
NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Holy Communion

The boys and girls in 3rd class are looking forward to receiving their Holy Communion this year. After consulting with Fr. Alphonse, we have provisionally booked Saturday, 12th November for the ceremonies. The girls will receive the sacrament of Holy Communion at 11 a.m. with boys celebrating their ceremony at 12.15 p.m.

Confirmation

The 6th class pupils will be receiving the sacrament of Confirmation this year. We do not have a date for this yet. The date for the Confirmation will be decided on by Bishop Fintan Gould.

RSE Programme

The children from senior infants to sixth class are currently being taught the Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme. This programme will be finished before Christmas and there is further information available at <https://www.pdst.ie/primary/healthwellbeing/RSE>.

Move Well, Move Often

This year the school has implemented the Move Well, Move Often programme. This programme was developed by the Primary Development Service for Teachers (PDST). The programme focuses on the fundamental movement skills while also integrating with the primary school curriculum. The children are receiving approximately 30 minutes of P.E. each day when following this programme. Further information on programme is available at <https://www.scoilnet.ie/pdst/physlit/fms-activities/>.

Cork Heritage Project

The fifth class pupils are currently working on their Cork Heritage Projects. The children are given the opportunity to pick an area of Cork history that is of interest to them and create a project on their chosen topic. Some of the projects being completed are 'Stadia in Cork', 'East Cork', 'Nano Nagle' and 'St. Finbarr's Cathedral' to mention but a few.

Parent/ Teacher Meetings

Traditionally, face to face Parent/ Teacher meetings take place in late November. However, this year this will not be the case. Parent/ Teacher meetings will be taking

place in late January/ early February for this school year. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 the meetings will not take place face to face. A final decision will be made before the Christmas holidays on how they will take place. Parents will be informed there after.

Christmas Celebrations

As we approach the Christmas period, we are determined here in Crab Lane to ensure that Christmas is celebrated in a happy and safe environment while allowing the children to experience the excitement of Christmas. We are currently planning for many fun and exciting activities (all socially distant of course) and even a visit from the Santa Claus himself. For further details see www.santainthehouse.ie.

Science Week

Science week took place recently with all classes throughout the school participating in many fun Science experiments and lessons. The children had a fantastic time learning about all things science including the human brain, hexominoes, 'Eggs for Breakfast' and much much more.

Drop-Off and Collection Times

Thank you to all parents/ guardians for taking on board the wearing of masks at drop-off and collection times. I would also like to thank the local residents for their understanding and support with parking around and near the school. I am sure you will all join me in thanking them for being so understanding around parking outside their residence.

Aladdin

The school continues to use Aladdin for correspondence with parents, money collection and much more. If you are not signed up for Aladdin or are experiencing any difficulties, please let us know and we will help as best we can.

School Uniform

Reminder that children are to wear school uniforms on Monday and Thursday, tracksuits on Tuesday and Friday and their own clothes on Wednesday.

Important Dates for Your Diary

Christmas Holidays

School will close at 12 noon on Tuesday, 22nd December and will re-open on Wednesday, 6th January.

Message from Parents' Association Co-Chairpersons

Leigh Hegarty and Erica Mahony

The Annual general Meeting took place via zoom on Monday November 9th, with over 60 parents in attendance, which was fantastic.

Bryan McCarthy outlined the major challenges and huge efforts made by staff to ensure our children's safe return to school in August and Bryan noted how well the children have all adapted to new procedures and classroom layouts now in place. Bryan also gave an overview of various teaching programmes, academic progress and an update on the new school.

Alison Walsh (Chairperson) gave an overview of how Covid-19 forced the cancellation of various family fundraising & social events in the latter half of last year, but instead the PA organised an online table quiz, socially distanced end of year picnic and zoom welcome to Junior Infants parents. The PA continues to support the purchase of classroom literacy & numeracy resources, IT equipment and PE & recreational initiatives.

Marianne O'Connell (Treasurer) outlined a total spend by the PA of €14,832 last year and items purchased included white boards, iPads, Defibrillator, basketball hoops, confirmation party, Santa visit to school and zoom table quiz during first lockdown.

Marianne confirmed that so far this year only 1/3 of families are supporting this initiative and funds are depleting due to the spend last year, so we would hope to see increased support from families going forward to ensure our ability to continue supporting our children in their school environment.

A number of PA committee members stepped down this year after many years, namely Alison Walsh (Chairperson), Martin Ryan, Aisling Haly and Orla Kavanagh (remains until June) and we would like to thank them all for their huge contribution made to the PA, school and our events over the years. We are delighted to welcome four new parents who have joined the committee; Aida Goold, Avril Murphy, Una McPartlan (Secretary) and Eimear Dalton.

PA FUND

We understand there has been confusion in relation to the school contribution payment and the PA fund. The school contribution is paid directly to the school via Aladdin at the beginning of each school year and covers costs such as arts & crafts material, photocopying, insurance etc. The PA fund is totally separate (& separate bank account) and parents are asked to contribute €10 per month per family towards this fund. This

money is completely ring-fenced to support our children in school to purchase additional resources needed, in terms of classroom learning, IT and sporting equipment, hosting events, Santa visit, hiring buses for children's outings etc. Each year the school outlines a list of resources needed and the PA aims to purchase as many of these as financially possible. We are currently looking into setting up an easier online payment system, which will be more user friendly, but in the meantime the PA bank account details are below and parents can pay by setting up a monthly standing order or pay in one payment at the beginning of each year.

Events

The PA normally organises a number of family events each year, such as a Christmas fun-day held in the school, a family table quiz in March and a parent's social BBQ in June at year end. This year in lieu of the Christmas fun-day, we are funding a "virtual Santa visit" for each class on the last day of school, and a treat for each child while they watch Santa. We are also organising a children's hamper for each class, which will be raffled by the class teacher on the last school day. Tickets will be sold by the teacher but payments will have to be made via Aladdin. Tickets cost €2 each, or 3 for €5.

Third class will hopefully be making their First Holy Communion on December 12th (postponed a number of times) and in lieu of the PA being able to host a reception afterwards in the school, we will be providing a goodie bag for each child to mark their special day.

The Committee will continue to consider other means of uniting the school community over the coming months and we welcome any ideas or suggestions that parents may have. Thank you all to those who have contributed to our fund to date and we look forward to increased support from families over the coming weeks.

PA Fund Bank Account:

Account Name: Ballintemple National School Parents Association

BIC: AIBKIE2D

IBAN: IE77AIBK93417893373195

Please reference all standing orders and bank transfers with your family name.

Should you have any queries, we can be contacted at pa@ballintemplens.com

Erica Mahony & Leigh McCarthy

PA Co-Chairpersons, Ballintemple National School