



**BEST
KEPT
SCHOOL
IN
MAYO!**



IT'S CHRISTMAS!

**School
Newsletter**



As the season of Christmas draws upon us, on behalf of the Board and staff I would like to wish everyone in our school community a very happy Christmas and wish you every blessing in 2016. This is a very special time for children and they are all busy preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus and the arrival of Daidí na Nollaig. Thank you to teacher Mary O'Donnell who donated a beautiful crib to the school which is displayed alongside our Advent wreath in the social space near the school entrance for children to enjoy.

Best Kept School in Mayo!

Representatives of the Green schools committee were invited to attend the annual best kept school awards in Mayo County Council chamber. Natalie Quinn and Kai Stokes were delighted to accept the winners prize of €600 and a plaque on behalf of Newport NS. This is a magnificent achievement for the school as competition is very strong particularly as we were competing against brand new buildings in a very broad geographical area. Children were afforded a lovely reception by Cllr Michael Holmes who commended Chairman Joe McGovern on the work accomplished by the Board of Management and school community in bringing the school building and grounds to such a high standard. Our school was applauded for the installation of Swift boxes, the introduction of a school vegetable garden and for the instigation of the edible landscapes project.

Inclement Weather

Please note that Newport NS will OPEN unless you receive a text or a notice is given out on local radio.

Christmas Concert / Parent Association

The PA is busy preparing for the Christmas Concert which takes place in the school hall **this Thursday December 17th from 11.30 am onwards**. Tea and coffee will be served during the intervals. This will enable parents to leave and free up space for other parents if they wish. Space will be at a premium on the day and we appreciate parents making room for others if their child is not involved. The PA will also run a fundraising raffle during the day. In the final week they hope to arrange to have Santa visit the children - North Pole weather permitting!

New Building

Following engagement with the public procurement process, the Board of Management has appointed Logden Homes as the main contractor for our additional classroom. Work should begin shortly. Plans may be viewed on the school's website and on the back page of this newsletter.



4th Class with handmade gifts from Koby



Our Futsal teams





5th Class Sale of Work

Board of Management

School Patron, Archbishop Michael Neary has approved the constitution of the 2016—2019 Board of Management of Newport NS to include the following members:

Joseph McGovern
Majella Palasz
Bríd Chambers
Frank Mulchrone

Fr Tod Nolan
Martin Dillane
Mary Noonan
Aedín Halpin

The new Board has arranged to meet early in the New Year.

Thank you to the group of volunteers who served on the Board from 2011 to 2015. These members were progressive and effective during their term of office. Since September the Board of Management has made a considerable investment in Information Technology. 20 new laptops were purchased while a dozen others were upgraded by an IT consultant employed by the Board. A company was employed also to up grade our wi-fi provision. A number of iPads were purchased for use in junior classes. All classes have an interactive whiteboard which is used to support all subjects in the curriculum. We feel that we now have adequate IT provision to meet current needs. We extend sincere thanks to Liz Hughes who has great expertise in IT and who oversaw this project on her own time.

Reports from regular Board of Management meetings are published on the school website. They can be accessed in the Downloads area.

Art Exhibition

Our very professional art exhibition of paintings from local artists and children continues to run in the school hall. We were delighted with the turnout for opening night which was performed by Cathaoirleach of Mayo County Council Michael Holmes. A wonderful montage of photographs from the occasion was featured both in the Mayo News and Connacht Telegraph.

School Improvement

The school continues to engage with school self-evaluation. This year the classes are explicitly learning comprehension strategies and reading for pleasure. We have extended school improvement to include Numeracy this year. The school has adopted a whole school approach to tables. Details of School self evaluation are all explained on the dedicated notice board in the entrance corridor.

Absences from School

Children are susceptible to colds and flu at this time of year. Following an absence, please send in a note or medical certificate explaining absence. We are duty bound to record all absences. Please be mindful that we are obliged to report all absences in excess of 20 days to TUSLA Child and Family agency. A new case referral process is being introduced to assist and manage instances where a high level of absence has been recorded. Our new school database (Aladdin) will automatically generate a referral to TUSLA and text a parent if and when a pupil reaches 20 days cumulative absence. More detailed information is available at www.tusla.ie. There is no need to ring the school when a pupil is absent. A note on return to school is all that is needed.

