

Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S.

Newsletter Summer 2015





Lenrec Clothes Recycling: On Wednesday 18th February old clothes donated by parents and people in surrounding area were collected at the school. When weighed we had 264 kg. We received a cheque for €145.20. Another collection was held on Wednesday 3rd June and the school community once again donated generously. Míle buíochas to all who donated.

Information Evening for New Parents: On Thursday night, April 23rd the parents of our new Junior Infants attended an information evening in the school. Refreshments were provided once again by our very dedicated Parents' Association.

Basketball: On May 6th, 19 girls from Third and Fourth class travelled to Causeway Comprehensive School to take part in the annual Basketball Blitz between Primary schools in the catchment area of Causeway Comp. The standard in this competition is increasing every year and there were some very keenly contested games. On May 8th our senior girls (Fifth and Sixth class) took part in the same competition. All the girls played and had great fun. A new set of basketball vests and togs, sponsored by Specsavers, has been purchased. We would like to thank Mrs. Bridget Slattery of Specsavers Tralee for kindly securing the sponsorship for us.

Confirmation: The boys and girls from Sixth class were confirmed on Wednesday, March 25th in Ballyduff Church by Bishop Ray Browne. The 22 pupils are as follows: Aoibhe Joy, Méabh Dalton, Ethan Daly, Aaron McCarthy, Shane O' Sullivan, Vincent Pierse, Kevin Goulding, David Joy, Johnny Kennelly, Nathan McGrath, A.J. Collins, Seán McGrath, Jack Patterson, J.P. O' Carroll, Cian O' Sullivan, Patrick Nolan, Ethan Freemantle, Kyle Enright, Aidan Anderson, Eric Flynn, Jack Kirby and Owen Lightfoot,

Confession and Communion: We would like to congratulate the 26 boys and girls who made their First Confession on Tuesday 10th March. They received their First Holy Communion on Saturday, April 25th. The children are: Abi Connolly, Oisín O' Callaghan, Molly Duignan, Mikey Moriarty, Emer Enright, Jamie O' Carroll, Hannah Ludgate, Cormac Patterson, Amilee O' Callaghan, Ryan Healy, Ava O' Leary, Alex Freemantle, Aisling McHale, Jack Galway, Caitlyn Kirby, David Kapica, Ella Rochford,

Callum Carey-Sheehy, Samantha Daly, Ruairí O' Connor, Justin McCarthy, T.J. O' Sullivan, Adam Lynch, Seán Harty, Mikey Dineen and Callum Brosnan-Mannix. We would like to thank all the parents who helped bring the children to the church for practice.

School Tours: The Infant classes travelled to Killarney to visit Kennedy's Pet Farm on Thursday May 21st for their school tour. On Wednesday June 3rd Fifth and Sixth class pupils travelled to Trabolgan. First and Second class went to Crag Caves on their school tour on Friday June 5th. Finally, Third and Fourth will travel to Mallow on Wednesday, 24th June to participate in the Lets Go Camp in Mallow GAA Complex.

Swimming: Fifth and Sixth class took a six week course of swimming lessons in Ballybunion Leisure Centre from January 9th to February 13th. The boys and girls benefited greatly from these lessons. We would like to thank the Parents' Association who subsidised these lessons.

Credit Union Quiz: A total of six teams (24 pupils) from Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S. took part in the Credit Union Quiz which was held on Sunday 1st February in Causeway Comprehensive School. It proved to be a very successful day for our school as four of the six teams were amongst the prize winners. Congratulations to our U13 team of Aidan Anderson, Kevin Goulding, Shane O' Sullivan and J.P. O' Carroll who came first and to Méabh Dalton, Jack Kirby, Adam Farrell and Ethan Freemantle who came third in the U 13 Category. Comhghairdeas freisin to our U11 teams of Adam Segal, A.J. Enright, Erin O' Sullivan and Joshua Diggins who won first place and to Keith Flynn, Ciara Donegan, Aodhán Curley and Emma Harty who were third in the under 11 section. A huge congratulation to all the children who took part in the quiz.

Scór na bPáistí: The North Kerry Hurling Board final of Scór na bPáistí was held at the Ceolann in Lixnaw on Friday night, 6th March with Sliabh a' Mhadra N.S. competing in Recitation, Ballad Group, Instrumental Music, Solo Singing and Figure Dancing. The Figure Dancers won as did the Instrumental Music group. The Figure Dancers went on to the Co. Semi Final held in Knocknagoshal on Sunday, 15th March when they were again successful. Finally, they competed in Co. Final in the Gleneagle, Killarney on Sunday, 22nd March and they came 2nd. The team practised several evenings per week after school and great credit is due to them. The team was: Kayleigh Elbell, Kacey Dineen, Donna Kiely, Jade Lynch, Niamh Barrett, Brídín Purcell, Alisha O'Neill and Shauna Quinlan. This team also competed in the Irish Nationals in Killarney on Friday 15th June.

