

# *St. Francis of Assisi Primary School*

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## **Newsletter November/December 2017**

### **Presentation to school**

The staff and pupils would like to record their appreciation to John Paul Hughes, Dara McCann and their grandfather, Francis, who in response to our invitation for assistance in making our outdoors area more attractive have been very busy making some bird tables and nesting boxes and kindly donated these to our school. The children in Foundation Stage enjoy watching birds visit daily and are learning to recognise the different birds and find out more about their feeding habits.

Should any other parent/ grandparent/ friend have an hour or two to spare and can share their gardening expertise with us, we will be delighted to hear from you.

### **Mr Hullabaloo Show**

The school has received very positive feedback regarding the Mr Hullabaloo Show, which we hosted recently in the school Assembly Hall. The children from Reception to Primary 3 thoroughly enjoyed the puppet show, as did the mums and dads who visited with preschool children. Well done to all our boys and girls who volunteered to take part in the show.

### **Christmas Carol Service**

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School cordially invites parents and friends to a Christmas Carol Service on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November at 7:00 pm in St. Patrick's Church, Keady. We look forward to seeing all our families and friends there.

A big 'thank you' to all the children from classes P4-P7 who represented the school at the official switching on of the Christmas tree lights by the Deputy Lord Mayor on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December. Santa Claus was also present and he too was very pleased with the boys and girls. Thank you also to Miss Hughes and Mrs McEvoy for their assistance with music and singing.

### **Reading Club and Writing Club**

We would like to remind all our children aged seven and over about the Writing Club (First Saturday of every month) and Reading Club (Last Saturday of every month) which are held in Keady library at two o' clock. This is an excellent opportunity for children to develop their enjoyment of reading and writing in an informal manner and we ask parents to encourage as many of the children as possible to attend. Martina (librarian) has been very pleased to date with number of children from St. Francis of Assisi Primary School attending the sessions and the school is grateful to the staff of the library for extending our whole school Writing focus in an out of school setting.

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Principal: Mrs Nuala McGarvey B.Ed Cert Ed. Man

### **Pupil of the Week Award**

The school is offering an additional incentive to all our children to further encourage them to put in their best effort at all times. Every week a child from each class will receive this award - the achiever badge, a cup to sit on their desk all week and a signed certificate - in recognition of their sterling efforts.

### **Non-uniform Day**

Friday 8th December was a non-uniform day in school to raise funds for School Aid Romania. Past pupils of our school will volunteer to work in Romania assisting those in need. Thank you to all our families who supported this worthy cause.

### **School Facebook Page**

The School has created a Facebook page 'St Francis of Assisi Primary School Keady'. This will be another means of keeping you updated with news about our school.

### **'Do this in Memory' programme**

There has been a slight change to the 'Do this in Memory' special Mass programme for children receiving First Holy Communion this year and their parents. The December Mass will now take place on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 7:30p.m. The January 'Do this in Memory Mass' will take place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Cluster Training Programme**

The school hosted a comprehensive training programme for teachers and classroom assistants from Clea, Darkley and St Michael's Primary School, Newtownhamilton. This programme will focus on development of children's language development. The training was delivered by Kate O' Hanlon, former literacy adviser for SELB over two days. This programme will be implemented during Term 2 of this school year. The kitchen staff are to be commended for the catering provided during the course of the training.

### **Career Break**

The staff and pupils send their good wishes to Mrs P Smyth as she commences a one year career break in the new Term. Mrs P Murphy will be covering Mrs P Smith's Career Break.

The school would also like to welcome Mrs Noreen Smith who has taken up her post of Vice-Principal at the start of November. As part of her role, Mrs Smith will be responsible for numeracy and PE. Mrs Smith was delighted with the efforts of the boys and girls at the recent football blitz.

### **Partnership Programme**

The school is planning a partnership programme with Lisnadill Primary School in the very near future. The partnership, in addition to developing mutual understanding, will have a numeracy focus, where staff and pupils of both schools will get an opportunity to share expertise and lessons over a 30 hour period throughout the whole of the school year. Primary 6 and 7 pupils will initially be included in the programme and this will be rolled out to other classes as the programme develops.

### **Application Forms**

Application forms for Reception and Primary One are available from the school office and should be returned to school by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

## **Class Roundup**

### Reception

The children in reception have had a very busy term during the months of October and November. We have had a couple of new children start during these months and they have all settled in really well. The children in reception have really enjoyed the topic 'The Jolly Postman', they made their Santa letters and we had a trip down to the local post office to post them. The children have also enjoyed taking on the role of the postman and have had great fun delivering their letters during role play. We have been working hard learning our Christmas song for the Carol service, which we are all very excited about! 😊

### Primary 1

October and November have been very busy months for the children in Primary 1. We have continued working through the linguistic phonics programme learning new sounds each week. In numeracy we have been working really hard. We have had lots of fun doing practical activities solving problems and learning how to programme a Beebot. During arts we have been very busy and creative making lots of items associated with a post office and have really enjoyed making different Christmas crafts. The children even got to visit the local post office to post their Santa letters 😊 Now we are looking forward to singing for you all in our Christmas Carol service!

### Primary 2

The children in Primary 2 have been researching the topic of 'homes'. The class have constructed a timeline of homes from the past to the present and investigated the most suitable materials to use to build homes. Children are working on improving their handwriting and have been comparing the content of fiction to non-fiction books.

