



St. Patrick's National School

BOM Newsletter

Principal's Welcome

I am delighted to introduce this St. Patrick's N.S. BOM Newsletter for 2018-2019 to you. As you look through it you will get a snap-shot of some of the story of the school from the past academic year and I am sure you will appreciate that this is only a small part of all the work and activities that have taken place in the school.

On behalf of the Board of Management, I wish to express sincere thanks and congratulations to the pupils in our school, who continue to display wonderful energy, inquisitiveness and an abundance of talent in all they do. Thank you also to all parents for providing the foundations on which your children are supported, to the board members, including Fr. Richard Matthews, for their help and support this year. I would like to pay a special word of mention to the staff, Parent Association, Book Rental Committee, Do This in Memory Committee and parent volunteers for their time, expertise, energy and effort which have all contributed enormously to school life here in St. Patrick's N.S.

Lorna Gerrard, Acting Principal and Secretary of St. Patrick's N.S. Board of Management

Board of Management

St. Patrick's N.S. is run on behalf of the Diocese of Meath by a Board of Management. Its members are as follows:

Chairperson:

Fr. Richard Matthews

Treasurer:

Sandra Walsh

Secretary:

Lorna Gerrard

Health and Safety Representative:

David Powell

Staff Nominee:

Gearóid O'Connor

Parent Nominees:

David Powell and Shona Dunne

Community Nominees:

Annette Fitzpatrick and Pat Connolly

Six meetings took place during this school year. As part of the work of the Board, we would like to confirm that:

- The Board of Management has met its obligations in respect of Child Protection and Anti-Bullying Procedures, including the introduction of a Child Protection Risk Assessment and Child Protection Safeguarding Statement
- The Board has reviewed standardised test results and pupil attendance returns during the course of the school year.
- The school accounts have been audited and certified in line with Department of Education guidelines.

Overview

Our enrolment this year is two hundred and seventy seven pupils in ten mainstream classes. We are currently projected to have thirty five junior infants next year.

Staff

Acting Principal – Ms. Lorna Gerrard

Acting Deputy Principal – Mrs. Debbie Connor

Teachers – Mrs. Cassandra Kelly, Ms. Cathy O'Brien, Ms. Lauren Delaney, Mrs. Ailbhe Goulding, Ms. Amy McCabe, Ms. Lorna Murphy, Ms. Ruth Collins, Mr. Sean Flanagan, Mr. Kevin Fagan, Ms. Emily Duignan, Mr. Tom Ó Braonáin and Mr. Gearóid O'Connor.

Secretary – Mrs. Sharon Carolan

SNAs – Mrs. Margaret Reilly and Mrs. Irene Meehan
Caretaker and Cleaner – Mr. Davy Hoey.

We would also like to thank Janine Reilly, who volunteered as school librarian every week in our school library and Angie Coen who uploaded our school website throughout the year. Their work was much appreciated.

Mrs. Darina Sheridan and Mrs. Joann Johnson continue to job share in other schools and Mr. Paul O'Donnell continues his secondment. Their positions are filled by Ms. Emily Duignan, Ms. Lorna Murphy and Ms. Amy McCabe.

School Mission Statement

St. Patrick's National School, Slane, strives to provide a caring, happy and secure educational environment.

With a view to providing the highest possible teaching standards, we actively promote staff development on an individual and collective basis.

This is a Catholic primary school which fosters gospel values and holds our Catholic ethos as a cornerstone of school life.

We endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, offering equal opportunities for all pupils to develop and progress in a well ordered and disciplined atmosphere, where parental involvement is encouraged and the wider community is served.

Policy Development

The following policies were reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management this year. Many thanks to the Parent Association representatives Rachel Keogh and Deirdre Stafford for their assistance with these reviews.

Anti-Bullying, Child Safeguarding Statement, Emergency Closures, Fire Drill, Safety Statement, Critical Incident, Administration of Medicine, Attendance, Competitions and Events, Custody/Separation, Enrolment, Exemption from Irish, Induction of New Pupils, In-School Management, Library, Litter Control, Psychological Assessments, Pupil Reports/Profiles, Swimming, Textbooks and Trips. The most relevant policies are available on our school website www.slanens.ie

Curricular Development

English - Our school English co-ordinator is Ms. Gerrard and Ms. O'Brien has also volunteered as a literacy link teacher to look at literacy improvements in the school. This year the staff had extended training on the new primary language curriculum for English and Irish. It focuses on oral language skills for pupils from junior infants to second class and it will establish very clear outcomes and development milestones for pupils in both languages. It is being implemented from junior infants to second class. Training for senior classes will begin in the next school year.

