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**Maynooth Educate Together Newsletter**

**February/March 2023**

**Dates to Remember**

**Easter Holidays** – On Friday 31st March the school closes early – see below 31st March and reopens **on Tuesday 18th April**

**31st March – School Cake Sale**

**May Bank Holiday** – 1st May

*As per our school calendar, the school will close early for the Easter Holidays - as follows*

* *11.00am - Junior and Senior Infants, Caterpillars and Butterflies, all school buses (and siblings)*
* *11.15am - 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes (and siblings)*
* *11.30am  - 4th, 5th and 6th classes*

**SCHOOL CLOSED APRIL 17TH -**

**On Monday April 17th, teachers will engage in a whole school Professional Development Day as provided for by the Department of Education. We will focus on the Primary Language Curriculum webinars and whole school planning for PLC. So, whilst the staff will be at school on Monday 17th, the school will not be open to pupils. Pupils may resume school on Tuesday April 18th.**

**World Book Day:** World book day was a great success. A huge thank you to the children and their families for their kind donations towards our 2nd hand book sale. We received hundreds of fantastic books. The sale took place on March 2nd and was run, very professionally, by 5th and 6th class volunteers. Every child in the school had the opportunity to choose a book or 2 (or more!) to purchase for a small fee. We managed to raise an amazing €619.45 on the day, which will be used towards literacy resources within the school.

The children thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as various characters from books and stories. Senior classes paired up with junior classes for story-time and paired reading. Classes engaged in DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time daily. We also ran a competition to design a book cover and the winning entries are displayed in the corridor outside Junior Infants classrooms.  Congratulations to our winners, who each received a €5 book token.

Junior Infants - Emilia / Vivansh

Senior Infants - Leandra / Patrick K

1st Class - Viktor / Emely

2nd Class - Lydia / Felix

3rd Class - Maria / Leo

4th Class - Devansh / Dviti

5th Class - Manase

6th Class - Amira / Maggie

Butterflies class - Oisín

All children in the school received a world book day token which they can exchange in participating book stores for selected free books.  We hope that the children will continue to embrace reading for learning and enjoyment.

**Junior Infant News**

Aistear; The Junior Infants have been exploring the themes of The Farm,  The Duck Pond & Pizza & Pancakes in Aistear during February & March. We have had lots of fun in Role play, Small World, Lego, Art and especially with Water Play witch was a definite favorite!!

Seachtaine na Gaeilge: We were working hard on our Irish Dances for the Ceili Mor and preformed Ballai Luimnigh, Damhsa Mor and An Dreolin. We had fantastic fun. The children were using lots of Irish during Seachataine na Gaeilge and the siopa was a big hit. The children were awarded shamrocks when the made a good effort to talk Irish ad then exchanged these for gifts in the siopa each day.

The theme in February was The Farm and the duck pond. Children learned all about different animals and the jobs a farmer has to do. For Aistear they acted out the role of the farmer or farm animals and at the end of February the role play area became the picnic area their very own duck pond.The children had great fun playing with the ducks in the water table, constructing boats in junk art, cutting and sticking animals, making animals from playdough and reading lots of stories about animals.

The children have begun reading independently and have been reading their readers in school and for homework. In art the children learned about a Russian painter, Kandinsky and they painted Valentines hearts and circles inspired by his work.

They also begun to learn Irish dancing in preparation for the Céilí in March.

Egg Hunt; News just in - there may be some chocolate eggs on the yard on Friday.

**Senior Infants** have had a busy month. We have been learning all about life in the ocean, from sea creatures, to endangered species and how to do our part to save the planet. We had a fun filled week of literacy, taking part in the readathon, storytime with parents and paired reading with 4th class. We all got lots of new books at the second hand book sale.

We have been practicing our céilí dances for the céilí in the hall for lá glas. This was a great success and lots of fun. Seachtaine na Gaeilge took place and we chatted with our friends as gaeilge and earned lots of seamróg that we could spend in the Siopa.

Our caterpillars have arrived and we are very excited to learn about the life cycle of the butterfly and watch this process occur before our eyes. We will release our butterflies when they hatch and look forward to seeing them visit our gardens over the Summer.

