



Bennekerry N.S. Newsletter



November 29th 2018

I am aware that this newsletter may seem a little early as Christmas is still four weeks away. However, the festive season is approaching at speed and a few very important dates are included here. As you might want to make special arrangements for some of these dates, adequate notice may prove helpful. Hence the Christmas edition at the end of November!

Cumann na dTuismitheoirí: A new committee for our Parents' Association is in place and they are full of enthusiasm and positivity. They have great plans for ways through which we can improve the overall school experience for our pupils. The committee members are...

Chairperson: Olive Fanning

Vice Chairperson: Michelle Bible

Joint Secretaries: Bríd Kavanagh & Colleen Scully

Treasurer: Frances Cole

Vice Treasurer: Mary Murphy

We thank them for agreeing to take on the task and wish them well with their endeavours. The next meeting will take place in the school on **Monday December 3rd at 7:30pm**. While the committee steer the work, all parents are welcome to any or all meetings. These gatherings provide a great opportunity for you to keep up to date with procedures and activities within the school, and also to network with other parents and share experiences and ideas.

A special word of thanks to the outgoing committee, Michelle McMahon, Georgina Brennan Stynes, Nicola Connolly, Aisling McConnon and Liz Doyle, who worked tirelessly over the past few years and achieved so much. They have generously agreed to continue to help out, and in this way, the experience and expertise they have gained will be passed on and put to good use.

Bailiucháin Éadaí: The first fundraiser of the year was a collection of unwanted clothing in the Bags2School initiative. Approximately 270 bags were collected and €1485 was raised. Thanks to all the volunteers who were there to gather the bags and load the lorry.

Polasaí: Following a consultation process involving staff, parents' representatives and the Board of Management, we have amended some policies and have added new ones also. These are available on the school website and are listed in the "Latest News" section.

Cursaí Spórt: After a tremendous league campaign, both the boys and the girls **Cumann na mBunscol football** teams reached the Division 1 Finals held under lights in the Centre of Excellence in Fenagh. The girls were up first against a very tough Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál team who never gave up. Although we were down at half time, the girls put in an incredible second half performance with some fantastic defending and super scores to win on a score line of 2-11 to 1-02. The boys had a tough act to follow but were focused and ready from the start. They faced a quick and skilful Ballon team but applied themselves well and got stuck in from the start. There was only one point separating the sides at half time and all to play for. Determined to do the double, the boys fought on and picked off some great scores and put in a gritty performance to win by 2-11 to 2-02. This was a great accomplishment for our school and one that has never been achieved before!

The **Autumn League** saw a great turn out again of boys and girls from 4th to 6th class with nearly 130 children competing. This lunch time league concluded in two fantastic finals with the **Meath Maniacs** winning the girls league, led by captain **Róisín Kennedy**, and the **Sligo Serpents** winning the boys league, led by captain **Oran O'Boyle**. Well done to all participants and I'm sure everyone is looking forward to the certificate awards ceremony. The Cumann na mBunscol medals will be presented on the same day. A date is yet to be confirmed but we will keep you updated.

In the annual Staff vs Pupils football match, the staff ran out convincing winners, though there were question marks over the legality of some of the players!!!

Gaelic Football coaching has commenced for 2nd and 4th classes with Martin Hosey, the facilitator of our school/club link with Palatine GFC. A new **hurling initiative**, run by Carlow GAA through Hurling Development Officer Benny Kenny, began after Halloween for the two 3rd classes. The aim is to promote hurling in urban areas. Hurling is also on the menu for our Junior and Senior Infants who are taking part in a six-week course facilitated by Leo McGough and Norah Kiely. We wish all coaches a productive and enjoyable time. Baineann na daltaí taitneamh asaibh gan dabht.

The boys from 6th class took part in an **indoor hurling competition** on Tuesday 20th November. They played Old Leighlin, Drumpeha, Ballinabranna and Garryhill and won three out of the four games, finishing top of the group. They will now compete in the Division 1 finals today, 29th Nov. The girls had their turn on 26th November and following matches against Drumpeha, Ballinabranna and Leighlinbridge, they qualified for the Division 2 finals which will be played on Dec. 5th. Go n-éirí libh.

Snámh: 2nd class (Seomra 8) and 4th class (Seomra 12) started their 8 week block of swimming lessons on Wednesday 14th November.

Cúirteoir Speisialta: On Monday 19th November the **Sam Maguire Cup** came on a special visit to Bennekerry N.S. All pupils were photographed with the trophy at a special assembly. The children were reminded about the importance of Physical Activity, self-belief and hard work. These are areas of emphasis as part of our on-going SSE on Health, PE and Well-Being. This was also the perfect opportunity for us to launch the Super Troopers initiative for this year and to remind our pupils about healthy eating habits which we established last year through the Food Dude programme.

