



Marine Institute visit by 1st class and 6th Class



Chess Champion Naoise



NEWS JUST IN...

Newport NS dancers WIN the West Mayo Scór na bPáistí. Well done to Sína, Eleana, Ava P, Ava S, Aoibheann, Jessie, Carla and Ava K!



Newport | NS

Learning Together in Harmony

Newport National School, Newport, Co. Mayo

Newsletter no. 31: March 2016



6th class at the Primary Science Fair

School Newsletter



We are coming to the close of what has been a very active and enjoyable term in Newport NS. There's always something new and exciting happening at school. All of the classes have contributed articles and photos which give you, as parents, a snapshot of the variety of curriculum related activities which we do at school.

I.T. Investment

We are conscious of teaching children in an ever changing technological world. This year the Board of Management has invested heavily in upgrading and replacing electronic devices within the school. 20 new

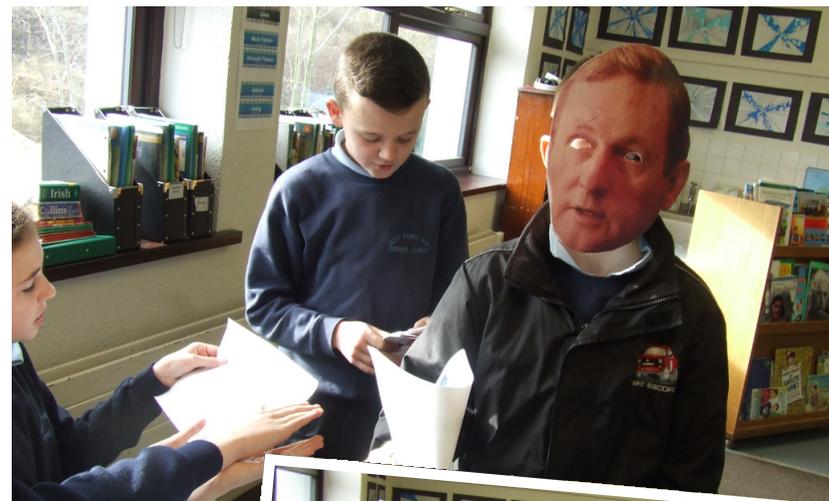
Lap tops were purchased, 20 existing laptops were refurbished and we installed a new projector and interactive touch screen in our new classroom. Equally significant is our investment into the provision of high speed wireless access to all classrooms. We have changed provider and installed new wi-fi points which give an enhanced service. This new system means that all pupils can work on projects or internet sites at the same time without a reduction in speed. We are assured that our IT provision is of a very high standard.

We have also invested in tablets which are rotated among the junior classes as part of the usual reinforcement of work already done by those infants and their teachers. iPads are in use also in junior classes where relevant apps are used to accelerate learning. Our teachers and SNA's are continuously updating their skills and regularly attend training in the area of IT. Having Fiona and all the IT expertise she has is extremely beneficial to all of us in the school. Fiona is responsible for the website and for the production of all the literature circulated from the school.

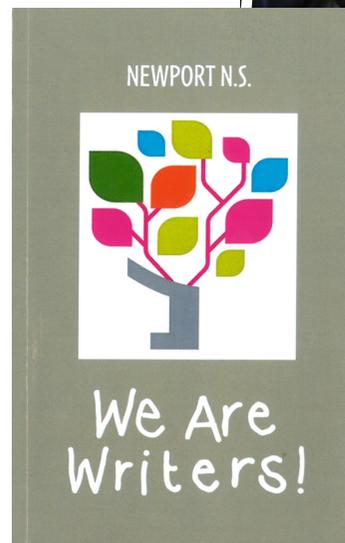
In an interview with Brendan O'Connor in the Irish Independent, Taoiseach, Enda Kenny recently referenced the ground breaking work being done with non verbal children in Newport school through the use of RPM and technology. It is a great endorsement for Newport NS that new educational methodologies used in our school are promoted as good practice by the holder of very high office.