Green Day: Everyone made a great effort to wear something green for 'Green Day'. It was decided that all monies raised would go to the work of the Lasallian Development Project in Ethiopia. Laura Costello, a past pupil of our school, is involved with this project and she was presented with a cheque

for €207. She visited all classes in the school and spoke about the project. We commend her on her efforts and wish her a safe and productive time in Ethiopia.

St. Patrick's Day Parade: 'Music makes the world go round' was the theme of our parade this year. Children from Junior Infants to Sixth class took part and there was great excitement on the day. Well done to everyone on their lovely costumes and to Ms. Wren and our school band who added so much to the occasion. Great fun was had by all!

Science Quiz: Congratulations to Aidan Anderson, Patrick Nolan and Johnny Kennelly who were prize winners in the 2015 ISTA Primary Science Quiz held in the IT Tralee. Schools from all over Kerry competed and the boys put in a wonderful performance ending up in joint first place but subsequently losing out to Ardfert N.S. in a tie breaker. These boys have upheld the proud tradition of success which our school has enjoyed in this competition in the past.

Healthy Eating Week: Healthy Eating week took place on September 29th 2014. Our Healthy Eating Policy was outlined to parents. The Health Promotion Department provided each family with an 'Eat Smart, Move More' booklet. The reward Chart helped to motivate and encourage children to set food and activity goals each week. The sugar content of popular foods was on display in the school corridor and explored by each class.

Mental Health Programme: The Zippy's Friend's Programme continues to be delivered to First and Second class by Mary Wallace. Elaine Goulding was trained to deliver this programme during the year. Breda O'Dwyer and Mary Wallace also attended training for a new mental health programme - Friends for Life. It is hoped to introduce this programme to senior classes next year.

Skipathon: Our annual Skipathon took place on April 21st. A total of €175 was raised in aid of the Irish Heart foundation. An active and enjoyable week was had by all.

Kerry Safer Cycling Programme: Pupils from Third to Fifth class took part in the Kerry Safer Cycling Programme on May 11th- 14th. The programme was subsidised by the Health Promotion Department and the Parents' Association and was offered to pupils at a cost of €5. The course was delivered by Garda David O'Connell of Blue Gate Sports. The course included an introduction to cycle safety, getting on/off the bike safely, starting and stopping, using gears, swerving, cornering and signalling and was delivered to each class over six hours. It was an excellent course and we hope that the pupils will get plenty of opportunity to use the skills and knowledge which they learned over the course of the summer holidays,

W.O.W Day: National Walking Week took place from May

11th - 15th. Pupils were encouraged to walk to school on Wednesday May 13th. Pupils walked from the cross and McHale's yard. WOW has continued each Wednesday for the remainder of the term due to the positive feedback received from both pupils and parents.

National Spring Cleaning month: Sliabh a' Mhadra was registered to take part in National Spring Cleaning Month last April. An Taisce provided us with gloves and recycling bags. Pupils from Junior Infants-sixth Class volunteered to clean the school grounds and the roads approaching the school. Pupils were very eager to help and as a result pupils continued volunteer to clean the school grounds each Wednesday for the remainder of term. The pupils efforts did not go unnoticed and they were also registered in National Volunteer Week in May.

Green Schools: The Green Home Programme was completed in May. Pupils, parents and teachers made great efforts to conserve water, energy and waste. Pupils were encouraged to carry out the tips they learned in their homes. Parents were encouraged to fill out a number of surveys and questionnaires in relation to saving energy in the home. The Greens Schools committee were very active in promoting the energy saving tips in the school. The committee members were Shauna Quinlan, Cathal Gibbons, Luke Kennelly, Dan O Sullivan, Méabh Dalton, Kacey O' Carroll, Aoibhe Joy, Jack Patterson, Leah Whyte and Rebecca Healy. They had a committee meeting each Wednesday at lunch break and their jobs were rotated each month. As part of the assessment the school had to make a poster promoting energy in the home. Each class got the opportunity to contribute their energy saving tips and the Green Schools Committee compiled the top tips for the poster. The pupils from the committee took responsibility for updating the Green Schools notice board, checking for leaking taps, turning off unused lights and sweeping the yard. Susan Vickers assessed our progress at the end of May and awarded us with our 5th green flag. The flag was raised during our Fun Day on June 7th by Councillor John Brassil, Mayor of Kerry and Angela Wall, An Taisce.

Music Classes: This year, twenty students stayed after school on a Monday for Irish Lessons with Ms. Wren. The children played a wide variety of instruments – flutes, fiddles, banjos, mandolins, concertinas and accordions! All children practised really hard and became fantastic musicians! The children were so enthusiastic about practicing that they were ready to play a piece at the Christmas Mass! Kevin, Méabh, Ciara and Martin represented the school exceptionally well at Scór na bPáistí. All the children performed with the school choir for the Communion which really helped add to this special occasion.

Garda Elaine Freemantle: Many thanks to Garda Elaine Freemantle who visited all classes in the school on her day off. She told the children about the work of An Garda Síochána and even let some dress up as a garda. It was great fun!

Pancake Tuesday: The delicious smell of pancakes wafted through the corridors of Sliabh a' Mhadra on Pancake Tuesday. Mr. O'Connor's Fifth and Sixth classes, as well as Mrs. O'Dwyer's and Ms. Wren's pupils with their pancake makers, churned out pancakes with a variety of toppings for all to enjoy. They were scrumptious!

County Mini Sevens Boys Football 2015: Fitzgerald Stadium was the venue for the Cumann na mBunscol GAA/INTO Mini Sevens County Finals. A total of 120 schools took part in the competition this year with 16 teams, eight boys' and eight girls' teams, qualifying for the final in Fitzgerald Stadium. Sliabh a' Mhadra, having won the North Kerry title also had to come through a qualifying round in Tralee. On their journey to victory they had to overcome Lixnaw N.S., Murhur N.S., Lisselton N.S., Ballybunion N.S., Caherleaheen N.S., Holy Family N.S., Scoil Naomh Eirc, Glenbeigh N.S., Baile an Fheirtéirigh, Kilgarvan N.S., Abbeydorney N.S. and finally Kilcummin N.S.

The final was an absolute thriller! Kilcummin got off to a flying start and were 2-1 to 0-2 ahead at half time. However Sliabh a' Mhadra took control in the 2nd half and with a great display of teamwork, held their opponents scoreless. Final score 1-7 to 2-1 with Sliabh a' Mhadra claiming the County Mini Sevens trophy.

A fantastic win for Mr. O'Connor and his boys. Well done!

Team: Kyle Enright, Darragh Quinlan, Owen Lightfoot, J.P. O'Carroll, Nathan McGrath, Kevin Goulding, Seán McGrath, Johnny Kennelly, Adam Farrell and Adam Segal.

Dog Trust Foundation: Leah Fitzgerald from the Dog Trust Foundation visited the Junior Classes on April 23rd. The children really enjoyed learning about how to be safe and responsible around dogs, how to look after their dogs and to understand that a dog is for life.

Illustrating with Microsoft Paint: An educational workshop about 'Illustrating with Microsoft Paint' was delivered by Ian Jackson to classes Fourth, Fifth and Sixth on the 28th April. Ian is the illustrator of a series of educational books for children using the free computer programme Microsoft Paint. After a presentation on how to use 'Paint', the pupils illustrated a children's story and then created a Power point slideshow. It was a most enjoyable and informative workshop.

Tadpoles: There was great excitement in Infants when Sive Purcell's dad, Stuart, brought tadpoles to school. We had learned all about the lifecycle of the frog so it was great to see what tadpoles really looked like. Stuart returned them to their habitat again but Sive is going to keep us informed as to their progress. Thank you Stuart!

Primary Game: Congratulations to Kevin Goulding and Aoibhe Joy who were selected to take part in the Primary game, boys' football and girls' football teams, at half time in the Munster Senior football semi-final between Kerry and Tipperary. Children from Primary schools all over Kerry took part in trials in Tralee over two days and it was a great achievement for Kevin and Aoibhe to be selected.

Fun Day: Sunday June 7th was a hectic day in Sliabh a' Mhadra when the Parents' Association hosted a Family Fun Day at the school for the first time in the school's history. A carnival atmosphere descended on the school from around 12 noon, as the school was decked out in bunting and organisers arrived with all sorts of cakes, food and games to make sure they were ready for the 2pm. start time. A variety of novelty games, bouncy castles, penalty shoot- out, pony rides, face painting, tattoos, cake sale and disco entertained the children and their parents and extended families over the course of the afternoon. Adults and children relaxed in the brilliant sunshine, while the wonderful aroma of homemade burgers from the BBQ filled the air. Inside the school, the cake sale was in full swing as many opted to sit and have a cuppa with some of their purchases. One of the classrooms was transformed into a disco and current and past pupils enjoyed dancing to the beat of the loud music. As activities came to a close, Siobhán Hennessy, Chairperson of the Parents' Association, called everyone together and presented all the young people with prizes.