**Caterpillars Class:** This month we have been working hard on making patterns with shapes and colours. We are also taking good care of our strawberries and potatoes that we recently planted. We are beginning to see flowers on our strawberry plant. We can’t wait to taste them – maybe even with some ice cream!

In **1st Class** we have been learning all about Information Texts. The students have been learning about different types of minibeast and what makes them so interesting. We have just finished World Book Day which was very successful. All children had a great time exploring new books and sharing their experiences on books that they enjoyed with other class members.

**2nd Class visit to Maynooth Castle:** At the beginning of February 2nd classes visited Maynooth visited to see the oldest tree in Ireland, the Silken Thomas tree. We talked about the history of the tree and that although the leaves and berries of the yew tree are poisonous the poison is actually used to treat some forms of cancer. We had been learning about measures in class and so we estimated and measured the height and width of the tree. thank you to Mums Olga and Elisabet, Holly and Annie, for volunteering on the trip.

**News from 3rd Class Oak**: Children in 3rd class Oak have been busy researching and completing projects on Germany as part of the school’s participation in the Blue Star programme. As part of this the children also learned about the artist Paul Klee and they drew their own cityscape scenes based on his style of art. The children also began working with a rugby coach during P.E. and they really enjoyed their first session with him by playing a big game of ‘End Zone.’

Children in **3rd class Oak** have been busy researching and completing projects on Germany as part of the school’s participation in the Blue Star programme.  As part of this the children also learned about the artist Paul Klee and they drew their own cityscape scenes based on his style of art.  The children also really enjoyed working with a rugby coach during P.E., they especially loved the game, 'End Zone'.  The children were also fortunate enough to participate in events for Engineers Week and Seacthain na Gaeilge and more recently enjoyed an egg painting activity for Easter.

**3rd Class Elm**: The children created some amazing projects about Germany and presented them to the class. We have run to Berlin and back which we really enjoyed. The children thoroughly enjoyed Seachtain na Gaeilge, everyone was using their cupla focail sa rang and they had so much fun at the céilí showing off their irish dancing. 3rd class Elm is taking part in a pen pal letter exchange with a school from California , the children have received their second letter from their pen pals and are looking forward to receiving the next letter. The class took part in rugby training and had lots of fun learning to catch, pass and play a mini game of tag rugby.

**News from the Butterflies Class:** Butterflies have continued to go swimming over the past few weeks. Swimming is a chance for the class to have fun, practice swimming, socialise and improve gross motor skills. We have started to clear the winter weeds from the garden and tidied up our strawberry bed. Over the next few weeks we will be tiding the other three beds in our garden and planting some crops such as carrots, lettuce and potatoes. We may even plant some corn which is Ben’s idea. In class we have been studying the signs of spring and through our art we have painted spring flowers such as snowdrops and daffodils. We have continued to bake in class and have made scones, cakes and cookies over the past few weeks. These activities accompany all the work we do in class where we work on our literacy and numeracy and our daily O.T. sessions.

**Seachtain na Gaeilge**: Bhí Seachtain na Gaeilge an-mhaith ag na páistí. Bhi sport agus spraoi acu go léir, as Gaeilge! Fuair dalta amháin sa rang Gaelgóir an Lae duais gach lá. I rith an seachtain bhí na ranganna ag imirt cluíchi le chéile. Bhí ceol agus damhsa, scéaltaí agus dánta, tráth na gceist, ranganna as Gaeilge, Lá Glas agus an Céilí Mór. Bhaineamar an-sult as, ag damhsa sa halla le chéile. Buíocha mór do na múinteoirí Liz agus Marcella, a chuir and clár ama le chéile. Buíochas freisin do gach múinteoir agus gach dalta.

**Seachtain na Gaeilge**: Seachtain na Gaeilge was a great success this year. We all had fun and sport, as gaeilge! Each class awarded the Gaeigóir of the day award to one child each day. During the week, classes played games, with senior classes playing with junior classes. There was music and dancing, stories and poems, Quizzes, classes conducted through Gaeilge, Green Day and then The BIG Céilí ie an Ceilí Mór. This was really good fun as the children enjoyed dancing the dances that they have been learning over the past weeks. Huge thanks to teachers

Liz and Marcella, who put the timetable together and thanks to all teachers and students who made the week such a great success.

