Christmas Newsletter 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

Christmas is drawing closer and we take time to reflect on this past term. We look forward to a New Year and the completion of the academic school year 2020/2021. We take this time to sincerely thank all the members of the school community who have worked tirelessly to keep our school users –children and staff safe. There were many changes introduced at the end of the summer and everyone rose to the "COVID-19 Challenge". We all adapted to staggered opening and closing times, staggered breaks, increase in hand washing and sanitisation procedures, increased ventilation and most importantly Social Distancing. We compliment the pupils and staff who worked so hard accessing the curriculum under these new conditions.

At this time, we remember in our thoughts and prayers, people who are sick or bereaved in our community. We remember our loved ones daily. During this season of Advent, we are reminded to prepare and wait for the One who is coming.

Upcoming Events

The Stay Safe Programme will begin in February throughout the school. Further information from the class teachers will follow closer to the time.

Buddy Reading which usually begins in January will be postponed for this year in compliance with health regulations and non-mixing of class bubbles.

Visitors to school/Controlled Access

Please adhere to the guidelines in relation to collecting children during school time. Please give Mrs McGourty advance notice of need to collect children and we will endeavour to have them ready to be collected at front door. We do not wish to offend anyone and we are following our COVID response plan regarding access into school building. Thank you for your cooperation.

New Entrants 2021/2022

Enrolment for new Junior Infants is underway. The timeline for admissions for next September is as follows:

14-01-2021: school ceases accepting applications

01-02-2021: applicants will be notified of the decision on their application

18-02-2021: applicants must confirm acceptance of offer by this date

An enrolment form is available on www.drumcongns.ie . A hard copy of the form is available by calling the school 0719642315 or by emailing drumcongns1978@gmail.com

Irish Aid

As part of an Irish Aid Project and Our Green Schools Initiative, 5th class have designed a poster with tips on how to reduce our impact on the environment. We want to encourage more sustainable living in our community. We hope you enjoy it.

Earth is in our hands. Please mind it!

1. Food Waste	2. Water use
Buy only what you need. Check your presses before you go shopping.	Do not let the tap run. Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
Put food waste in the brown bin. COMPOST!!!	Reduce shower time. Did you know that you use 10 litres per minute in the shower? We recommend you spend 5 mins in the shower.
Compost correctly! When you compost you lock in CO2. If you put food waste in the general waste or recycle bin, then you are contaminating the bins.	Drink tap water where possible. Otherwise use a filter jug/ filter system. Avoid buying bottled water at all costs.
Look at your food packaging – reduce the amount of plastic you bring into the house.	Only use the kettle when needed. Did you know that a kettle is a large energy consumer – 50 times higher than your laptop!
Buy food without packaging where appropriate.	Don't have baths or at least try and reduce the amount of baths you have!
Freeze food that you know you won't use before its sell by date.	Save water and install a water butt.
3. Energy	**4. Diet**
Use electricity only when you need to!	Eat less meat. Beef is the highest emitting food- in 3 ways: Cows burp out methane; fertiliser releases CO2 and change in use of land – all leads to an increase in CO2.
Look at the energy rating when buying devices especially bulbs!	Eat more fruit and vegetables.
Try and buy solar panels for your house!	Eat less dairy.
Please remember to turn off the emersion!!	Eat more vegetarian/ vegan dinners.
Use heating only when needed!	**Produced by 5th Class, St. Brigid's NS, Drumcong.**
Invest in an electric car/ bike.	
Try and upgrade the energy rating of your house.	
Consider investing in a windmill!	
Avoid 'Fast Fashion'.	

Nativity Play/Carol Service

Our annual Carol Service and Nativity play has been cancelled this year.

Online performances

We will access 2 performances by actors in the Roscommon Arts Centre who will perform "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens and for our younger classes they will be shown "Christmas Toons" This will take place in classes between December 15th and December 20th.

We will also stream the pantomime "The Sword in the Stone" and the cost is €2 per child. We hope that this will be an enjoyable experience for the pupils since we are unable to travel to any performances this year.

Fundraising is put on hold for now due to COVID 19

Hallowe'en Dress-Up

Thank you to the children who dressed up for Hallowe'en on Friday October23rd.Thank you, the parents, for helping them. This brought some cheer to the children and enabled them to celebrate Hallowe'en in some small way this year

Team Hope Shoebox Appeal 2020- this went online and unfortunately we could not participate in the usual manner.

School Attendance

The following is the overall percentage attendance for the last 4 months:

August: 94.8%

September: 92.3%

October: 94.5%

November: 95.3%

In accordance with our attendance strategy published on our website, we aim to achieve an attendance level of 95% this school year (2020-2021). We have lowered our target this school year to take into account the impact of COVID on attendance. We continue to remind the children in class each week of the importance of attending school every day (unless they are ill or some other circumstance arises that they are unable to come to school). This past year was difficult for everyone and we acknowledge everyone for their attendance since September in light of this global circumstance.