Super Troopers: We noted from our surveys that many parents and pupils wanted PE to be included as part of homework. There are excellent ideas for physical activities in the Super Troopers books, which all pupils have been given a copy of. We ask you to encourage your child to complete these activities each day, unless they have already taken part in some other form of sport, dance etc. on that evening. If that is the case, simply ask your child to write down this activity instead in the booklet. The best way to ensure that your child engages enthusiastically is to do the exercises with them yourselves. Our “Active Schools” initiative demands that parents be involved, so this is one simple way through which we can meet this requirement and hopefully we will all have fun and improve our fitness level too. They are very easy and can be done almost anywhere, any time.

TaeKwon Do: Classes take place in the school on Wednesday afternoons between 3-4pm

Siúlóid Samhain: On Thursday 25th October, Bennekerry School was transformed from a busy institution of education to a den of witches and ghouls! Delight filled the air as the senior pupils lined the driveway and the junior pupils went on a “Witch Walk”. Many pupils made generous donations and the fund was split between Callie Kavanagh’s Fund and Goal. €775 was given to the Kavanagh family to help with ongoing expenses during Callie’s treatment and €300 was collected for Goal.

Spraoicheist: A huge congratulations to our three school quiz teams who took part in the Féile an Fhómhair table quiz in Éire Óg clubhouse on the 3rd October. Two of our teams placed 1st and 2nd on the night, which really was an amazing feat. The winning team members were **Kate Webb, Lorcan Kelly, Áine Fallon, Kate Culleton, Dylan McGrath, Seán Breen, Marie Cranny and Katie Bowe**. Thanks to Ms. Hosey who prepared the teams and supervised on the night. Comhghairdeas libh.

Comórtas Ealaíne: Several pupils from Bennekerry N.S. took on the “Trash or Treasure” competition which was organised by Carlow County Council. **Róisín Brennan** (4th class) was awarded the overall prize for her wonderful jewellery storage unit which she created entirely from recycled materials. We were delighted also to hear that three of our pupils were named among the winners in the **Autumn Art Competition** run by Glór Cheatharlach. **Tara Webb** and **Mia Dalton** were placed first and third in the 4th class competition, while **Eoghan Brennan** (5th class) was placed 2nd in his category. All the winning entries were displayed on the night of the presentation of prizes and the judges commented on the high standard of workmanship. Bearing this in mind, we were proud and pleased when Tara was awarded the prize for best entry overall for the second year in a row.

Rince Ghaelach: **Róisín Brennan** and **Sarah Whelan** (4th class) competed in the Carlow Irish Dancing Feis recently and took home a host of trophies and medals between them.

CoderDojo: **Wren, Créd, Nuadha and Dubhlacha Stynes** entered the CoderDojo “DojoCon Hackathon” recently. They thoroughly enjoyed their experience and Wren’s team “The Wolves”, won in their category (7-9 year olds) for speed and accuracy. Maith sibh.

Cogadh Domhanda 1: Carlow County Council Centenary Committee hosted a commemoration event at the All-County Memorial in Leighlinbridge on the morning of Sunday, November 11th. 6th class children from around the County participated in the memorial event by reading out the names and ages of those who lost their lives from their own local areas during the Great War. **Éabha Mc Connnon** was chosen to represent Bennekerry and she did an amazing job and was a credit to the school and her locality.

Spraoicheist Tíreolaíocht: Sarah Rice (4th class) was a winner of the Geography Quiz at Presentation College, Carlow's open evening. Well done Sarah.

Cártaí Nollag: The pupils have been busy designing Christmas cards and the finished products have been printed and sent home in plenty of time for posting. A total of €1,221 was raised through this project and the funds will be put to good use by the school.

Ceol: Our **Brass Development Programme** is proving very popular and runs each Wednesday from 3- 4pm for 6th class and 3-4pm on Thursdays for 5th class. Mrs. Bowe, Mrs. Byrne and Ms. Kenny are helping with these classes and are developing their own musical knowledge and talents through their participation.

Ceolchoirm na Nollag: The school is buzzing with excitement at the moment and the halls are regularly filled with the sound of music and laughter as the junior pupils are busy practising for their Christmas performances. These will take place on Friday 14th December at the following times...

Junior Infants 1:15pm

Senior Infants 1:30pm

First Class 2:00pm

Second Class 2:30pm

The infant classes will finish at 2pm as normal. If some parents wish to stay in the hall to see older siblings perform, the Infant teachers are happy to look after the younger pupils in their classrooms until the adults are ready to collect them. All pupils will get a chance to view the performances on Thursday 13th so we ask you not to bring Infants in to the hall on Dec. 14th. Space is limited and seats are required for the grown-ups.

Don't be too disappointed that the older pupils are not taking part in the "Christmas Concert". There will be opportunities for them all to perform later in the year.

Seirbhís na gCarúl: There will be a Carol Service in the Church for 2nd-6th class pupils on Thursday 20th December. This provides some time out so that the pupils can reflect a little and focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Unfortunately, the children themselves fill the Church so there is no room for parents. However, there is a Parish Carol service in St.Mary's Church Bennekerry at 7pm that same night. Some of our pupils will be reading Christmas prayers, poems and stories and our choir will sing Christmas Carols. Everyone is welcome as the parish and school join to celebrate together at this special time of year.

