

# Ashbourne CNS Newsletter

December 2023



## Acting Principal's Address

### Winter Address

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Term 1 in Ashbourne CNS has been a whirlwind! From enrolling many new students and making them part of our school community to moving into our new building, we have certainly been kept busy!

Ashbourne CNS is a great school to be involved with. We have a thriving school community. Interest in our school grows on a daily basis. The children who attend our school are happy and learning so much. The future for our school is very exciting.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the staff for all their hard work. To the pupils for their smiles, good behaviour and fun. Also, thank you to the parents for your positivity and well wishes.

Bain taitneamh as an séasúr féiltiúil.

Séamus



## New School Our Forever Home!

Monday 20th November 2023 was a very special day for our whole school community as the staff and pupils of Ashbourne CNS moved from our temporary building to our brand-new state of the art school. We began our day by lining up at our old building, before we all said a final goodbye and walked together to line up outside our fantastic new building. Everybody was so excited to get inside and see their new classrooms and school. We all went on tours around the huge new school and the yards during the day. It wasn't long before the walls of the new classrooms and school corridors were filled with our work and learning, and now it feels like we've always been in this school. We recently held our parent information meetings for each class and parents/guardians got the opportunity to come in and have a look at our fabulous new classrooms. It was wonderful too to welcome so many of you back to enjoy our Winter Show performance in the Hall.



First Class Pupils Razvan Lena, Amelia, Pola and David completing the building snag list and taking handover from foreman Eugene!

# Maths Week 2023

## Mathletics, Hata Mata & Maths Trails

The staff and pupils celebrated Maths Week 2023 from October 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>. Although the weather didn't play its part for the week, we didn't let it dampen our spirits! The Numeracy Committee ensured that the children were actively learning maths throughout the week by organising fun and stimulating activities for each day. Every day, each class were given a problem to solve. This problem-solving activity helped children to use Maths Talk to highlight and demonstrate the different ways of solving a problem. As well as this, indoor and outdoor activities were timetabled for every class to participate in.

On Monday, pupils were given the opportunity to talk about the Maths Week poster and were encouraged to ask and answer questions based on the information that was on the posters. On Tuesday, the junior classes solved questions based on the school grounds through maths trails while the senior classes were challenged to write their own maths questions based on photos, they had taken around the school grounds. On Wednesday, the children in the junior classes played games such as *What Time is it Mr Wolf?*, *Hopscotch* and *Cone Game* to reinforce the topics of time, number and colours while classes in the senior end were paired to play board games. On Thursday, all classes took part in Mathsletics. This involved children working in pairs to compete against each other to answer 10 maths questions that were displayed in the school yard in a timely manner. First pair to return their answer sheet with all questions answered correctly won the competition. On Friday, children brought in their Hata Mata entries, and every class was invited to the hall to showcase their creations. To conclude the week, two pupils from each class were awarded with maths week certificates for their learning in maths throughout the week.



Junior Infants modelling their Hata Mata's



Mathematicians of the Week Winners

# Literacy

## Books, Books, Books!



October saw the return of our fantastic Literacy intervention, Guided Reading. Guided Reading is an inclusive practice as it is designed to improve the fluency and reading level of children of all abilities. The program lasts for four weeks, with four sessions a week, each one an hour long. It involves the class teacher alongside three support teachers giving intensive support to children working at five different stations; Oral Language, New Reading, Familiar Reading, Phonics and an Independent working station. It commenced in 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> class and was quickly followed by 2<sup>nd</sup> Class in late November and December. It will run in 1<sup>st</sup> class on our return in January.

This whole-class intervention gives the children an opportunity to extend their own learning and improve their reading skills, at a pace that is appropriate to them. In order to support the success of the programme, no written homework is given over the four weeks, instead parents /guardians are asked to take the time to read the daily reader provided with their child. We believe that the time invested in reading will be one of the greatest investments both teachers and families can make in their child's future. Afterall, *once you can read, you can do anything!*

## We have a Library!

With the new school came a brand-new school library. We are beyond thrilled to have this amazing new space at our disposal. Pupils from the Action Team for School Partnership have been working with staff setting up and creating a user-friendly library management system. We also wasted no time in purchasing some super new library floor cushions so the children will have a cosy space to sit and enjoy a selection of great books.

