

December Newsletter

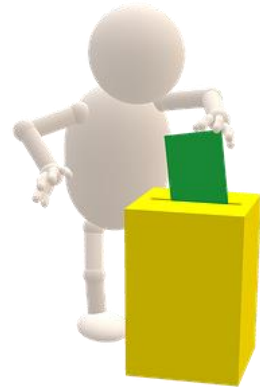
Language Connect

Once again our pupils from 6th class have started to learn how to speak French. The languages connect initiative is up and running in the school whereby Ms Byrne has been sharing her knowledge and love for the French language with all our 6th class pupils. The learning of French is firmly becoming a long standing initiative in the school and provides our pupils with a flavour of a modern language that they may be learning in secondary school next year. A massive thank you to Ms Byrne for implementing such a fantastic initiative in the school.



Student Council

Our new student council is once again up and running. Twelve wonderful pupils from 5th and 6th class were formally elected by their peers to represent their class on the council. The pupils, alongside their council teacher, Mr Colin Ryan, will work alongside pupils and staff on various activities and initiatives over the remainder of the school year. We really look forward to having our new student council coming on board with us here in Scoil Mhuire na nGael. They have already begun the planning some exciting things for the school with some of the activities kicking off before Christmas.



Christmas Card Fundraiser

A big thank you to all our pupils and their families who took part in our 'Design a Card' fundraiser. All cards purchased are due to be delivered in the very near future.



Christmas Jumper Day

In order to raise funds for our country's children's hospitals, the school will hold a 'Christmas Jumper Day' on **Friday, the 8th of**



December. Christmas jumpers do not have to be bought especially for the event as pupils can just as easily decorate a jumper they already have at home themselves. Creativity and individuality are always welcomed here in Scoil Mhuire na nGael so we look forward to seeing the 'Christmas Creations' which our pupils will come up with. We would ask, if possible, that each child would donate €2 towards the charity.

Annual Food Drive

It is hoped that we can, once again, facilitate our annual Christmas food drive this year whereby our pupils and families would donate items of non-perishable food to the local Soup Kitchen charity. **The collection will take place between the 4th and 19th of December.** We would really appreciate your support with this and hopefully, your contributions, as always, will make a big difference in the lives of those less fortunate. The food donated will go towards Dundalk's Soup Kitchen.



School Closure

There will be no school for pupils on **Friday the 2nd of February** to facilitate whole school staff training from the National Council for Special Education. A reminder will be sent to all families closer to the time.



School Photographs



The school photographer will be coming to school on **Wednesday the 31st of January.** Please ensure that your child is wearing their full school uniform on that day. Reminders will be sent to all families about the photographs when we return to school after the holidays.

Board of Management 2023 - 2027

Our new Board of Management for the next 4 years has been formed. The Board of Management members and their role on the board is as follows:

- Proinsias Ó Cunaigh (Chairperson/ Patron's Nominee)
- Pat McCann (Patron's Nominee)
- Lisa Jones (Principal), Mary Nixon (Teacher Nominee)
- Tara Nash; Niall Kehoe (Parent Nominees)
- Ann Lee; Fiona McGailey (Community Nominees)



Sacramental News

Our 6th class pupils have started preparations for their Confirmation. Details of their upcoming ceremonies are as follows:



Commitment Ceremony – Friday 26th of January @11:30am in the school hall.

Ceremony of Light – Wednesday 7th of February @ 6:30pm in the Holy Family Church.

Confirmation Ceremony – Friday 8th of March @ 11am in the Holy Family Church.

School Choir

The choir have been busy in recent weeks rehearsing for some special Christmas performances. The choir will begin their Christmas carolling with a performance in the **Holy Family Church on Sunday the 17th of December**. The carol service begins at 7pm and all are welcome to attend.



On Tuesday the 19th of December, the choir will pay a visit to St.Oliver's nursing home. The choir are very much looking forward to this trip! A big well done to all our wonderful singers!

Drama



December is choc a block on the school stage as we have 13 amazing plays to look forward to. The teachers and pupils are busy, busy, busy preparing and are very excited to show off just how talented we are to all our family and friends.

International Children's Day

We celebrated International Children's Day on **Monday the 20th of November**. Some important members of our community came in to help us celebrate. The fire fighters brought great excitement to the Senior Infant children, allowing the children to sit in their truck, try on their uniforms as well as teaching the children about fire safety. The army brought a bit of drama - teaching the children how to march as well as standing to attention. The librarian shared her love of reading and invited the children to join in on some of the wonderful activities the library has to offer.