Maths - Our Maths co-ordinator Mrs. Goulding and Ms. Collins has also volunteered as a link teacher to look at Maths.

This year, our school was invited to participate in a Department of Education funded Maths project called Lesson Study. The teachers (4th-6th classes - Ms. Murphy, Mrs. Kelly, Ms. O'Brien, Mrs. Goulding and Mr. Fagan) worked with a facilitator from our Primary Development Support Team (PDST). The teachers came together over two full days to ask a question relating to the teaching and learning of Maths. Then one teacher (brave Mrs. Goulding) taught the lesson and was observed by the other teachers. Finally, the teachers met together to see if their question was answered by the pupils. Many thanks to the Department for funding this scheme.

From 3rd to 6th class, station teaching continued this year. Each of the classes had five weeks with three teachers in the room for one hour a day. This included the class teacher (Mr. Fagan, Ms. Murphy, Mrs. Goulding, Ms. O'Brien and Ms. McCabe), one of the three support teachers (Mrs. Kelly, Ms. Delaney or Mrs. Connor) and Ms. Gerrard.

At infant level, pupils with Ms. Duignan and Mr O'Connor have continued to implement Ready Set Go Maths programme. It is the reason why we do not now have a Maths book at infant level now.

Gaeilge – Is í Bean Uí Chonchubhair comhordaitheoir na Gaeilge sa scoil. Our Gaeilge co-ordinator is Mrs. Connor. Dhá bhliain ó shin, thosaíodh scéim nua sa scoil darbh ainm Gaelbhreach. Two years ago a new scheme was introduced to the school called Irish Flag. Is í aidhm an scéim seo chun an teanga neamhfhoirmiúil a fhoirbairt sna páistí. The aim of the scheme is to promote the speaking of Gaeilge informally among the pupils. Sa chéad bhliain, rinneamar an tionól as Gaeilge, d'foghlaím na páistí Amhrán na bhFiann agus bhí lá amháin gach téarma an Gaeilge á labhairt againn. In the first year, pupils hosted assembly in Irish, learned our national anthem and we had one day per term where the pupils spoke Irish for the whole day. Sa dara bhliain, rinneamar scéalaíocht, cómhra scoile, tráth na gceist agus chuir an Coiste Gaelbhreach fáilte roimh na páistí ag an ngeata gach maidin. In the second year, we did stories in Irish, school phrases, quizzes and welcoming at the gate in Irish. Chur an coiste gaelbhreach ceisteanna cómhra na scoile ar na páistí ar an gclós freisin. The committee also asked pupils questions from the school cómhra scoile. Tá an obair iomlán thuas ar an mblag www.gaelbhreach.ie agus tá clár gaelbhreach thuas sa scoil le frásaí, seanfhocail agus ceist na seachtaine air. All the work being carried out can be found on a blog page for participating schools at www.gaelbhreach.ie and the gaelbhreach noticeboard displays the Irish phrase, saying and question of the week.

Tosóidh an scéim nua Gaeilge Bua na Cainte i rang a ceathair an bhliain seo chugainn fosta. The Irish school scheme Bua na Cainte will be rolled out in fourth class next year also.

The Department of Education has developed a website called www.helpmykidlearn.ie which is an excellent resource for parents to support their children's learning at home across all curricular areas.

ICT

Many thanks to Mr. Sean Flanagan and parents Angie Coen (website) and Sarah Jane Lynch (PA Facebook) for all the updates on our www.slanens.ie. The website, PA Facebook account and the school Twitter feed @Slanens

which are great ways for parents, pupils and families to see what is going on in our school.

ICT lessons began in the middle of September for Pupils from 1st to 6th class. Over the course of the year, all pupils in these classes engaged in these lessons. Many thanks to Debby, our ICT teacher, who planned a variety of lessons for the pupils including Microsoft Word, Microsoft Powerpoint, Microsoft Excel, Web Safety and Scratch.