New building

Work commenced on the building of a new classroom this month and the foundations have been dug out for our brand new PE hall. The Board has delayed the project in order to cause minimum disruption to school life. Our new classroom will be fitted with state of the art facilities and we are also providing two additional rooms for resource teaching. Our experience of provision of the first sensory room in the county has convinced the Board of



Election Day in Newport NS



Our first book!



Burrishoole Ladies (including Junior Infants teacher Aisling Doherty)

Pancake Day in the ASD Unit!



the value of providing a second sensory room, both of which are available to all pupils in the school who have sensory or behavioural challenges. We believe that very positive learning outcomes will accrue to the school and community from our commitment to providing the best possible facilities and opportunities to our pupils. Newport has a great tradition of promoting sport and our new sports hall will be available to community groups for use outside of regular school hours just as the GAP is made available to the public. You may have noticed that a photo of the GAP was used on promotional literature in the recent election....It's all happening in Newport!

Parent Association

The parent association is very active supporting the school by hosting social events in the school and fundraising for school related projects. We had a lovely day on Shrove Tuesday when a core group of parents provided pancakes for over 200 hungry people. The cooks expressed an invitation to parents who are available to join them for these events, as they are most enjoyable and it's a way of making new friends in an informal environment. Some of the parents who have been involved with the PA for many years will no longer have children attending Newport and they are anxious to enlist new members. These members have taken time off work and away from their families in order to provide a warm and welcoming environment in our school. We appreciate all their work and are thankful that a committed group of volunteers support the children so well.

We are grateful for the involvement of the PA with our recent, successful open evening. Prospective parents enjoy hearing the experience of trusted parents who already have children enrolled in the school. Thank you all for the very responsible way you represent the school and highlight the varied and interesting curriculum we offer the children.

School Improvement Plan

You will hear a lot about self assessment in relation to school improvement over the coming years. We are currently assessing our provision in relation to SPHE (2016/17) and a survey has been circulated via email to parents seeking your views in this regard. Results of the survey will inform what area of SPHE the school will choose to improve.

Thank you for giving your input and responding to the questionnaire. This school has very successfully used data gathering in the past to inform a five year plan for the Board of Management. The PA collated the data gathered from a parental survey in 2013, the results of which guided the Board in

decision making and completing the broad range of enhancements which have been completed to date. It is reassuring and important for parents to have an input into the education provision for their children.

I'm sure you are already aware from your children that we are targeting improvement of tables (2015/16) in numeracy and comprehension and reading for pleasure in literacy (2014/15).

Fundraising

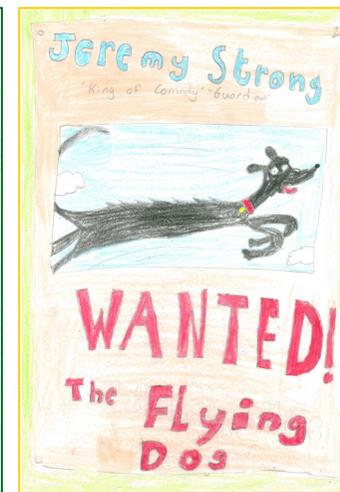
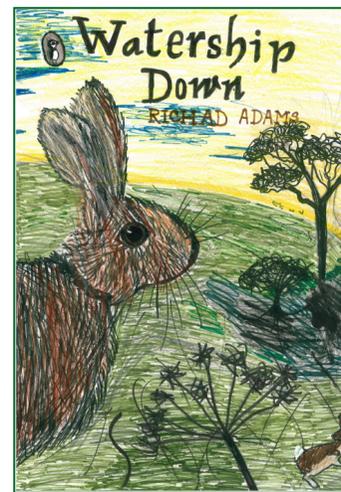
We are very thankful to all the families who took a card in the Silver Circle this year. We realise how difficult it is to ask friends and neighbours for money when times are hard. The money forms a very valuable part of our budget and will be spent carefully. We are regularly updating and refurbishing the school and intend doing some of this work over the Easter break.