BLAST / BRINGING LIVE ARTS TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS



The children in 4th class will have the opportunity to work with professional artist, Sculptor Brian Synnott. The pupils can look forward to and exploring new creative techniques and processes involved in making figurative sculptures'. The workshops will take place during January and February. We can't wait to see all the amazing art work that they will create.

Food Dudes

The Food Dudes Week (Healthy Eating Programme) commenced in our school today. The whole school will taste a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables which are delivered to the school daily. We absolutely loved The Food Dudes last year!



Cumann na mBunscol Quiz

Well done to Oisín Doherty, Holly Phelan, Fiachra Daly, Aoibheann Morgan, Conor McCooley, Jack Donegan, Sadhbh Cahill, Patrick Augustyniak, Eabha Byrne and Emily Searle, members of the school quiz teams who represented Scoil Mhuire na nGael recently in the Cumann na mBunscol quiz.



Anti-bullying/ KiVa Updates:

Thank you very much to all the parents and guardians who attended our KiVa parent event. Mrs Grant facilitated the information event where she shared her knowledge and experience of KiVa in the school. If any parent/guardian wants to find out more about the programme, information can be found on our website or you can link in with Mrs Grant, our KiVa co-ordinator directly.



The KiVa program is being implemented at our school!

KiVa stands for against bullying or antibullying. The KiVa program is a model funded by the Finnish ministry of education and developed by the University of Turku in order to reduce school bullying. KiVa has been shown to reduce bullying and to increase well-being at school! In Finland almost all elementary schools are implementing the KiVa program.

During KiVa lessons the students will learn about ways to fight bullying

KiVa is visible in many ways in the daily life at school. The students will take part in the KiVa lessons (10 lessons, each consisting of two 45-minute sessions). The lessons include discussions, group work, short films about bullying and role play. Their content proceeds from general topics such as the importance of respect in human relationships to the mechanism and consequences of bullying. Many lessons concentrate on the role a group can have in maintaining or stopping bullying; the students think about and practice different ways to resist bullying. The lessons are supplemented by the KiVa antibullying computer game. KiVa posters in the school halls ensure that the program is constantly visible.

There's no bullying at a KiVa school!

The KiVa Parents' Guide is available on the KiVa website at <https://data.kivaprogram.net/parents/>

The KiVa team and the class teacher tackle the bullying cases together

Each school has a taskforce, the KiVa team, which consists of at least three teachers or other members of the school staff. Together with the class teacher they tackle the acute bullying cases. The school staff has been familiarized with ways to implement the KiVa program and to tackle bullying cases.

If you suspect your child is being bullied or you have a reason to believe that s/he is bullying others, please contact the school so that the matter can be dealt with as efficiently and as soon as possible! Discuss bullying together with your child even if s/he is not bullied or does not bully others. It is important that you and your child together think about what to do if someone is being bullied at his/her school!

"It's good to be at a KiVa school!"

www.kivaprogram.net

Turun yliopisto
University of Turku

Ministry of Education and Research

We celebrated Friendship and Anti-bullying Week 13th -17th November. The 'Colourful Clothes for Kindness' day of free dress generated quite a bit of excitement around the school. Every class attended an anti-bullying Assembly with Ms. Jones, where they had the opportunity to meet our KiVa Team. Our 2nd and 3rd Class pupils enjoyed interactive anti-bullying workshops. Minister for Education Norma Foley sent a 'Cinealtas/ Kindness' flag to our school in recognition of the good work being done to prevent and address bullying.

Many of our pupils won prizes in the anti-bullying poster and poetry competitions. Congratulations to our overall winner Dearbhla D'Arcy in 5th Class. We held our flag raising ceremony on Friday 17th November when our whole school community was represented by the Student Council. This marked the end of anti-bullying week but our work to stamp out bullying together continues.

KiVa lessons continue in class for our 1st - 6th class pupils. The KiVa Parent Booklet can be accessed on the school website and more information can be found on the KiVa intranet www.kivaprogram.net

Deputy Principal



As previously communicated, Mr. David O'Callaghan will leave our school on the 18th of December and take up his new role as Principal. We wish David the very best of luck and would like to take this opportunity to thank him most sincerely for all his effort and commitment to our school.

We also extend our heartiest congratulations to Mrs Siofra Grant on her new appointment as Deputy Principal in our school. We wish her every success in her new role.