**6th class have had a busy February/March.**

**FAI**: 6th class, alongside 5th participated in the FAI tournament where they played a series of 5 aside matches. There were medals for the winning teams Germany and France. Nerea and Euan won the top scorers trophies.

**Blue Star**: 6th Class are working on their landscape models as part of the Blue Star programme where they are learning about the EU and how it works. They have picked a landmark in the EU and are making models of this to display in the school. 6th class are also participating in the run to the capital challenge. Our chosen capital is Sofia in Bulgaria which is 3062 miles from the school. Between the two sixth classes we are hoping to run 3062 laps to achieve this. 6th Class is also helping 4th class with the Sistine Chapel painting activity and Junior Infants with the Eiffel tower STEM activity.

**World Book Day**: On World Book day, the 6th class got to meet Irish writer Jackie Burke. They got to ask her questions on being an author and she gave them helpful tips to write their own stories.

**Social and Emotional Workshop:**The 6th class participated in a social and emotional workshop where they learned about tools for resilience and how to manage emotions in stressful situations. They also learned about Mental Health and the importance of looking after your mental health.

**Rugby training** every Monday morning was an energetic was to start each new week and everyone enjoyed learning a few new skills.

**In History** we have been studying about World War 1 and World War 2. The children are now busy working on some projects and we look forward to the presentations and learning even more.

**Hoodies**: 6th class would like to thank the PTA for gifting them their graduation hoodies. The hoodies are being worn with pride on these chilly spring days!

**JEP (Junior Entrepreneurial Programme):**6th class are participating in the JEP programme and are engaging with various business activities throughout the year. The first activity was the St Patrick’s Day pop-up shop led by Aran Uhlemann where 6th class sold flags, hairspray, tattoos, face paint and other St Patrick’s Day merchandise to the different classes in the school. The 6th class made a total of €514 euro from the shop.

**Seachtain na Gaeilge**: 6th class are enjoying participating in Seachtain na Gaeilge. There is a huge focus on oral Irish and have participated in éist agus tarraingt. They will be helping run activities next for the younger classes where they will run and guide them through Irish.

The PTA, aided by teacher Clare, organized a **Read-A-Thon** in March. This was a huge success. Children kept a reading log to record books read. Thanks to Jennifer and Clare for this extremely enjoyable event.

**St. Patrick's Day Parade**: Despite it being a wet and murky day, there was a great turnout of parents and pupils in the parade. The Maynooth Educate Together banner and community have been part of the parade since 2009, so it is wonderful to see children being excited to be part of this national day of celebration. Very sincere thanks to the PTA for organizing the school group.

**Safer Internet day 2023**

Safer Internet Day took place on Tuesday, February 7th. To mark the event and raise awareness of internet safety a number of presentations took place with classes from 1st to 6th class. Following each presentation, a take home activity was completed by the pupils. Throughout the remainder of the week there were a number of fun activities that the children participated in their classroom including an internet and phone safety quiz, a digital footprint activity, an Online Safety Quiz: Who could I tell? and a Perfect Password Activity and password Monster Check. In addition, we had a poster competition where pupils had to design a poster to raise awareness of internet safety. We had prize winners from all classes.

John - 1st Class (RobP)

Emely - 1st Class (RobL)

Lauren - 2nd Class (Jacinta)

Sophie - 2nd Class (Angela)

Gennaro - 3rd Class (Mary)

Helena - 3rd Class (Sue)

Emi - 4th Class ( Dave)

Dviti - 4th Class (Sinéad)

Holly H - 5th Class (Tom)

Eileen - 6th Class (Aimée)

Maggie - 6th Class (Ruth)

Congratulations everyone!

**Donation of IT Equipment**: Big thanks to parent Kerry Pollock for the donation of 10 laptops. These laptops were being decommissioned and Kerry kindly thought of our school's needs and arranged for these to be delivered to the school. These laptops will be put to good use primarily in classrooms and for SET purposes.

**DCU Donation:** As a token of thanks to a staff member's participation in the Maths4All Professional Learning Community, DCU has gifted the school with €350 worth of mathematic resources. The staff will decide how this will be best spent, mindful of the new primary mathematics curriculum that is due to be rolled out shortly.

