

Scoil Inse Rátha
Déan do Dhícheall
Newsletter November 2023

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to our monthly newsletter. This month has flown by as we have been busy with lots of different activities. There is great work being done in each class with the children and staff working very hard. I attended the Principal's Conference this month and, after hearing stories from around the country, we can all feel lucky and privileged to be part of such a wonderful school community. Here is the news from November:

New Windows Project:

We applied for funding several years ago to replace the old windows at the front of the school. After much waiting and renegotiating of prices and budget, the new windows were installed during the midterm break. This is all part of our Board of Management's commitment to providing the best possible environment for our wonderful students and staff. Architect, Stephen Dawson, managed the project for us and we are delighted with the quality of the work. There are some small snags that need to be fixed but nothing major. The classrooms are feeling warmer and cosier already while maintaining good ventilation. Our Board won't stop here as they have plans for other improvement and developments across the school. We have submitted funding applications for IT equipment among other applications.

Free School Meals:

We submitted an application to be included in this scheme last year and we have been approved. It will start in April 2024 and each child will be provided with a free hot meal every day. There will be an app where you can choose/order your child's lunches each day. It will work like The Lunch Bag currently works except you won't have to pay. You can elect to opt out of it if you want. Whatever your child doesn't eat will be sent home so you can see if they have eaten or not. Once we have more details, we will send them on to you.

PT Meetings:

Thank you to all the parents who made the effort to attend their child's PT Meeting. There is invaluable information gained by our teachers to help educate your child during these meetings. Communication between home and school doesn't end here. Our teachers are available to meet at any time during the school year if you want to follow up and get an update on your child's progress. If there are day to day issues, feel free to write a note in your child's journal or to call the office. The office is open Mon to Thurs 8.50am to 1.40pm and until 12.40pm on Fridays. Outside of these hours leave a message and we will get back to you.

Credit Union Art Winners:

We had a large number of winners again this year in The Credit Union art competition. Congratulations to Julia, Kavish and Maya who won their age groups and to Jamie, Emma and Ilma who got runner up positions. Maya's entry has been put forward for the Credit Union Chapter competition. Well done to all who entered and took part.

Erins Own Junior Ladies County Champions:

The Ladies' teams locally have been winning all around them recently. Glanmire, Sars and Erins Own have won football and camogie competitions in recent weeks. We were delighted to welcome the Erins Own team to a special assembly this month to celebrate their county championship victory. It was especially nice to welcome our former teacher, Ms. Ní Chaoimh and our past pupil Judy Cogan who were on the team. It is brilliant for our current students to have so many role models to look up to and to aspire to.

Acceptable Usage Policy:

We have updated our Acceptable Usage Policy recently and it will be brought to our next Board of Management meeting to be ratified. This will include an update to our use of the Internet in the

school and updated photo consent to cover our use of Instagram. We will also be including a section about smart devices including phones and wearables that can record sound or video. All of these devices will not be allowed in school for everyone's protection. School needs to be a safe and secure environment, so we need to make sure there is no danger or worry about being recorded. I am bringing this to your attention at this time in advance of any Christmas present buying.

Cork Soccer Squad:

Congratulations to Adam Ryan who has been selected for the Cork soccer squad. This is recognition of his dedication and skill and we are very proud of him. It is also recognition of the excellent work the coaches in Leaside AFC are doing in developing players from a young age. We wish Adam well in his games and hope that he enjoys the whole experience.

Christmas Performances:

Our Christmas performances will take place this year on December 19th at the following times: 9am Junior Infants; 10am Senior Infants; 11am 1st class; 12:00 2nd&3rd and 1pm 4th, 5th and 6th classes. These will take place in Rooms 10&11 which you can access from the pitch side of the school.

Road Safety Talk:

PipeLife spoke to 5th and 6th classes this month about travelling to and from school safely. This included an opportunity to sit in the cab of an articulated lorry to get the driver's perspective. As the mornings and evenings are darker it was a timely reminder to our pupils on how to stay safe. A number of our classes also took part in an online Road Safety webinar run by Cork County Council. PipeLife gave every child in the school a special pack including a hat, water bottle and high-vis vest. Each of our classes will reinforce these messages over the coming weeks and we encourage you to do the same.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Ready, Set, Fun is up and running again two days a week. Chess is running two days a week and we have soccer training at lunchtime two days a week also. These activities provide our students with some alternative activities outside of school hours and help them to develop in different ways. A big thank you to Leaside who gave us two bags of soccer balls to help with our training!

Teen Idol:

Well done to Cassidy Gurhy who qualified for, and took part in, the finals on Teen Idol last weekend. It was a great achievement to qualify for this given she was competing against mostly second level students. We are very proud of her.

Christmas Traditions:

Christmas means different things to different people. Many families want to enjoy the magic and wonder of Christmas for as long as possible and other families don't. I would ask that you speak to your child to make sure they don't do or say anything to take away from someone else's experience of this time of year.

Christmas Presents for staff:

At our most recent staff meeting we discussed the pressure that parents can feel to get presents for staff. In some cases, there can be several adults involved with a child and this can make it very expensive for families at an already expensive time of year. We understand the importance of teaching children to say thank you. Firstly, there is no need to say thank you as we love working with the fantastic children in our school. If you do want to say thank you, a card or a note is always welcome and appreciated.

Sherpa Kids:

Sherpa Kids provide a before and after school service to mind your child(ren). They have recently developed a new activity-based learning curriculum where your child will have a greater say in what they do. They have more programmes to be launched in the next few months. Rebecca, the former manager of Sherpa in our school, has been instrumental in developing these new programmes. You can find more details at: <https://www.sherpakids.ie/>. Feel free to email Ellen at lins@sherpakids.ie for more details or to book a place.

That's all for now.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

Up Coming Events:

4th December: 4th Class soccer blitz in Carrigaline.

6th December: school closed for staff in-service on the new Primary Maths Curriculum.

7th December: 5th and 6th visit to NRG Xpress.

11th December: 7pm First meeting of the new Board of Management

12th December: nasal flu vaccinations for Senior Infants

House of Circuits Workshop for 4th-6th classes with Lifetime Lab.

19th December: Christmas Performances – see article above for times.

20th December: PA Christmas Raffle

22nd December: school closes at 12.15pm for all classes for Christmas Holidays