2016 School Calendar

Our new school calendar is currently on sale at a cost of €10. The calendar is a very professional production containing photos of pupils busy at work and play. Discounts are being offered for multiple purchases. Thank you in particular to Fiona Hopkins who collated photographs, created innovative collages and generously gave of her time and expertise in order to ensure the calendar meets the highest standards of production.

Opening Times and Safety

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.

5th Class Sale of Work

On Monday, December 7th, Fifth Class held an impressive Sale of Work. The pupils made Christmas decorations, baked delicious treats, held challenges and raffles and donated toys and books that they no longer wanted. All classes and school staff were invited to buy the goodies on offer and an astonishingly generous total of €600 was raised!

Fifth Class have decided to donate this money to cancer care, Noeline Haylett's animal rescue fund and to the Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. Everyone in the school community is extremely proud of the pupils' hard work, enterprise and generosity.





Irish Flag Presentation

written by 6th Class

On the 22nd of October, two soldiers came to our school to present us with the Irish tricolour. along with the proclamation from the 1916 rising. The soldiers' names were Sergeant Wayne Fitzgerald and Private Robert O Flatharta from Renmore Barracks. They asked us questions and the sergeant showed us his 6 medals. He told us we were the first school to know all seven names on the proclamation. Milly Allen and Luca Palasz recited a poem called 'The Mother' by Patrick Pearse.

Mark Kelly and the Private then recited the proclamation. The oldest and youngest students, Brian Loftus and Winnie Reilly, received the Irish tricolour and the proclamation.

We finished by singing the national anthem 'Amhrán na bhFiann' and listening to a grúpa cheoil, before the soldiers left the school.

Futsal

written by Kevin Sheridan

On the 24th and 25th of November, our Fourth Class boys and girls went to the Breaffy Sports Centre to participate in the annual Futsal Tournament. Futsal is a five-a-side indoor soccer game. The girls had a very successful day, winning two out of the three games that they played. Everybody played and had a very enjoyable day. The support and encouragement from all of the parents was very much appreciated.

Energy Awareness Workshop

Green Schools – as part of our work towards our 7th green flag we have been looking at the area of Climate Change and Energy conservation. It was very appropriate that all the classes had a very enjoyable and interactive workshop in the past two weeks on the issue of climate change. This was to coincide with the Climate change conference taking place in Paris at the moment. The pupils learned about alternative sources of energy and the importance of moving away from a culture of relying upon fossil fuels to proper use of sustainable fuel sources now and in the future.

The workshop was facilitated by Niamh Rath from Sustainable Energy Ireland. Niamh was very impressed with the level of knowledge pupils had on the issue.

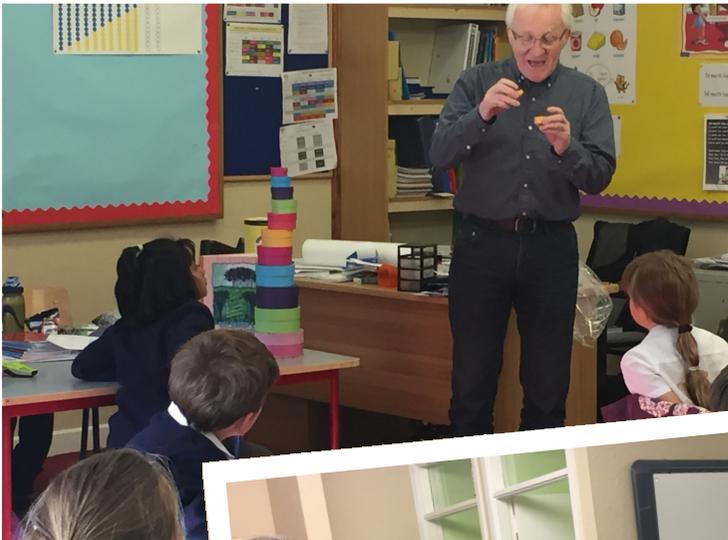


The pupils of 5th class learning about alternative sources of energy





Some very scary Halloween costumes from 1st and 2nd class



1st and 2nd class enjoyed a workshop provided by Kiltimagh poet Terry McDonagh



1st and 2nd class were visited by Niamh and Guzzler from SEAI to talk about energy



Cathaoirleach Michael Holmes opens our Art Exhibition