Girls' Football Skills: Well done to Aoibhe Joy, Méabh Dalton and Kacey O'Carroll who participated in the North Kerry Girls' Football Skills in Finuge on Wednesday 27th May and came third. They went on to compete at County level in Fitzgerald Stadium on Thursday, June 4th. Congratulations to the three girls.

Camogie: During February and March, Camogie training was provided twice a week after school for girls from 3rd to 6th Class. Although the evenings were cold, we were fortunate that it was never necessary to cancel. When the Cumann na mBunscol Camogie Blitz took place in March we entered a team for the first time. The panel was: Erin O'Sullivan, Ria Fealy, Ciara Donegan, Kacey O'Carroll, Grace Hennessy, Rebecca Healy, Emma Harty, Aoibhe Joy, Leah Kennelly, Sarah O' Sullivan, Mai Whelan, Méabh Dalton, Kayleigh Elbell, Lauren McGrath.

Girls' Football Mini Sevens: The girls travelled to Duagh to play in the North Kerry Cumann na mBunscol mini sevens blitz. They enjoyed a good win over Ballybunion but lost their matches with Lisselton and eventual winners Drumclough. However, they acquitted themselves well and showed very good spirit and team work. The Panel was: Aoibhe Joy, Méabh Dalton, Kacey O'Carroll, Erin O'Sullivan, Leah Kennelly, Emma Harty, Rebecca Healy, Ciara Donegan, Ria Fealy, Mai Whelan and Jade Lynch.

Self Evaluation: A whole school evaluation of teaching and learning was undertaken in our school in 2012. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in literacy across the whole school was evaluated. Oral language was identified as an area of priority. An improvement plan has been actively in place since 2012. The area of oral language continues to be monitored and assessed at each class level. A comprehensive plan is in place where all teachers are following a detailed oral language programme, co-ordinated by Mary Wallace. Three tracker children are assessed at each class level using the Drumcondra English Profiles. This year we linked oral language with our writing genres. Each genre is explored over a seven week period, with each class level. The children's written work is displayed on our 'Writing Wall' to help encourage and motivate the children to write for an audience.

Numeracy Self Evaluation: A school self-evaluation of Numeracy was undertaken in our school in 2014. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in numeracy across the whole school was evaluated. The strand of "Number" has been identified as an area of priority. An improvement plan will be actively in place from September 2015. The area of numeracy will be monitored and assessed at each class level with specific classes being targeted for team teaching. A comprehensive plan will be in place where all teachers will follow a detailed number programme, co-ordinated by Denise Wren.

Cumann na mBunscol Buachaillí: The boys won the County Football Final and this was a hard act to follow! They participated in the hurling but were not as successful, losing out to Ballyduff, Lixnaw and Abbeydorney. The team was as follows: Kevin Goulding, Johnny Kennelly, Seán McGrath, Patrick Nolan, Adam Farrell, Adam Segal, Darragh Quinlan, Tommy O'Grady, Martin Brosnan-Mannix, Jack Enright.

Boys Skills: Kevin Goulding, Adam Segal and Darragh Quinlan represented the school in the hurling skills, while Seán McGrath, J.P. O' Carroll and Kevin Goulding competed in the football skills. Seán McGrath, as a result of his outstanding display in the Mini Sevens County Final was selected to play in the Primary Game at half time in the All Ireland Football Semi-Final in Croke Park in August. Congratulations to Seán on a great achievement.

Mathletics: Mathletics was enjoyed by the majority of our pupils over the past few months. It will be available to all pupils for the next year for the small sum of €6 per head. Pupils are encouraged to keep up their Maths skills over the summer by spending some time on the programme.

Graduation: On Tuesday, 23rd June we will host a graduation night for the sixth class and their families. They will each receive a cert., a year book and keyring to mark the end of their time in Sliabh a' Mhadra. The Parents' Association once again will provide refreshments on the night.

Final Words: As the school year draws to a close, I would like to thank the whole school community for their help and support over the course of the year. I would especially like to express my gratitude to the Parents' Association for their outstanding work. They were always available to provide practical help and they put in a tremendous effort to fund raise so that we could provide extra materials and activities for the pupils. Míle buíochas to the dedicated and hard working teaching staff, and to Anne, our secretary, and Noel and Maudie, our cleaners, who all work so hard to make sure that this school is a great place to work and to learn. We all wish Mrs. O'Carroll a speedy recovery and look forward to her return to school. May our boys and girls enjoy a safe, relaxing and enjoyable holiday and we look forward to welcoming them back on Tuesday, September 1st.

Mise le meas,
Breda O'Dwyer.