Each class has scheduled library slots that they can use to listen to read alouds, do some independent reading or to source books that they can use for class projects or when learning about a new topic.

In Spring we will be inviting parents into the library to participate in Story Time by reading a book to pupils in their native language. Details will be sent closer to the time.

# Green Schools

## *New Year, New Members, New Goals!*

Our Green Schools Committee welcomed two new members from First Class for the second year of working on the litter and waste theme. The Committee have been extremely busy since we started back to school in September from organising a Green Schools Code competition, to an October bin competition, from monitoring and assessing bin usage to keeping our school grounds litter free.



Pupil Members of the Green School Committee

The Committee have updated the action plan for this year and have decided that the targets that the school will be focusing on will be: To reduce landfill waste by 60% by June 2024 and to reduce the number of litter blackspots on the school grounds by 80% by June 2024. The

timeline that we had set the targets for last year were achieved. Therefore, we are very hopeful that we will be able to achieve the targets that we have set from September 2023 to June 2024 too.

For us to fulfil our goals, we need everyone in our school community to work together in reducing litter and waste in our school. This can be achieved when waste bins, recycle bins and compost bins are used correctly. Bin signage is displayed in every classroom to help with identifying what waste goes in the correct bin. We urge all pupils to limit the amount of packaging that they bring to school for their lunch and that all food waste, food containers and juice cartons are brought home every day in pupils' lunchboxes to reduce the waste being produced in school. We also encourage all staff, pupils, parents and visitors to the school to dispose of litter on the school grounds using the campus bins that have been provided. When everyone plays their part a litter free campus can be maintained. Mar a deirtear an seanfhocal, ní neart go cur le chéile. There's no strength without unity.

# School Community News

## *Action Team for School Partnership*

Our Action Team for School Partnership are up and running for the school year and are delighted to welcome new members on board, which include parents, members of the local community, staff and pupils. We were thrilled to organise the recent Parent Information mornings, welcoming parents/guardians to our new school for the first time. Our pupil members did a fantastic job acting as chaperones.

We have lots of exciting goals planned for 2024 some of which include our first ever school bookfair, class trips the local library and hosting an intercultural day at ACNS. We can't wait to share more information with you about these initiatives in Term 2.



Pupil Members of the Action Team for Partnership.

## *Parents' Association Update*

The Parents Association (PA) is up and running and looking forward to filling the new year with activities to bring parents and guardians together in supporting our school community and our children's learning path.

Our AGM took place on the 12th of December when a new committee was elected for the academic year 2023/2024. It was very productive with both school and parents bringing exciting new ideas and projects to the table. An action plan will be discussed in our next meeting in January (date to be confirmed).

If you'd like to be involved with the PA or have questions/ideas to share, please email us on [parentsassociationACNS@gmail.com](mailto:parentsassociationACNS@gmail.com).

The PA wishes all kids, families and school staff all the best on their holidays!



## Wellbeing at ACNS

As some of you may be aware as part of our School Self-Evaluation, we are focusing on wellbeing. Last year, we surveyed pupils, staff and parents on their thoughts and ideas about wellbeing in ACNS. This year, as we settle into our new surroundings and welcomed lots of lovely new pupils, we felt it was prudent to re-issue the survey to get more current insights on wellbeing within our school.



2<sup>nd</sup> Class pupils completing their Wellbeing Surveys

As we encourage and promote student voice in ACNS, a range of pupils from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class were surveyed on their thoughts about our school and things we can do collaboratively to improve wellbeing and make our school an even better place for the whole school community.

## Pupil's Thoughts on our New School

'I loved the design and the exterior of the school. It was pretty shocking because I never knew there would be a separate place for parking. The school is huge! It was great to see there was a whole new entrance. I love our class because it is so well decorated and it is bigger than I imagined!

I hope we get to do basketball tournaments like we did a couple of years ago. I also hope we do a lot of sports activities and that we have a big graduation party for being the first 6<sup>th</sup> Class to graduate in the new school building!'

*Miracle Ojo, 6<sup>th</sup> Class*

I like the new school building. It was hard to get used to the new routine but after some time I got used to it. It is very big and there are so many more classrooms. There are a lot of things in the school that have improved since we were in the last building, for example, the P.E. hall is very good to have for assemblies or shows or just for when it rains outside and we have to do P.E. inside!

Even though the new school is really good, I miss some parts of the old building. There are still so many memories to be made here and I look forward to spending the last few months in primary school here.'

*Ciara Moore, 6<sup>th</sup> Class*

## Class News

### Junior Infants

Junior Infants have had a fantastic start to their journey in Ashbourne CNS. We had a very busy and fun-filled first term as the children settled into their new school and made new friends. Lots of time was spent getting to know each other through circle time, group activities, and play time. This has also helped the children to build and develop their



communication and social skills. Since September, we have worked on developing our phonological and phonemic awareness skills before we moved onto phonics. We were also very lucky to engage

in maths stations for two months to work on early mathematical activities and begin learning about numbers. Our school move took place in November, and we are delighted to be the first Junior Infants to start in the amazing new building! We are really enjoying all the extra space, especially the new hall for doing PE. At the moment we are busy preparing for our first Winter Show at ACNS, and we are very excited to perform in front of our family and friends.



### Junior / Senior Infants

We have had a very exciting term in our multi grade Junior/Senior Infants. We welcomed 10 new Junior infants into our class, and they have all settled in well. Before we moved into our new building, our class were asked to design hats for Maths Week. We were very proud of our efforts. We were lucky to get some rugby coaching for six weeks from Judy Bobbett from Ashbourne Rugby Club. We hopefully will have some aspiring players for the future. We are excited to have moved into our new building. We are working hard and loving our new school.



## First Class

Hello everyone! We cannot believe that we have nearly completed our first full term in 1<sup>st</sup> class. We have been working so hard and having lots of fun while we learn. We particularly love to sing and dance, and we are really enjoying our time creating constructions and patterns, solving problems and working as a team during our STEM time. Over the last few weeks, we have been particularly excited to perform our song at the Winter Show. We created lots of art to decorate the hall, and we were so excited to see our grown-ups when we took to the big stage! We are really looking forward to a well-earned Winter break, and we will be back for more learning in 2024!



## First & Second Class

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class have been working very hard on procedural writing over the past number of weeks. We have explored this in many forms including recipes, instructions and experiments. Within our writing, we were careful to include a title, list of materials needed, steps, sequential language (first, next, then, after, finally) and, of course, plenty of bossy verbs! Our favourite part of writing was conducting the procedures, Here's a few photos of some of our favourite procedures!



## Second Class

We have had a very busy first term in Second Class. During the week the students work hard to earn points towards golden time by showing respect, kindness and good participation in class activities. We have been making great progress, growing together as a community.

Our class took part in the Guided Reading programme for four weeks during November and December. The students really enjoyed working on their reading skills and moving from station to station to work with the different teachers. Special thanks to Múinteoirí Niamh, Anna, Colleen, Sadhbh and Angela who came into our classroom to work with us.

Throughout December, we have been very lucky to have learned football skills with two coaches from our local GAA club. There are rising GAA stars in our midst! We also have many talented singers, and we worked really hard on



learning songs and poems for our winter performances. The children all felt very brave singing in front of the whole school and were especially proud singing for their families.

## Third Class



This term has been an exciting term for all at A.C.N.S. We have finally moved into the new state-of-the-art school, and everyone has settled in very well in the new building. We have been very busy in 3<sup>rd</sup> class, learning about multiplication and division for the first time and taking a dip into the lives of the Vikings. We also

became scientists for science week 2023, learning how to construct a strong building using marshmallows and spaghetti. We also explored the features of liquids to make stronger bubbles. The children have really enjoyed this term and look forward to closing it out with the 'Winter Show'.



## Third & Fourth Class

To celebrate science week 3rd and 4th class had a great time participating in 'The Moldy Bread' experiment. We discussed the method of how we would introduce 'germs' to the bread to encourage mold growth. Each group chose one different way to introduce germs to their bread from different areas of the classroom such as; our hands, door handle, light switch, floor and even the toilet seat! Every group was careful to use gloves so as not to contaminate their bread with the germs of their hands and only gather the germs from their designated area. Everyone was very excited to check their bread every day to see which one grew the most mold - and compare it to 'control'!



## Fourth Class

So much has happened since we moved into our new school building! Fourth class have been loving the new PE facilities such as the basketball courts and hall and have wasted no time in getting stuck into some gymnastics and games. From Teddy bear rolls to front and back tumbles, we have been having a great time and getting some great exercise in. We have also been working on our flexibility, fitness and strength to help us with this. It has been so wonderful to have the new PE hall while the weather is colder outside, and having two basketball courts in the school yard means much more space for games outside when the weather is nice.



## Fifth Class

Our first term in Fifth Class has been a very busy one! We have completed lots of active and fun activities through active learning. In Geography, we designed and presented Rugby World Cup projects 'Country Edition' to our class. We used our SESE textbook and iPads to help us gather information and research our country of choice.

In English, for the month of November, we focused on the genre of Procedural Writing. We made Rice Krispie buns in school and linked it to our Procedural Writing skills. They were delicious!!

During Science Week, we did numerous Science Experiments. We made our very own Marble Paper, Paper Airplanes and Space Rocket Balloons. We had great fun!

Since starting in 5<sup>th</sup> class, we learned the lyrics to the song 'Best Day of My Life'. We got to sing this at our second ever Assembly in our brand new school building!

At the moment we're busy preparing our Winter Art for our Winter Show, we cannot wait to perform our song in front of the whole school along with our Parents and Guardians and showcase our artistic skills to everyone!

## Sixth Class

Sixth Class have had a fun filled term settling into our fabulous new school building. P.E. in the new hall has definitely been a highlight so far! We have already completed a number of projects this year; firstly, focusing on the countries of the Rugby World Cup and secondly completing projects on different Nomadic tribes.

Sixth class have really worked on their research and presentation skills this term, something we will continue to develop as the year progresses. To celebrate science week, we spent a day completing a number of STEM challenges, we built towers out of spaghetti and marshmallows, and we also learned how to blow bubbles inside bubbles!



# Winter Show 2023

## Preparing for the Performance

Our first Winter Show in our new school took place on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Each class in the school sang a song in front of a huge crowd of parents/guardians who came to watch the show. The children and teachers spent lots of time rehearsing their songs and perfecting them in time for the show.



The school hall was transformed into a spectacular Winter Wonderland by some very creative pupils from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class. The pupils involved gave up some of their lunch breaks to create amazing winter trees. The trees were painted and decorated in blue, white and silver using a variety of resources and materials. Their creativity, commitment and talent, all led under the guidance of Múinteoir Niamh meant that the stage was set for the show and oh what a setting! Didn't it look spectacular...



The hall was also adorned with Winter themed artwork created by each class. All pupils should be really proud of themselves for the effort they put in to taking part and performing in the first of many successful Winter shows in our school. A festive and merry day was had by all!

***Some of Our Winter Art!***



## Attendance Awards

At ACNS we promote and encourage full attendance at school. Consistent attendance promotes continuity in learning and allows pupils to build an important rapport with their peers and school staff.

At the end of each term pupils from each class who have not missed a day in that term are presented with an attendance award.

At the end of the school year Gold and Silver Attendance Certificates are also awarded based on the year's attendance.



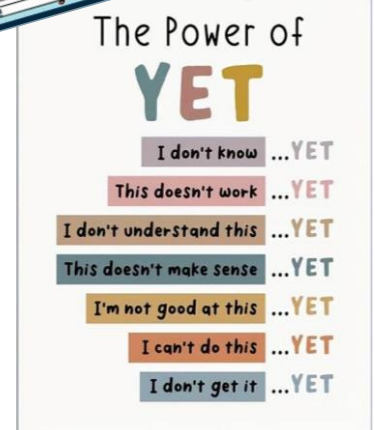


# Growth Mindset

## Recognising The Power of Yet!

Our Growth Mindset Awards are now firmly embedded in life in ACNS. These awards continue to recognise pupils who believe that in time and through effort and perseverance they can learn new skills. They move from the fixed mindset thinking of "I can't do it", "I'm just not good at this" and "this is too hard" to Growth Mindset thinking of "this is hard but I will try", "in time I can learn how to do this" and "I may not be able to do this yet!" We remind our pupils of The Power of YET!