The children had a wonderful time at the Christmas Pantomime, Sleeping Beauty, and are still talking about the journey on the big coach!

### Primary 3

Primary 3 have been working hard in Literacy learning to write instructions and they have written a great set of instructions for making a ham sandwich. They also created some wonderful poems and had a go at some performance poetry.

In Numeracy they have been working on using a table to solve problems, adding within 50 using a number line, using a table to collect data and producing a bar chart to show this data along with carrying out some measuring work. They have used the I pads to work on programming the BeeBot to carry out forward moves along with left and right turns.

The children are working hard to learn their Christmas song for the Carol Service and are looking forward to performing this for their parents and friends.

### Primary 4

Primary 4 are working very hard preparing for Christmas. We are looking forward to taking part in the Christmas Carol service. We hope to see you all there. Musicians have been working hard practising and are sounding very good. In class we are painting our figures to go into our crib and making clay decorations to bring home. We are looking at Christmas symmetry in number and working out how much we need to spend on food. We are also investigating the concept of division. In science we have enjoyed making electrical circuits, making lights and buzzers work. We are looking at factual writing, writing reports and note taking. We have begun to write about People Who Help us in school. We wish all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

## Primary 5

In primary 5 we have been very busy this term preparing for the carol service, starting our swimming lessons and preparing for our mid-term tests.

We had a great time on our trip to Bagenal's Castle, Newry. The children enjoyed looking at different memorabilia from WW2 and even got to try on some helmets and gas masks. The boys were taught first aid skills and how to prepare bandages while the girls were taught how to sew. We were also taught how to get into the brace position which came in very handy as while we were there the sirens sounded! Lucky for us we are quick on our feet and we all got home safe and sound!

This term we have been working very hard on fractions and division and have recognised how we can use our times tables to help us complete division questions. We have also been learning about time and understanding and recognising how long a minute is and finding different activities that we can complete in this time frame. (We found quite a few!)

Problem solving has been a big focus this term and we have focused on two different strategies to help us solve problems. These strategies were to produce a list and try a simpler case. We had great fun using these strategies to help us solve the tricky problems.

In literacy we have been learning about writing a recount. We learned how to structure a recount and we focused on using grammar we have learned this term, including powerful verbs, connectives and similies. We chose to write about our trip to Bagenal's Castle, which was great as it felt like we were reliving the whole experience again.

All of us in Primary 5 wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year!

## Primary 6

Primary 6 pupils have been working hard on using maths problem solving strategies to complete maths investigations. One of our favourite measurement investigations has been the paper aeroplane challenge. We carried out an experiment to measure and compare the flight of aeroplanes made from paper, card and sugar paper. The children were excellent at making predictions and giving logical reasoning for the results. I was delighted to see that all children could produce a table to record results and use this information to create a graph and interpret findings. I'd like to remind children to keep up the daily practice of times tables as this is helping with number work (division, multiplying by 10, 100&1000, finding the area and mental maths problems).

In literacy we have planned and edited Kennings poems and emotions poems and displayed these in the classroom. The poems are a great example of the children's evolving literacy skills as they have effectively used higher level vocabulary, metaphors, similes and alliteration to engage the reader. At this stage of the term all pupils are completing comprehension work independently and have used comprehension strategies to help fully understand the text. I would encourage parents to make sure that their child is reading aloud every night and that time is being spent learning and revising spellings.

Finally, Mrs Crilly and I would like to wish everyone a very happy and merry Christmas!

## Primary 7

The pupils in Primary 7 have been working hard on developing strategies to solve set numeracy investigations. We have focused on deciding how to use the information provided to produce a table in order to solve the problem. This has involved a lot of thinking skills and the pupils need to be confident with language and calculations in order to solve the problem. We have been working hard on Fractions and solving problems regarding the 24 hour clock.

We have read various passages and play scripts from William Shakespeare. The pupils have really enjoyed acting out scenes from Macbeth and the children have written diary entries from Lady Macbeth. We have focused on open and closed questions to develop our research skills. This information was collected and organised by the children to write a biography on a famous Victorian scientist.

As part of our WAU we have been studying the Victorians, learning about the differences between the home life and school life of Victorian children. We have learnt about Victorian composers and we have listened and analysed several pieces of their work. As part of our Art work, we have been studying pieces of work and created art work inspired from famous Victorian artists, such as, John Constable and William Morris.

Two teams of 8 P7 boys and girls took part in a Gaelic football blitz organised by Cumann na mBunscol. The girls performed brilliantly, they demonstrated brilliant team work and they enjoyed the opportunity to meet with other P7 children in our area. The boys team showed excellent collaboration skills, patience and relished the competition. Their determination and good teamwork skills helped the boys to win this heat of the competition. They will compete in the finals in January.

### **After School Clubs in the New term.**

The school will issue details regarding our after school activities early in the new term. We will run the after school soccer club as we did last year (Burns Soccer School) and this will commence at the end of January. The cost will be £20 per child for ten weeks, with the third child free, which might be a good Christmas present for someone to receive! These sessions will take place on Wednesdays and are offered to children from P1-P7.

### **School Closures**

Please note an addition to the list of school closures issued earlier in the year. **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018** will be a Staff Development Day. Children will return to school after the Christmas holidays on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January.

Wishing all our families and friends a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year!