School Buildings

Slane Community Centre – it is expected that the Slane Community Centre will begin construction this summer after school finishes up in June. The hall will be a great additional resource for the school in the winter months. As part of the works, the car park will be upgraded.

New Murals on the Junior Yard - We are delighted with the new murals that brighten up the junior yard. They are based on themes of our Green Flags. Try and see if you can identify all the flags from the murals the next time you look at them! Thank you to Davy and the pupils in 6th class who were busy preparing the walls by painting them blue. A huge thank you to our Parents Association who funded this. We absolutely love them!



Yard Markings on the Junior Yard - Pupils on the junior yard had great fun playing on the new yard markings courtesy of our Parents Association. The yard is very colourful and pupils practised their long distance running on our new running track.



Outdoor Classroom – We hope to have our outdoor classroom completed by the end of the summer. This area will be used for infants 'Aistear' a framework for learning through play and there will be a rota drawn up so as that each class can use it each week during lunch time.



Parent Association & Book Rental

Many thanks to Angela Callaghan, Julie Marron and all on the Parent Association and Book Rental Committees, for all their work this year. Both groups have invested a huge amount of time again in assisting the running of the school.

The Book Rental Committee continues to be fantastic value for money at €45 per pupil. The cost remains the same this year, despite the introduction of a new English scheme for all pupils from Junior Infants to 6th class. Books will be ready to go home in the last week of June.

The PA has now raised over €100,000 over the last five years which is testament to their work and the support of all families and the local community. Money raised by the Parent Association this year went to the following school items – purchase of additional P.E. equipment, additional junior yard equipment, Irish resources, additional library books, funding of buses for pupils to school sports events and the replacement of the floor in the school hall. The Parent Association will also be funding the upcoming play area to the rear of the school and new iPads for the school

The time given up by garda vetted parent volunteers who have assisted at functions, swimming, sports events and tours has also been invaluable towards the running of the school.

The Board would again like to thank all the above mentioned for their time and support.

Staff Extra Curricular Volunteering

Along with their teaching duties, the staff of the school give up a lot of voluntary time towards other activities and events for the pupils in the school. All the following areas were catered for by staff in a voluntary capacity this year – school choir, Active School Week, girls’ and boys’ Cumann na mBunscol gaelic football, Navan Area GAA league, Meath Pride of Place school gardening scheme, infant teacher supervision of classes to facilitate teacher meetings, Green Schools committee, Gaelbhrtach committee, Meath athletics, yard station teaching activities, star class popcorn parties, Credit Union quiz, mindfulness programme and 5K morning running. Each teacher has also coordinated assemblies, with pupils from 1st – 6th presenting each month.

School Activities

Hens

The 5th class pupils were trained up on how to care for the hens. They did a super job in caring for the hens over the course of the year. Unfortunately, we do not have hens at the moment as nature took over and the hens became part of the local food chain. We hope to have new hens for the beginning of the school year in September. A huge thank you to Davy, our caretaker and our 6th class pupils who helped them and oversaw their work at the beginning. The school garden was assessed for its Level 1 Meath Co. Council Pride of Place School Gardening Award 1st and 4th class pupils met the assessor and showed their work during the year. They had applied for Level 1 in the initiative and were awarded Level 5. Well done to all pupils and a special word of thanks to teachers Ms. Collins and Ms. Murphy who coordinated the initiative and to Davy our caretaker for his work all year round.



Swimming Lessons

Swimming lessons took place this year for pupils in all classes. Swimming is consistently listed as one of the best activities that pupils enjoy taking part in every year. From next year, as a result of this year’s child protection assessment, senior pupils will be allocated individual changing cubicles and only parents will be able to assist their own children in the changing rooms in the swimming pool.

Cheerios Breakfast

The pupils were very lucky to have their annual Cheerios breakfast fundraiser again this year in the school hall. A lot of work goes into the morning and the Parent Association had all the Cheerios ordered as well as cutting up fruit and ordering milk for the day.

Davy also had all the tables set up and our new floor in the hall made it much easier to clean afterwards. The pupils had a timetable, beginning with the junior infants and working all the way up to sixth class to come to the hall for their breakfast. Thank you to all the adults who made it possible. The €2s went to the charity ISPCC and their Childline service.