Every Friday a pupil from each class is awarded with a Growth Mindset Certificate at our whole school assembly. Pupils are presented with their award by a pupil member of the Action Team for School Partnership. The winning pupils share why they won their award with the rest of the children at assembly and get their photo taken which is then displayed on our Growth Mindset board in the Hall. These awards continue to have a very positive impact on school life in ACNS.



## Growth Mindset Awards

### Award Winners

*We extend our congratulations to:* Stanislav Mindziak, Raul-Denis Rostas, Pavel Pruten, Lola Daniels, Emma Smolarek, Tiago Oliveira, Damir Dolyunnyi, Norah Magee, Pola Awad, Danny Kuchana, Merola Awad, Liam McGuinness, Chris Van Nierop, Arley Murphy, Nicoleta Melinte, Heba Roji, Chloe Prinsloo, Sarah Milard Mendonca, Lena Sinagoga, Patricia Petri, Oleksandra Yeromenko, Corey Lynch-Loftus, Dillon Myles, Fatima Ikhtyar, Sebastian Cazacov, Ben Talbot, Raul Melinte, Reman Alsadi, Viaan Upadhyay, Miracle Oju, Lakshiv Sharma, Zoya Ali, Gloria Nicora, Afnan Alsadi, Freya Ballard, Momina Aziz, Jaser Arafa, Isabel Van Nierop, Gordon Li Yang Ng, Lena Bieda, Kamile Lobinaite, Yun Han Lin, Valerii Mina, Alina Mindziak, Lailah Rooney, Aimee Moore, Charlie Malee, Olivia Musgrave, Ilinca Turcanu, Iasmina Rusu, Alonzo Cloete, Saksham Malhotra, Isabelle Keogh, Dev Deep, Sofia Morais McManus, Harry Toomey, Simon Ogbewe, Rares Nuhaiu, Harry McGoldrick, Theodor Zaluzean, Sophie Lattimore, Luka Milosait, Daryna Varnalii, Jessica Keogh, Andrea Ivanauskaite, Mollie Farrelly, Alma Deb Hishma, Sophia Sekoni, Ana Barbu, Denis Hantari, Edison Soyi, Ryan Ndebele, Eleanor Hernandez, Gloriane Malengo, Oliver Makuiza, Abi Burton, Reid McMahon, Mila Lynch-Loftus, Sara Barbu, Vanessa Cimpoca, Marvins Alabi, Daria Taran, Emily Patridge, Will Talbot, Otilia Bat, Dan Charles, Bogdan Sapa, Ruxandra Boestean, Sofia Ciocoi, Mostafa Farahat, Philip Sowa, Zosia Drwal, Arsenii Perju, Lumi Gillanders, Manal Aziz, Alex Rogers, Dumitru Rotari, Ruth Pop, Olivia Magee, Itisham Haider, Nicolas Olcsvari, Vanesa Matusevicuite, Gheorghe Mancas, Paula Barbu, Razvan Melincescu, Andrei Gandu, Ellie Boyd, Dominykas Rudys, Hans May Montero, Emanuela Rusu, Matei Ros, Catalin Vieru, Marius Mereuta, Alessia Galan, Nichita Rusu, Louise Mendonca, Bano Sala, Mia Czarniak, Gabriel Barbu, Damir Valuskins, Helena Sulowski Moreno, Yaroslava Kovalenko, Daniela Toma, Raul Petri, Vito Sinagoga, Marilena Tonu, Liza Yeromenko, Amelia Midrigan, Anna Pognante, Matteo Rosca.

## Important Dates for your Diary

16<sup>th</sup> January – Open Evening for Prospective Junior Infants  
30<sup>th</sup> January – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 – Parent Teacher Meetings.  
5<sup>th</sup> February – Bank Holiday Monday, School Closed.  
15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February – Mid Term, School Closed.  
29<sup>th</sup> February – Staff Meeting, School Closes at 1:40pm for all pupils.  
18<sup>th</sup> March – St. Patrick's Day, School Closed  
22<sup>nd</sup> March – Spring Break, School Closes at 12 noon (reopens Monday April 8<sup>th</sup>)