Safety notice- Thank you all for your kind co-operation while building work is in progress. Safety is enhanced for all when you safely escort your child to and from the car park in the morning and in the evening.

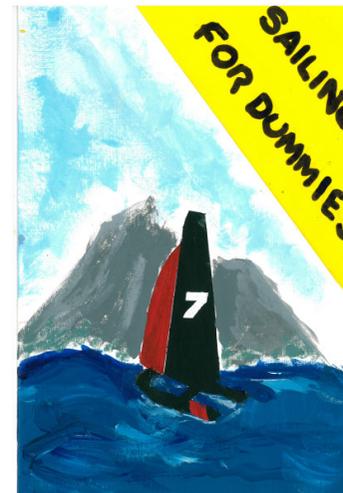
The school opens to receive pupils each morning at 9:20am. Supervision is provided from 9:10am by one teacher and one SNA. No responsibility is accepted by the Board of Management for pupils arriving before that time. Please ensure that you see an adult staff member in the yard before driving off and leaving your child. Class Assembly time is from 9:20 to 9:40am and formal lessons begin at 9:40am. No pupil should arrive any later than 9:30am. Classes end each day for Infants at 2pm and for all other children at 3pm. Parents of infants meet their children at the classroom door and the other children are met in the school yard.

Primary Science Fair and Young Scientists Exhibition

The boys and girls of Sixth Class attended and exhibited at the BT Young Scientist show in the RDS on Friday, January 8th. Their project entitled "Do different birdfeeders attract different types of birds?" received very positive commentary from the judge and the members of the public who stopped by to view it. Our students gave a very good account of themselves during their presentation and also enjoyed the various exhibits and shows on offer during a busy day. With thanks to Ms Finnerty and Ms O'Malley for organising the day, the parents who travelled to assist with supervision and the Irish American Partnership who funded the outing. The project is now on display in the school where it also forms part of the bio-diversity element of our Green Schools work.



BOOK FAIR WINNERS!





Mike Casey visits 2nd, 3rd and 4th



Weather- Uniform. Please ensure that you send your child to school wearing a coat as the children will play outside during breaks. Some children will need to buy black shoes for their uniform during the Easter break. We have noticed that older children are not all complying with uniform policy. As many senior children will be representing their school for the school tour, sporting events and competitions in the final term it is important that the full school uniform is worn. Replacement ties are available from Fiona at all times (price €3). As was always the case children wear a plain navy trousers for PE, as branded clothing is not allowed. All items of uniform are widely available at low cost from the usual suppliers. We would like to see the best turned out children in our Best Kept School.

Credit Union Quiz

Newport entered four teams in the Credit Union Quiz. All teams performed very well and are a credit to themselves and the school. Congratulations to our Junior team of Kevin Sheridan, Ruairí Hollywood, Alana McDonnell and Ruby Slok who came third!

Sports Quiz

The Newport NS Sports Quiz Team of Mark Kelly, Eoin McNulty, Ronan O'Donnell and Niall McLoughlin came first in the West Mayo division of the Cumann na mBunscol Sports Quiz. They went on to represent the school in the Mayo Final in Castlebar where they performed very well.

Chess

A selection of students from Sixth Class attended a Chess Tournament hosted by St. Brendan's NS Myna. Well done to all involved, particularly to Naoise Kennedy Jones, who won a trophy for Second place.

Burrishoole Ladies—a report from Aisling Doherty...

As a member of Burrishoole Ladies GAA Football team, we were delighted to get the year off to a great start with a win at the annual Páidi Ó Sé Football tournament, in Dingle recently. This is our second successive win at the festival in the Intermediate category. Overall, thirty six teams (men and women) competed in the tournament ranging from Junior, Intermediate, and Senior levels. Teams travelled from London, Liverpool, and all across Ireland to take part. We defeated an East Kerry side, 'Firies', in the semi-final, and went on to win the final against a strong Cork team, 'Naomh Abán'. Overall, a

great weekend was enjoyed by all, and we look forward to getting our League and Championship campaigns off to a good start for 2016.

