- Save a copy of the photograph in its original format before any editing takes place. (This is important as if your entry is shortlisted you will be asked to forward a copy of the original photograph).
- Then use your photograph to create your poster using the templates provided below or using photo editing software.
- When you are happy with your edited poster you will save this as per the guidelines in the links that follow. (The edited poster when saved should be less than 2MB in size.)
- You then submit your edited poster before the deadline given.
- Remember, if shortlisted you will be asked to also submit the original high resolution photograph later so make sure you keep it somewhere safe!!! AR AGHAIDH LIBH!

MATHS MASTERS TABLE QUIZ

This year's Maths Masters Table Quiz will take place on **Thursday 27th November** in the Senior School Hall. This idea was first introduced 4 years ago and has gone from strength to strength, challenging the minds of our pupils and of all those in 6th class in local schools who have an aptitude for maths. We will welcome 13 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!



THE OWLS PROGRAMME

The children in 3rd class are very lucky to have started the "OWLS" nature programme. Andrew from OWLS has already come in to each class to give the children a slide show about the animals and creatures to be seen in our local environment. He does wonderful work with the children and last Friday he brought in Hobnob the Hedgehog to show the children, before he hibernates for the Winter. Each of the three classes will start nature projects in the New Year, under the direction of Andrew and their class teachers.



BOOK WEEK 2014:

We had a fabulous Book Week before the mid-term break and congratulations to all the boys and girls who won prizes during the week. We managed to sell a massive €2645 worth of books, which enabled us to buy €1587 worth of books for the library.



MUSIC TO OUR EARS!



The National Children's Choir involving 4th and 5th class pupils is doing great work and on Thursday 13th November we will have a big practice with the other schools in our team. Scoil Naithí will host this performance and we expect it to be music to our ears! The repertoire of songs is very challenging and the standard is very high, but the children are well able for it and we look forward to hearing from them at the Christmas Carol Service.

ONLINE PAYMENTS

We are delighted to announce that we will be rolling out the Aladdin Online Payment system to the parents of St. Attracta's Senior School in the new year. The new payment system will not require parents to log in or to set up an account (more on this below). Our school uses the Aladdin School Management software system for administrative purposes, so switching to the Aladdin Online Payment system will streamline the school's administration even further by effortlessly incorporating money collections into the school's management software. Another great benefit is that Aladdin is providing us with a more cost effective system which means savings for parents and for the school.



The Aladdin Online Payment system will give you access from an internet browser on your computer, phone or tablet to make secure payments to the school using your credit or debit card. Aladdin uses state of the art security to safeguard information entered by you and the school and data is stored and processed in strict compliance with Irish data protection laws.

PLEASE READ THIS!



The same rules apply to all pupils and we have a strict **uniform** code here in the Senior School. Proper uniform should be worn every day complete with school tie and black shoes. Perhaps encourage your child to organise their uniform the night before to avoid any panic in the morning! Please also remember the rule that long hair must be tied back (for hygiene purposes) and nail varnish is not allowed. The children know the rules but we ask parents to ensure that they follow them.

Also, we are doing our best to encourage **punctuality** in school. We do of course allow for traffic and other circumstances which may delay children coming to school on time. However it is unacceptable when children are constantly late and it is difficult to reprimand a small child if it is the adults in their life who are responsible for getting them to school.



SO WHAT ELSE IS ON?

- Before the mid-term our 3rd and 4th class pupils were invited to attend a fabulous show - 'Beauty and the Beast' - in Ballinteer Community School and we were blown away by the talent and professionalism of all involved, especially some of our past pupils. Congratulations to all the BCS pupils and teachers!
- As part of Science Week, Mr Maguire's class will visit **Notre Dame** this week for a **Science Study** visit hosted by the teachers and pupils.
- Some of our 6th class children will attend a performance of 'Oklahoma' in Wesley College tonight and it promises to be great! Thanks to Ms. Spicer in Wesley for the invitation
- Work is underway on new website and we hope to launch it before the end of November.
- ACCORD will visit our 6th class pupils on Monday 24th November and our Mass of Commitment in preparation for Confirmation will be notified to you in the next few days.
- Our provisional date for **Confirmation 2015 is Thursday 21st May 2015.**
- Christmas Carol Service - **Monday 15th December 2014 at 7.30p.m.**
Celebrate Christmas and all that it means by being with us on the night.