Maisiúcháin Nollag: Last year we began a new tradition in the school as each family decorated a wooden ornament to hang on our Christmas tree. The name of each child from the family who attends our school was written on the back so that every child in the school was represented on our tree in the front hall. This year, all newcomers' names will be added, and our new families have been given a wooden decoration to personalise so that they too will be included.

Cór: On Monday last the choir recorded the songs "Believe" from the "Polar Express" and "Pachelbel's Canon/The First Noel" which they have submitted to the Lyric FM Competition for choirs. While we hope they will do very well in the competition, the experience of being involved in a live recording session is something not many can boast about being a part of, and so they are already winners, whatever the final outcome.

Turasanna Scoile: The two 2nd Class groups visited the library on 14th November for a workshop entitled "Go Fly Your Kite". They learned all about aerodynamics and the history of flight and then designed and assembled their own kites which they got to bring home. The 5th Classes enjoyed a wonderful performance of "Mama Mia" in Presentation College Carlow and it was great to see many of our past pupils starring on the stage. **4th Classes will attend the George Bernard Shaw Theatre on December 5th** for a performance of "The Little Prince", a fantastical adventure that explores growing up and how the imagination we are all born with can save us.

Seachtain Eolaíochta: There was a general air of excitement and industry in the school during Science week. Many classes engaged in Science experiments and/or project work and there are plenty of photographs capturing some of this work on the school website. Pupils from 3rd-6th class took part in a workshop entitled "What a Waste" and Senior Infants-2nd class were enthralled when shown a variety of wildlife which live in the rural landscape in Ireland by Lorraine Doyle from the Heritage Council. This "Nature in Focus" workshop was engaging, interactive and most importantly, great fun. Maths week was equally busy and fun maths activities and maths trails were completed by all classes.

Táiplís: Mairéad and Pat Breen have started back training the Bennekerry/Tinryland draughts teams after yet another very successful year in 2017-18.

Bí Sábháilte: As the weather deteriorates and the evenings are getting darker, we want to remind you once again about the importance of safety procedures as you drop off and pick up your children. Please do not park in the bus bay at any time, pay particular attention to people crossing at the zebra crossing, reverse into parking spaces rather than driving in, do not drive into the school grounds and above all drive slowly and with care. Pupils should also be reminded to cross only at the zebra crossing and then, not to attempt to cross until the traffic has clearly stopped.

RSE: Workshops dealing with the sensitive areas of the Relationships and Sexuality section of the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum will be delivered to 5th and 6th classes on **14th, 15th and 16th January**.

Ullmhúchán do na sacraimintí: The Enrolment Ceremony for First Holy Communion took place on Wednesday 7th November and the Enrolment Ceremony for Confirmation took place on 14th November. Pupils have been hanging crosses on our memorial tree to remember loved ones who have passed away during this month of the Holy Souls. A special service for the Confirmation class to mark Advent and focus on the Rosary will take place **in Askea Church at 8pm on Tuesday 4th December**.

Carthanachtaí: We are once again overwhelmed by the generosity of the families in Bennekerry N.S. as they reach out to people who are less well off than themselves. Over 250 beautifully wrapped shoeboxes filled with wonderful gifts for children in other parts of the world were donated. This is such a lovely gesture as one of these boxes may be the only gift a child will receive this Christmas. To bring such joy into the life of another is indeed a special thing. The pupils also sent funds for a super goat, three chickens and school supplies to Dominico, the boy we sponsor in Tanzania, and his community for Christmas.

Airgead Caillte: A sum of money was found at the school gate. If you know of anybody who may have lost this money, please ask them to call to the school office where it can be claimed.

Dáta don Dialann: A very important **information evening for parents about the Stay Safe programme** will take place in the school hall on **Thursday 10th January at 7:30pm**. Since this is the first week back after the Christmas holidays, we are giving you plenty of advance warning to ensure that the date can be reserved and appropriate arrangements can be made to allow for your attendance.

Éadaí Nollag: We have noticed a huge improvement in compliance with correct school uniform recently and we thank you for your efforts in this area. Ní neart go cur le chéille!

In a break from the norm, and to add to the festive cheer on the day of the holidays, **December 21st**, the pupils may wear Christmas jumpers or their red PE jumpers with their tracksuit bottoms. Santa hats or other Christmas regalia may also be worn. We will be **finishing at 12 noon** and will **reopen on Monday 7th January 2019**.

Finally, on behalf of myself and all the team in Bennekerry N.S., I wish to thank you for your continued support, co-operation and the many kind wishes which we have received. It only remains for us to wish you all a very happy Christmas and we hope it will be a special time for each and every one of you.



Nollaig aoibhinn agus Athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir.