

Ashbourne CNS Newsletter

March 2024



Principal's Address

Spring Address

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I'm delighted to be back and so much has been achieved by pupils, staff and parents since my last newsletter. Well done to everyone all the hard work is really paying off and is clear for everyone to see.

I think you will agree the building is AMAZING! Its a great facility to have and really is the final piece of the jigsaw. These facilities are a marvellous resource but it is and always was the people that make this school so special.

Learning takes place in a relationship and it is these relationships that were built long in advance of the bricks and mortar that make the school what it is today. Ashbourne CNS is a creative and collaborative caring place where children, their families and the staff work together and encourage each other to have the courage to be themselves and flourish in the school community.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and seeing all the exciting developments that are taking place as we settle into our new home.

I look forward to seeing you around the school next term. Enjoy the various family celebrations that come with spring time - as well as that 'grand stretch' in the evenings.

Is mise le meas,
Príomhoide Jenny



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Afterschool Clubs are back!

This term saw our afterschool clubs go live! There was something for everyone with Art Club, Chess Club and Homework Club all available.

The clubs have been so much fun and it's been wonderful to be able to offer the pupils more of an opportunity to get to know friends from other classes.



Art Club



Chess Club

Next term sees the return of current clubs with some new additions available too. Pupils will have a choice from Art Club, Chess Club, Homework Club, Lego Club and Ukulele, book your space today!



Numeracy

Mata sa Rang



Mata sa Rang was introduced for the first time this year in ACNS to improve the teaching and learning of Maths in the school. The intervention began in 1st/2nd Class and 2nd Class after the winter break, and more recently in 1st Class.

Mata sa Rang is an early intervention programme aimed at improving children's competency and confidence when working with numbers. The use of visuals, concrete materials and games at each station helped the children to improve their mental maths, work on extending their knowledge of strategies and build on their understanding of number. The class teachers were joined by Múinteoirí Niamh, Cian and Colleen to work with small groups of children at each station.

Green Schools

The Green Schools Committee have been working very hard this term completing their roles and responsibilities each month. They also have been keeping the school community up to date with important information and initiatives going on at weekly assemblies. A few weeks ago, the whole school took part in a 'Bin Free Day', each classroom removed or sealed up their bins for the day to encourage pupils and staff to think about how much waste we put in our bins each day. Some classes designed posters for the hallways to remind pupils and staff not to use the bins. After 'Bin Free Day' had taken place, the Green Schools Committee surveyed some of the classes on whether the day made them think about how much waste we produce and what we can do to further limit waste going into the bin.



Green School Committee Members 2023/2024



ACNS Bin Free Day

Literacy



Books, Books and more Books!

We hit the ground running in January continuing our wonderful Literacy intervention, Guided Reading, this time in Múinteoir Rebecca's 1st Class. The boys and girls really enjoyed working in small groups in the different stations with the dedicated team of teachers. They especially loved that reading was the only focus for homework during the initiative too!

World Book Day Celebrations!

Our love of books in ACNS saw World Book 'Day' celebrations last the whole week, and what a week it was!

We proudly hosted our first ever Scholastic Book Fair with the aim of continuing to instill the love of reading for pleasure across the school community. The enthusiasm amongst the pupils and staff was wonderful to see. A huge thank you to you and your children for purchasing books at the fair. We're not only delighted to see so many books making their way home with the boys and girls but are thrilled to confirm that we have raised significant funds to restock the school library too! This was all achieved with your support and is very much appreciated.



1st Class pupils Eman, Melinda, Edith, Hans and Evyaan enjoying browsing the book fair.

On World Book Day itself we were delighted to welcome the boys and girls to school dressed as their favourite characters from one of their favourite books. Calling the roll on the day saw some interesting new 'enrollments' at ACNS with 'pupils' ranging from The Mad Hatter, Captain Underpants and Harry Potter to Tweedledum and Tweedledee!



Tweedledum and Tweedledee aka Múinteoir Mick and Múinteoir Cian alongside 2nd Class pupils Chris as Captain Underpants, Ryan as Harry Potter, Lola as Hermione Granger and Ayo as Jack Skellington.

School Community News

Action Team for School Partnership

Our Action Team for School Partnership have been busy actioning some of our target goals for the year.

On March 7th as part of the World Book Day celebrations we were absolutely delighted to organise our first *Parents Story Time* across the school. Each class in the school had the pleasure of welcoming a parent into their classroom to read to them. We had stories in Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian, Polish, Slovakian, Italian, Ukranian, English and Irish! A huge thank you to Cassia, Irene, Shirley, Dominika, Carol, Zuzana, Natalia, Svitlana, Alexandra and Áine for taking the time to join us and read so enthusiastically, the boys and girls loved it! We're already looking forward to doing this again!



1st Class enjoying Parents Story Time

For our first "People in our Local Community" event we welcomed parents and community members into the school to talk about their occupations and hobbies. Guest speakers included a football coach, brain surgeon, ultra-runner, referee, microbiologist, music producer and members of An Garda Síochána.



Garda Brenda alongside Junior Infant pupils Darcy and Vanessa and Garda Ethan



6th Class pupils Momina, Meher and Dumitru turned microbiologists for the day!



School Community News

Student Council Elections

February saw a very exciting and historic time in ACNS as our first ever Student Council elections were held. The election was fiercely fought, and we were amazed at the effort the boys and girls of ACNS put into their manifestos, speeches and posters.

The whole process was very exciting, and we all learned a lot about how to vote in an election. The first Student Council meeting has now been held and the first item on the agenda is helping us to decide what books to get for our School Library. Stay tuned for more news on the work of our Student Council later in the year.



ACNS Student Council Members 2023/2024

Languages Connect

In January we commenced our second 'Say Yes to Languages' primary sampler module. The module facilitates participating primary schools to introduce a modern foreign language to pupils from 3rd – 6th class.

We surveyed the pupils and the language they were most interested in learning was Spanish. With this in mind we were delighted to welcome our amazing Tutor, Irene, to the school to teach Spanish to pupils in 3rd, 3rd and 4th and 4th classes. The Spanish lessons took place weekly for 8 weeks and the pupils have thoroughly enjoyed their introduction to Spanish, gracias Irene!



Spanish Tutor Irene with 3rd/4th Class

School Community News

Art Competition News

In January, artwork from across the school was entered into the annual Robert Ballagh LMETB Inter Schools Art Competition. The competition was open to all LMETB schools and the competition judge is arguably Ireland's most well-known living artist, Robert Ballagh.

Last month we were thrilled to receive the news that 4 pupils within our school had won awards in the competition. On March 6th the opening night, for the exhibition of winning artworks, took place in the Droichead Arts Centre, Drogheda. Here the prize giving took place and our pupils artwork hung proudly on the walls. Congratulations!



Art competition winners Isabelle (3rd/4th class) and Tiana (Junior Infants) at the Art Exhibition, receiving their prizes.



Art competition winners Eva (Junior Infants) and Emma (3rd/4th class) at the Art Exhibition, receiving their prizes.

Quiz Team!

This year, ACNS entered the Credit Union Quiz for the first time, with a 3rd/4th class team and a 5th/6th class team. The questions were tough and often had the parents and teachers baffled, but there was no getting past the competitors!



3rd/4th Class Quiz Team Members

Both teams had a great time and did themselves and the school proud. We were especially happy to see our 5th/6th class team finish on the podium, finishing second after a three-way tie break. It is definitely something we will be continuing next year!



5th/6th Class Quiz Team Members

Class News

Junior Infants

We have had lots of fun with hands-on learning in Junior Infants since our return in January. The boys and girls have been working really hard on their letter sounds and practising letter formation.



We learned lots about toys & play, we even got to make our own playdough and bring our favourite toys to school. We also spent time learning about people in our community and had great fun dressing up as doctors and nurses and looking after all the sick patients!

We were so lucky to have a visit from Garda Barbara and Garda Ethan from Ashbourne Garda Station who talked to us about the very important job they do. We loved trying on their uniforms and testing out the handcuffs.

This term we also got to do hurling with Maura from Donaghmore Ashbourne. We learned how to use a hurl and got to play lots of games. We celebrated Pancake Tuesday, World Book Day and Seachtain na Gaeilge to name but a few and we are looking forward to a busy final term after the holidays!

Junior / Senior Infants

The last few months have been very busy for the children in the Junior/Senior infant classroom. We too were very lucky to get a visit from An Garda Síochána where they showed us the equipment they used when they are on duty and the uniform they wear. We were even allowed to try it on. We hope to have some aspiring Gardaí in our room in the future. We have been working hard on our phonics in our class.



Spring is here! We applied to Incredible Edibles for some plants and we were lucky to receive our plants and planting equipment last week. We have chives, lettuce, strawberries, spinach, carrots and potatoes. They have started to grow already and 6th class are going to help us transfer our plants to the bigger planters outside. We can't wait!

First Class

Wow what a term we have had in 1st class! The boys and girls have worked so hard as they took part in Guided Reading stations and our Mata sa Rang stations. We want to say a big thank you to all of the teachers that helped us with these stations – we have so much fun!

On top of that, we got to perform a song at Assembly, and we really enjoyed learning our dance routine for our Lá Glas assembly. We visited the Book Fair, we enjoyed listening to a story being read to us in Spanish and we loved dressing up as a favourite character from a book. We learned a lot about how to be an ally and stand up together against racism. We can't wait for more fun and learning in the Summer term.



First & Second Class

Term 2 has been full of celebrations for 1st and 2nd class. Between celebrating the New Year, Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Pancake Tuesday, Easter and Ramadan, we have been busy learning about all sorts of important events across different cultures. For example, on Pancake Tuesday, we wrote recipes in our copies on how to make pancakes, then made pancakes ourselves in class. We even got to choose our own toppings!

We also got to do an Easter Egg hunt. Eggs were hidden all around the yard and we had to search for them. Even with the wind blowing them everywhere, thankfully, we managed to find them all. We look forward to learning about more celebrations in Term 3.



Second Class

During January and February, 2nd Class really enjoyed taking part in the Mata sa Rang programme, focusing on our counting, 100 square and number work. We were very lucky to have Múinteoir Niamh & Múinteoir Cian join us every day. The students really enjoyed visiting the different maths stations and working with the teachers.

In February we really enjoyed having local Gardaí visit our class. They told us all about their jobs and we got to ask them all the questions we had prepared. We even got to try on the uniform! We also had a visit from Denise, who is a microbiologist. She told us about all kinds of different micro-organisms and we loved examining them under the microscope.



We dressed up as our favourite characters to celebrate World Book Day and we had a lovely visit from Shirley who read us a story in Spanish that she had written herself called "Riku Miku".

In March we have been very busy celebrating St. Patrick's Day, Seachtain na Gaeilge and participating in "Run Around Europe".

Third Class

Term 2 has been a very active term for all of us here in 3rd class. We've really enjoyed being able to learn and engage with aspects of jobs that some of the parents work as, this included a chat with the guards, exploring different fungi using scientific telescopes and learning about the different roles of a soccer coach.

The children also enjoyed world book day and got to dress as their character of choice while being given the opportunity to purchase some new books from our first ever school Book Fair. Seachtain na Gaeilge was a big hit for the children as they engaged in a variety of different fun activities to promote the Irish language, such as Tráth na gCeist, Céilí and the 'Haka' as Gaeilge.



Third & Fourth Class

This term 3rd and 4th class explored 3D shapes in Maths. We used marshmallows and toothpicks to create our own 3D shapes and even challenged ourselves further to make prisms. We also used our knowledge of making cubes to design a beautiful Mother's Day giftbox in art.

Georgia O' Keefe was our inspiration for our Spring flower art this term. We focused on one zoomed in part of the flower and used a tiny paintbrush to add details. There was a lot of colour-mixing and blending of tones for this piece of work- which adds a gorgeous pop of colour to our classroom!



Fourth Class

We've been having so much fun in 4th class this term. As part of our active curriculum, our school took part in the #RunAroundEurope challenge during March. This is a team-based challenge where each class tries to collectively run 3399 laps of the school yard, one for every kilometre between Dublin and the furthest away capital city in Europe, Ankara. 4th class smashed this goal in two weeks and went on to complete nearly 5000 laps in total by the end of March. We also learned interesting facts about other European capital cities as we crossed each milestone. 4th class have really enjoyed this challenge as it has allowed them to get fresh air and exercise every day.



Fifth Class

5th class have had an extremely busy term two! We had a Careers Week in school. 5th Class got to meet some amazing people who have wonderful jobs. We got to meet a Microbiologist, a Music Producer, and a Brain Surgeon. We got the opportunity to ask questions and chat to these people. We even produced a short music clip and we got to use a Microscope! Careers Week gave 5th class students the perfect opportunity to think about what they would like to be when they're older.



In Science, we prepared our project for Science Blast. On the 4th of March we travelled to the RDS in Dublin to display our Science Blast project to the judges. Our project was called: 'How does the Brain Process Optical

Illusions'. The students worked extremely hard on their project, so much so that we won a prize! It was a great day out!

Sixth Class

6th class spent the month of February preparing for the ESB Science Blast. We got the whole school involved in our question 'Do children learn more and perform better in tests when sitting beside their friends?'. On the 4th March we presented our findings to the judge in the RDS who was very impressed with our project!



More recently we've started to work on our 'Incredible Edibles' programme and planted some potatoes, onions, strawberries and carrots, we hope to watch these grow over the coming months!

6th class pupils were really involved in the Seachtain na Gaeilge celebrations: leading the Haka at assembly, working on their spoken Irish in the classroom and even reading for the younger classes as Gaeilge!

School Wide Celebrations

Engineering Week

From the 11th to 15th of March, 3rd to 6th class took part in Engineering week. Each class completed different engineering challenges to test and enhance their engineering skills.

6th class built and tested bridges with lollipop sticks and tape, utilising strong shapes to add structure and strength. 5th class designed and used filters for dirty water using household items. 4th class made "sweet factories" using all recycled materials from home, including cereal boxes and tissue rolls for pipes. 3rd/4th class used their engineering skills to design and improve paper aeroplanes and boats which could hold up to 250ml of water without sinking. Finally, 3rd class used scrap paper and cardboard to design a protective case for an egg, and then dropped it from head-height, with a messy surprise for one or two!



Wear Red Day

On the 21st March 2024 ACNS took part in the 'Show Racism the Red Card' initiative by organising a 'Wear Red Day'. This was an opportunity for our school community to send out a message that we welcome diversity, celebrate uniqueness, and stand against racism of all forms. The whole school spent the last four weeks learning about how we are all the same, but we are all unique. We used stories and circle time to facilitate lessons that teach pupils to include and welcome everyone regardless of their skin colour, religion, or background. On Thursday the pupils participated in ACNS' first ever Ringo Bingo which was a great success and the pupils had great fun. Some classes designed red themed art and senior classes made bunting that was displayed all around the school. See our whole school picture below for ACNS Wear Red Day 2024 which was a huge success!!



School Wide Celebrations

Seachtain na Gaeilge

Cheiliúramar Seachtain na Gaeilge in ACNS an tseachtain seo caite. Rinne na páistí go léir a ndícheall chun Gaeilge a úsáid agus a labhairt sna seomraí ranga, ar an gclós agus timpeall na scoile. Bhí a lán imeachtaí ar siúl le linn na seachtaine do na páistí, mar shampla, léigh Rang a 6 scéalta do na ranganna sóisearacha, bhí tráth na gceist ar siúl do na hardranganna, bhí tóraíocht taisce sa chlós agus bhí cluichí teanga ar siúl sna seomraí ranga. Ar an lá deireanach, bhí Lá Glas againn. Bhí na páistí agus an fhoireann gléasta suas in éadaí glasa. Bhí tionól agus paráid againn ar an lá seo chomh maith. D'fhoghlaim gach rang 'An Dreoilín' agus an 'Haka Gaelach' agus rinneamar na damhsaí le chéile i rith an tionóil. Bhí an-spórt agus spraoi againn i rith na seachtaine!