Cake Sale

There was great excitement in school with the cake sale happening on Friday the 30th of November. A huge amount of baked goods came in to school for the event. There was very little learned in class while pupils waited for their turn to go to the hall but when they did, the real maths lesson started as pupils got as much value as they could for their money.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all those who baked or bought treats for the event, to the Parent Association volunteers who ran the day, to adults who called for tea and coffee, to pupils and staff who bought cakes, buns and raffle tickets for the draw, which was a big success again this year.



Carol Services

St. Patrick's Church hosted pupils performing over two nights and were a credit to their parents, grandparents and other family members who turned up in huge numbers to see them. Mr. Kelly and the teachers did a wonderful job coordinating the nights, as did the Parent Association organising refreshments back at the school. Mr. Kelly was presented with a gift by the Parent Association for all his work and it was well deserved.



Aistear

Junior and Senior Infants have been doing the Aistear programme this year. Each month they worked on a new theme and the children learned new vocabulary, developed their problem solving skills, worked as part of a team as well as developing communication and play skills.

Aistear tells us that engaging in play is good for children's health and well-being. It is a way of creating community so that children develop a sense of identity and belonging. It is a way of communicating and exploring and thinking. Pupils had a great time being doctors and vets as well as enjoying meals in the restaurant!



Credit Union Quizzes

Congratulations to our five Credit Union Quiz teams who took part in the local competition in Rathkenny Hall. The Credit Union in Slane ran a great afternoon's entertainment and the pupils had a great time. The first placed teams in both sections went forward to the county finals.

Junior Competition

1st Slane N.S. – Declan Harding, Andrew Harding, Dylan Carolan and Tom Coyle

2nd Rathkenny NS

3rd Slane N.S. - Jessie Riggs, Cillian Murphy, Rose O' Donnell and Zack McConnon

Senior Competition

1st Kentstown N.S.

2nd Slane N.S. Doon Aherne, Kathryn Yore, Paschal Ayres and Nathan Kenny

3rd Slane N.S. Ella Traynor, Senan Kerrigan, Ethan Harding and Conor O'Sullivan

4th Slane N.S. Aoife White, Lily Harrop, Grace Murphy and Kevin O'Neill

Our junior quiz team represented the local area at the Credit Union county quiz in Ashbourne on Friday 1st March.

There were some very tricky questions but the lads did extremely well! Many thanks also to all the class teachers for their work and to Ms. Delaney for all her quiz organising.



Boys and Girls Football

Both our girls and boys football teams had a very successful year competing at a very high standard. Our girls team made history this year by winning all of their games to qualify for the Division 2/3 Shield Final in Páirc Tailteann. It was a fantastic occasion where the girls played their hearts out in front of a big crowd. They beat Longwood on the day by a goal. The girls were presented with their medals by county star Vicki Wall.



Our girls and boys GAA teams both finished in the summer league at the semi final stage. The girls team was defeated by Bohermeen N.S. in a very entertaining match and the boys team fared exactly the same being narrowly beaten by Wilkinstown in their semi final. Well done to all the pupils, teachers and parents who assisted and supported with teams throughout the year. A special mention also to the Parent Association who paid a

considerable amount of money towards bus costs all year.



6th Class Music

Our 6th Class pupils put our school on the map this year with their recordings of Band Aid's *Do They Know It's Christmas?* and Metallica's hit *Nothing Else Matters*. Led by their teacher Mr. Fagan, the pupils produced the tracks by playing all their own music and singing the songs. They raised a huge €2,598.97 at Christmas and chose to donate the money to St. Vincent de Paul in Slane.



Slane NS 5K Trail Run

The 5K run took place in glorious conditions in Slane Castle in May. There were 569 participants on the run, between children and adults, and it is fair to say that the course was a tough test. Fortunately, there were great buns, sandwiches, bananas and drinks at the end to revive all who took part. Sincerest thanks to the PA sub-committee who organised the run, and on raising €9,000 for the school.



Green Schools

The green school committee has been busy this year. BOWOW finished in March and the team have been carrying out energy checks in classes. They have also carried out surveys with pupils on global citizenship issues. Classes presented projects

based on the Global Goals. The school was awarded its 7th Green Flag this year for Saving Energy and Global Citizenship. Well done to everyone in the school community for their continuous work in saving energy both at school and at home. A huge thank you to the Green Team and especially to Ms. Collins and Ms. Murphy for coordinating the Green Schools Programme.