**School Wellbeing Questionnaires:** In accordance with our school Wellbeing Policy, we are working towards developing a Wellbeing Improvement Plan for our school. This is the focus of our School Self Evaluation Process at present. All school partners ie pupils, parents and staff are requested to respond to the questionnaires provided to you. The questionnaires are anonymous, and the information gleaned from them will shape our school Improvement plan.

**CPD courses for Teachers**: Teachers are availing of a number of courses to assist us to cater for the individual needs of our pupils, ie information courses on ADHD ie Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Handwriting for Tears.

**Mural painting in ASD unit**: Work will commence in the coming weeks on a wall mural in the open space of the school area for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

**Sticks and Stones Workshops**: These workshops have been given to our 4th, 5th and 6th classes.

Sticks and Stones the original Anti-bullying Programme™ is Ireland’s longest running, and most innovative Anti-bullying Programme for children, young people, their teachers, and parents. Sticks and Stones Anti-bullying Programme™ is a European award-winning anti-bullying programme for Irish schools. The aim is to heighten awareness of bullying in all its guises, reveal the misery it inflicts and help break the silence that ensures its continuance. Drama proves to be a key element in getting young people to participate and engage with the issues. Using a combination of in-depth discussion, communication exercises, role-play and Forum Theatre, facilitators encourage them to explore and articulate their feelings and attitudes towards bullying. The approach is not to attribute blame to individuals, but to look at the class holistically and to examine the group dynamics at play. It is intensive and participative – your students will never again be able to say: “It was only a joke”.

The format encourages pupils to take personal responsibility for their actions, and equips them with the skills to address bullying in their environment. The programme does this by giving them the knowledge and skills to problem solve for themselves, to ensure that students have;

· the ability to recognise bullying

· the confidence to challenge it

· and the skills to handle it.

**Lidl stickers**: Our First Class pupils are still busily collecting the Aldi stickers. Thank you for your support. The prize is huge: we can but try!

**Vision Screening**: The HSE vision screening will take place in the school on April 26 and 27 for Junior Infants.

**Transition Year Students**: We currently have a past pupil on Transition Year Work experience in the school. Saul is a Taekwondo instructor and is introducing our pupils to the skills and discipline of Taekwondo, under the supervision of the class teachers. He is also introducing 5th class to Coding, under the supervision of Tom, 5th class teacher.

Lucy, another past pupil, is undertaking her work experience in the classes for pupils with ASD.

**Friends for Life Parent Night**: An information night was held in the school for the parents of Fourth Class pupils, on Feb 28. Thanks to all who attended. Friends for Life is a school-based positive mental health programme that promoted emotional resilience and reduces anxiety in children and adolescents. The programme is being delivered to 4th class by trained school teaching staff.

**Gaa and Rugby Coach 3rd to 6th Classes**: Our children from 3rd to 6th class are currently availing of coaching in GAA skills and in Rugby skills. This coaching is provided to the school free of charge. Very sincere thanks to the clubs concerned.

**Kildare Cross Country County Championship**

On Thursday 30th March, our school competed in the Kildare Schools Country Cross Country Event in Rathcoffey. We brought a team of seven girls and eight boys to the event. The children have spent the last couple of weeks preparing for the event and performed exceptionally well on the day. Our boys team came 5th place with Sam Chubb finishing 11th overall.

For the second year running, Chloe Moran, won the Girls event with Lucy Doherty coming in third place. Our Girls team was pipped by two points into Second place. This is a great achievement for the school as we only started competing in the County Championship last year.

I would like to thank all the children who participated this year. It has been a pleasure to work with them and I hope they will continue to participate in sports in the years ahead. We will hopefully have two more athletics events, Track & Field, in the final school term for classes from 3rd to 6th.