Accelerated Reader Programme

Our AR programme is now in full swing and the pupils are reading, quizzing and reaching targets! This online platform helps encourage independent readers, promotes comprehension skills, rewards readers and helps pupils maximise their reading potential by suggesting suitably challenging reading material. It tracks and shows pupils their progress. We have found it to be very helpful in creating a culture of independent reading in the school and the pupils have been very busy reading this term. We encourage you to check in on their great progress by logging in to the parents' section on ukhosting113.renlearn.co.uk/6936019/HomeConnect and using your pupil's username and

password (older pupils will know this - or your child's teacher).

Books make great Christmas presents too! arbookfind.co.uk is a great resource where parents can pick books that are exactly at the right level (ask your child for their ZPD [reading range]) for them. The "Advanced Search" tab on this website will help you find books that your child will love and that will help them to develop their reading.

For any assistance with the AR programme or questions, please email drumcongmmk@gmail.com.

Memory Lane photographer will come to the school in early February. This of course depends on the public health guidelines at that time.

Cumann na bhFiann have launched a Christmas song to raise money for the worthy charity ALONE. Well done to the 8 girls from 6th class who took part in the making of the video and performing in the song Dóchas (Amhrán na Nollag 2020). The video and the link to donate to ALONE can be found on www.cnb.ie

Christmas Jumpers

Children can wear their Christmas jumpers from now until the holidays if they so wish.

Maths Week

Maths Week 12th-16th October 2020. All classes took part in activities dedicated to mathematical methodologies-bar charts, bar graphs and recording of data and maths trails were designed and carried out by pupils and staff for this event. The message Maths is All Around us and Maths is Fun was the order of the week!!

Science Week 9th- 13th November 2020-12-13

There was a great buzz around the school with many science experiments and projects happening in each class. Well done to everyone involved.

Our 6th class students took part in the ReelLife Science 2020STEM video competition designing, writing and recording science themed movies on our new iPads. Well done to all involved.

Anti-Bullying Week 16th -20th November 2020

We as a school community make every effort to stamp out bullying and during this week teachers and pupils took a look at how bullying occurs and how we each have a role and responsibility to discuss issues and not stand by and allow it to happen. Communication is vital and we aim to give children strategies to help them deal with bullying situations. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if your child feels unsafe or unhappy in school.

Preparing for Secondary School

The 6th class were visited by the principal of Ballinamore Community College Mr Diarmuid McCaffrey during November. The next few months are important for our 6th class to start planning their next step in education. Due to restrictions and guidelines the pupils will not get to visit local post primary schools and every effort will be made to discuss and plan for the transition for next September.

Christmas Cards/Garda Initiative –Christmas Cards in the Community

Some of our pupils wrote to older people in nursing homes. The children also took part in the initiative run by the local Gardaí to send Christmas Cards to people in our community.

Leitrim Sports Partnership

5th class are taking part in The December Christmas Schools Challenge with the aim of jogging 500km collectively and 150 mins of circuit training and 150mins of dancing in the month of Dec. This competition is being run by Leitrim Sports Partnership and is in response to the Government Keep Well campaign.

First Holy Communion 2020

First Holy Communion which was to be held on Sunday 3rd May 2020 took place on Saturday December 12th 2020. Congratulations to the 18 children who received The First Eucharist. Thank you to their parents who helped to prepare them for this special day. We really hope it was special and enjoyable and safe for everyone. Thanks to Fr Tomás, Ms.Glancy, Ms Beirne and Jane Cowley for their work and contribution on the day.

Green Schools

Our theme this year is Global Citizenship Food & Biodiversity. Ms Glancy and the rest of school community have started work by doing an awareness survey. Further work will commence in January 2021 and we will keep you informed. Sincere word of thanks to the Gray family who donated and planted three Birch trees in our school grounds and this will promote Biodiversity.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Our parent teacher meetings will be via zoom or by phone in February.

Any emails regarding absences etc. should be sent to the main school email address. Teachers do not have an opportunity to look at emails during the school day. If you want to contact the teacher about school work please try to send emails before 4:30p.m

Christmas Annuals / Christmas cards

Thanks to all who purchased the annuals. We hope you got hours of enjoyment from them.

The personal Christmas cards were a great success and will, no doubt, bring joy to the recipients!

Blended Learning:

The Seesaw app is up and running in our school. It's important to stress that although it's new to the children, it is still part of school work and the school code of behaviour still applies. Any videos/ recordings/ written exercises shared with a teacher, should be done respectfully, preferably monitored by parents and should be carried out in an appropriate environment. Thank you for your support.

Credit Union Art Competition

Thanks to all the children who participated and well done. As we all know there can only be a few winners! A special word of praise and congratulations to the following students who were winners in their category:

Jodi Zelias : 3rd in the 8-10 category

Hannah Morgan: 2nd in the 11-13 category.

Well done girls…. A wonderful achievement.

The school will close on **Tuesday December 22nd 2020 @12.30p.m**. The first Buses will collect children from 12pm onwards. School will reopen on **Thursday January 7th 2020 @9.20a.m**. Le Cúnamh Dé