Gaeilgeoir / Dalta na Seachtaine Certificate Winners

We celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge in ACNS last week. Each pupil made a huge effort to use and speak Irish in the classrooms, on the yard and around the school. There were a lot of activities on during the week for the pupils, for example, 6th Class read stories to the junior classes, we had a quiz for the senior classes, a treasure hunt on the yard and language games were happening in the classrooms. On the final day, we had 'Lá Glas'. The pupils and staff were dressed up in green clothes. We had an assembly and a parade on that day too. Every class learned the 'Dreoilín' and the 'Irish Haka' and we all did the dances in the hall together during the assembly. We had great fun during the week.

A Note from Parents' Association

If you'd like to be involved with the PA or have questions/ideas to share we'd love to hear from you! Please email us on parentsassociationACNS@gmail.com.

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

Growth Mindset

Have You Got a Prob-llama?

Our Growth Mindset Awards continue to inspire and encourage our pupils to foster a Growth Mindset.

We use our 'Prob-llama' display to remind the boys and girls about the differences between having a Fixed Mindset and having a Growth Mindset and to promote positive language around developing a Growth Mindset.

At ACNS we believe that the language we use when we talk to others and ourselves can shift how we think, feel and learn. We make subtle, yet conscious choices around the language we not only use but also teach our pupils helpful ways to talk to themselves. We remind them to believe in the Power of Yet.



Growth Mindset Awards

Award Winners

We extend our congratulations to: Christabel Okafor, Volodymyr Prindyn, Mihaela Breahna, Leon Ciurcina Martinez, Quddus Husein, Ryan Abin, Evan Roji, Edith Malengo, Stephanie Ripa, Rene Pohlodkova, Ciara Moore, Daisy Dunne, Mollie Farrelly, Kamil Ayub, Daria Bagu, Rosel Alo, Pareedhi Dyal, Logan Innes, Mia Remes, Alexandrina Pascari, Sasi Pohlodkova, Coalan Denham, Laurentiu Pascari, Fabian Curasevici, Tisya Kakkar, Anastasija Sidorcenko, Fabian Dzieledziak, Jaxon Kelly, Murtaza Ali, Darcy McMahon, Dimitru Rotari, Man Qing Ng, Natalia Tybus, Anvi Chandel, Parker Innes, Haiqa Butt, Ella McLoughlin, Melinda Padurari, Amelia O'Riordan, Gershwin P.S., Olivia Hayward, Great Makuiza, Arim Afacailor, Ruth Pop, Gursheen Kaur Gogna, Marius Barbu, Luke McCullough, Tim Pop, Julian Cazacov, David Sorin Gurin, Katelyn Hayward, Veronika Strongonova, Milena Janocha Kordasiewicz, Tomas Vrabel, Timothy Gillanders, Elqueen Ndaya, David Gaita, Arina Covali, Logan Myles Power, Vladut Hantari, Kamil Gilani, Darii Kelbas, Sean Rdzanek, Kyle Moss McCarthy, Francesco Maracinaru, James Maciejewski, Catarina Dos Santos, Evyaan Kashyap, Jessica Murray, Ellie Kean, Dylan Brady, Loredana Ciobanu, Izabella Odia, Ryan Aggarwal, Pamela Pohlodkova, Illia Frysa, Nikesh Sudarkarthink, Makar Kravchenko, Emanuel Pop, Tiana Cullen.

Important Dates for your Diary

- 22nd March – School closes at 12 noon for Spring break.
- 6th May – Bank Holiday Monday, School Closed.
- 3rd to 7th June – Bank Holiday Monday/School Holidays, School Closed.
- 25th June – 6th Class Graduation.
- 26th June – Incoming Junior Infant Welcome afternoon.
- 28th June – School Closes at 12 noon for Summer Holidays





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