A special thank you to Carol & Ray Connolly who organised the new school singlets which were wore with great pride by the student

**World Book Day:** This year we incorporated our World Book Day into our school Book Week. Over the course of the week, teachers availed of the many resources available on the World Book Day websites eg quizzes, Make and do etc. We also held scheduled events ie Tuesday Shared Reading Day , when children from 5th and 6th classes read story books to younger classes. They also read stories that they had written themselves. March 2nd was World Book Day. Our pupils dressed up a their favourite literary character. The outfits were fun and creative. We also ran our annual second-hand book sale, where we hoped that every child went home with a previously owned book on the day. A huge number of books were donated, and very sincere thanks for the great number and variety of books that we could present on the day. Our Competition this year changed focus. We asked children to design a book cover (Title and Illustration), for a book entitled 'The day an elephant got loose in METNS' There was a prize for the best design in each class.

The PTA launched a READ A THON in conjunction with the school activities. This was a home-based sponsored activity, with the sponsorship being collected through the Aladdin school database. Again, huge thanks to all children who read the books and to the parents who provided the sponsorship.

Only Literacy homework was assigned for the duration of Book Week. Children were also encouraged to read for the readathon.

**St Nicholas Montessori student 2nd class**: We currently have a student teacher on teaching practice in second class.

**Safer Internet Day**: this took place on Feb 7th. Over the course of that week, all classes had activities scheduled, many from the Webwise. www.webwise.ie. The activities included:

Webwise Safer Internet Presentations with a follow-up Kahoot Quiz

· Homework activities ie design an emoji, Rules of the Internet matching activities, Anti-Cyber-Bullying Rap,

· Poster Competition,

· Digital Footprint Activity

· Keeping Personal information safe

· Online safety with passwords

· Perfect password activity

Webwise is the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre which is co-funded by the Department of Education and Skills and is co-financed by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility.

Webwise is part of the PDST Technology in Education, which promotes and supports the integration of Digital Technology in teaching and learning in first and second level schools.

The PDST Technology in Education is a section of the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST). The PDST is a support service of Teacher Education Section, Department of Education and Skills and is hosted by Dublin West Education Centre.

**Webwise Core Work**

Webwise promotes the autonomous, effective, and safer use of the internet by young people through a sustained information and awareness strategy targeting parents, teachers, and children themselves with consistent and relevant messages.

We develop and disseminate resources that help teachers integrate internet safety into teaching and learning in their schools. We also provide information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children’s online lives. With the help of the Webwise Youth Advisory Panel we develop youth-oriented awareness raising resources and campaigns that address topics such as cyber bullying.

**Daffodil Day** – Hilary, our School Secretary wishes to send a huge thank you to the whole school community for the wonderful

support she received on raising funds for the Irish Cancer Society – the final amount raised is a fantastic €1,270.

**Haircut for charity**: a pupil in first class raised €2,500 for charity by having her hair cut and given for wigmaking.

**Additional classroom teacher**: Our enrolment numbers at Sept 30th last year entitles us to appoint an additional classroom teacher in September. The additional teacher will be our 16th classroom teacher and will complete our mainstream staffing.

**HSE Hearing testing:** the HSE conducted hearing tests on our junior pupils on Feb 1st.

**NPC information Workshop**: a facilitator from the NPC met with parents to explain the role of the PTA in supporting the school. This meeting was held in the school on Monday February 27th. Thanks to those that attended. The workshop explored the role and function of the Parents Association in the school. It explained how parents can support their childs education by supporting the school teacher, Principal and Board of Management. The National Parents Council website will provide you with the information you need and there are many information leaflets which deal with specific topics which may be of interest to you.

**February 2023 Student Awards**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Class | Student Award | Handwriting Award | Gaeilgeoir na Míosa | Reading Award |
| Junior Infants Liz | Luna | Louis | David | Mabel |
| Junior Infants Elaine | Vihaa | Katherine | Onur | Cillian |
| Senior Infants Clare | Aerin | Amina | Sara | Rowan |
| Senior Infants Stephanie | Patrick L. | Sarah | Dara | Ben |
| 1st Class Rob L. | Noah | Sam | Maya | Aoife |
| 1st Class Rob P | Cian C. | Viktor | Nisa | John |
| 2nd Class Angela | Riley | Noor | Oscar | David |
| 2nd Class Jacinta | Maia | Lauren | Aryan | Aidan |
| 3rd Class Sue | Leo | Elana | Mateo | Alex |
| 3rd Class Mary | Darragh | Ethan | Melissa | Sofia |
| 4th Class Sinead | Lavinia | Dastin | Authur | Omar |
| 4th Class Dave | Ksawery | Antosh | Joao | Fedor |
| 5th Class Tom | Matthew | Olivia | Sarah | Hannah |
| 6th Class Ruth | Tobyn | Chloe M. | Sam | Oisín A. |
| 6th Class Aimee | Abigail | Adam L. | Khaya | James G. |

**Board of Management Meeting 23rd February 2023: Community Report**

The Board of Management of Maynooth Educate Together NS met on 23rd February 2023.