Grandparents Day

A sincere thank you to all 108 of our grandparents who came to St. Patrick's N.S. from far and wide as part of Catholic Schools Week. The hall was buzzing, helped by the usual five-star coffee, tea and refreshments provided by the Parent Association.

After being formally welcomed to the school, grandparents got to see in a window of their grandchildren's lives in school and also to tell the pupils about their own days in primary school. It was a great morning in the school and pupils were so proud to see their grandparents there on the day.



Gaelbhrtach

Comhghairdeas do na páistí mar fuair siad an Ghaelbhrtach imbliana. A huge congratulations to the whole school community as the school was awarded the Gaelbhrtach this year. Tá níos mó

Gaeilge á labhairt ag na páistí timpeall na scoile. There has been a huge increase in spoken



Irish around the school. Go raibh míle maith agat le Bean Uí Chonchubhair agus le gach duine ar an

gCoiste Gaelbhrtach as an obair mhaith ar feadh dhá bhliain. A special word of thanks to Mrs. Connor and everyone on the Coiste Gaelbhrtach for all of their hard work over the past two years.

Lá Glas agus Lá Glas

Bhí seachtain an gnóthach againn arís an tseachtain seo – Seachtain na Gaeilge. Is féile idirnáisiúnta Ghaeilge í Seachtain na Gaeilge, atá ar an gceiliúradh is mó dár dteanga agus dár gcultúr dúchais. Míle buíochas le na múinteoirí go léir, a d’eagraigh na himeachtaí i rith na seachtaine. Bhí lá lán Gaeilge agus lá glas againn ar an Déardaoin.



World Down Syndrome Day

On Thursday the 21st of March we held a fundraiser for World Down Syndrome Day. Pupils wore in colourful, odd socks. Odd socks were chosen as a symbol for WDSO because chromosomes are shaped like socks, and those with Down Syndrome have an extra one. It was a great day and the school raised €437 for the Meath/Louth branch in Down Syndrome Ireland.



Confirmation and Communion

Comhgairdeas do na páistí i rang a sé agus a dó a rinne a gcuid comhneartú agus céad chomaoineach sa séipeil i mBaile Sláine le Mr. Fagan, Mr. Ó Braonáin agus Mr. Flanagan. Congratulations to all the 6th class and 2nd class pupils who made their Confirmation and Communion in the Church in May. Thanks also to Fr. Matthews, Mr. Fagan, Mr. Ó Braonáin, Mr. Flanagan, the servers, choir and Mrs. Goulding, Ms. Duignan and Mr. Flanagan, Mrs. Reilly for her art work and Mrs. Connor for

recording a video of the ceremonies. Thank you also to all the teachers who helped to supervise classes for practices and the ceremony.



School Tours

Classes travelled as far away as Northern Ireland and as close as Slane Parish for school tours last week. We were very lucky with the weather and everyone had a fun day and came back safe and sound. Thank you to all the staff and volunteer parents for assisting and to Sharon, our hard working secretary, for all her hard work to make it happen!



Stackallen Pitch & Putt

This year some classes went to Stackallen Tennis and Pitch & Putt Club and participated in activities such as tennis, pitch & putt and hockey. They had a great time and even got treats on the day. Many thanks to parent Emma McCann for helping facilitate with these trips.



Athletics

Ms. Delaney and Mrs. Kelly brought a team of athletes to Claremont, Navan for the annual athletics track and field event. The pupils had gone through trials in school and had also been trained by Mr. Ó Braonáin at lunchtimes in preparation for the day. Congratulations to all participants on the day.



Active School Committee

Our Active School Committee was set up where pupils in 6th class wrote very well written and convincing letters stating why they want to be on the committee. The committee had meetings to organise Sports Day for the whole school. They organised the events for the day and the groups that the pupils went into for the stations. They also organised all of the equipment and set up the field for the day's events. We had a very sunny Sports Day where pupils got time on the bouncy castles, enjoyed ice-cream and got to witness the very skilful teachers taking on 6th class in the annual soccer match which was a fantastic contest.