Author visits Newport NS

On Thursday the 25th of February 2nd, 3rd and 4th class had the privilege of meeting author Michael Casey who came to talk to the children about his book 'I Was There, The Universe Story'.

Michael was born in Co. Kerry but now lives in the locality of Newport. He was always intrigued about where we come from and after reading a book by Stephen Hawking he was inspired to discover his own universe story. He told us it all began over 14 billion years ago with the Big Bang and he helped us to trace our existence from this star story, through earth story, to life story and finally to the human story.

The children were absolutely fascinated by the idea that at the beginning there were only two elements and that everything in the world today is made by a combination of only 74 elements. They found the talk really interesting and enjoyed listening to Michael. As one girl noted 'it is so strange to realise what a tiny part we humans make up in the story of our universe and yet from the beginning we were there!'

Orienteering at Lough Lannagh

The lucky pupils of 5th and 6th classes participated recently in orienteering challenges held by Mayo Adventure Experience at Lough Lannagh village, Castlebar.

Throughout the experience, the pupils learned about map reading, map orientation, feature recognition, understanding scale, understanding legends, thumbing the map, the country code, decision making and basic understanding of the participation in and running of a line event.

Despite the harsh weather conditions, the pupils enjoyed the activities and gained valuable knowledge of map skills as part of the geography curriculum.

Newport School Election

On Thursday 25th of February, the senior classes participated in a mock general election.

Ms O'Malley and Mrs Hughes compiled a very realistic ballot sheet with all sixteen candidates in the Mayo constituency who ran in the General Election 2016.

The process of voting was explained to fourth, fifth and sixth classes, including the meanings of terms such as democracy, proportional representation,

quota, transfers, surplus, eliminations and recounts. Initials of the various political parties were explained and predictions of outcomes were also discussed.

Particular emphasis was placed on the concept of how a vote that is spoiled cannot be deemed usable. For various reasons, it transpired that there were three spoiled votes from a total of 60 votes.

Having received a polling card from Ms O'Malley and under the watchful eyes of returning officer pupils from 4th and 6th classes, all ballot sheets were carefully stamped and the children voted privately and placed their sheets in a ballot box. Later that afternoon, the votes were carefully counted. The quota (the formula for which was explained) was 16 votes per candidate. In the first count, Enda Kenny FG and Lisa Chambers FF topped the polls and took the first two seats. Due to surplus votes and eliminated candidates, Jerry Cowley IND and Michael Ring FG took the remaining two seats.

Marine Institute

On Wednesday 24th of February, the children of 1st class visited the Marine Institute in Furnace. The children began their visit by observing recently hatched salmon and learned about the life cycle of the salmon. They then moved on to the labs where they helped test the quality of the water and used the microscopes to examine some of the tiny creatures living in the lake.

Next stop on the tour was to the biology and wet lab and the pupils really enjoyed observing and handling some fish samples that were caught on the RV Celtic Explorer while surveying at sea.

We moved outside to the fish trap and were lucky enough to find two adult salmon on their way back out to sea and the final stop was at the weather station where the children learned how information on the weather is collected and then recorded.

It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to observe how scientists work in their local community and we'd like to thank all the staff for their lively presentations and the wonderful welcome they gave to 1st class.

Book Fair

The annual Book Fair took place in February. This is a very enjoyable time, when each class is given a chance to visit the fair and browse through the shelves of bestsellers and well known favourites. This year €2,600 was spent at the fair, which results in the school getting €1,560 worth of books.

The winners of the Book Fair Art Competition were Cari Brady, Ellie May Reilly, Hailey Farrell, Liam McNea, Rachel Knox, Jessie Troy and Matthew Moran.