* The Board discussed:
* Anti-Bullying Procedures. The Board will conduct a review of our Anti-Bullying Policy at our next Board meeting
* Child Safeguarding reporting
* Positive Behaviour Policy: The Board will fund staff training on Restorative Practice as a tool in Behaviour Management
* Maths Grant: The Board has received a grant of €350 from DCU. This grant will be spent on Maths equipment
* Wellbeing Policy: The Board formally adopted the Wellbeing Policy. This Policy will be posted on to our school website
* Staffing: Our school will appoint our 16th mainstream class teacher for September 2023. This will complete our mainstream capacity
* Administration Matters: The Board has approved staff leave as applied for
* PTA: The Board has invited the Chairperson of the PTA to meet the Board prior to our next Board meeting
* ASD class matters: The Board approved expenditure on a mural in the ASD open space. Our next Board meeting is scheduled for March 30th

**Community Report for Board of Management Meeting 30th March 2023.**

The Board of Management of Maynooth Educate Together NS met on 30thd March 2023.

The Board discussed:

* Anti-Bullying Procedures. The Board will conduct a review of our Anti-Bullying Policy at our April Board meeting.
* Child Safeguarding reporting
* Staff Courses: The Board will fund a Manual Handling course for staff and also a course from Barnardos.
* Wellbeing Policy: The Board welcomes the Wellbeing Questionnaires to the school community, which will inform our schools Wellbeing Improvement Plan, which is our current years area of focus in our School Self-Evaluation.
* The Board thanks the school Community for the great representation of the school at the St Patrick’s Day parade. Maynooth Educate Together NS won the ‘Best School Award’. The Board acknowledges this award and congratulates the PTA, the entire parent body and all who contributed to this award.
* The Board acknowledge the great work being done in the school, with teacher and pupil engagement in many school events ie Safer Internet Day, Seachtain na Gaeilge.
* The Board thanks all teachers involved in organising all sporting events in the school. The school continues to enjoy success at the Kildare Cross Country Championships. Congratulations to all school award winners also.
* ASD class matters: The Board welcomes the commencement of the mural in the ASD school area. The Board acknowledges the great work of staff in the Caterpillars and Butterflies classes. Now that Spring is here, the focus is on the outdoors, with the planting of flowers ie snowdrops and daffodils, plants ie potatoes, carrots, lettuce and fruit ie strawberries. These outdoor activities focus the children on Spring and the changes in nature.
* Staffing: The Board granted the staff leave applied for.
* The Board considered correspondence.
* PTA: The Board approves PTA’s the running of a pub quiz.

Our next Board meeting is scheduled for April 27th.

**PTA NEWS**

PTA would like to thank the school community for participating in the Read-A-Thon and raising €1200. We'd also like to thank everyone that came out to the parade to represent the school. It was wonderful to see the children enjoying themselves. If you volunteered to help with the library, we will be getting in touch with you after the April break to discuss availability and the new schedule.

Our next PTA meeting will be on Monday, April 24th via Google meeting. (Log in details below). At the meeting we will be discussing Summer Fair and other end of the year activities. PTA has decided to elect new committee members at the June PTA meeting. If you are interested in being on the committee, please put yourself forward as there are several spots to be filled.

PTA Meeting

Monday, 24 April · 8:00 – 9:00pm

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/zjs-vmti-geg>

Happy Easter!

On behalf of the school staff, I wish all of our families a very Happy Easter break. Thank you for your continued support of the school. Your support has made it possible for us to recommence all of our school events and outings in this school year. These are a very important element of our children’s education.

Keep safe. We look forward to meeting you all again on April 18th.

Best Wishes,

Marie, Principal