

Ashbourne CNS Newsletter



December 2022

Acting Principal's Address

Winter Address

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I can scarcely believe that I am writing this as we come to the end of the first term of the school year! Time really flies when you are having fun!

It has been an amazing first four months in our new school building and a wonderful start to the 2022/23 academic year. We have managed to turn a building into a school. A school full of happiness, inclusion, and learning. I am genuinely so proud to be able to say that.

The staff of the school have been so integral in creating this special place. The hard work, diligence, and enthusiasm the staff have shown since August has been phenomenal. Without them, we would not be in the place that we are today. We have a tremendous team in Ashbourne CNS, and I want to sincerely thank them all for all their efforts since September.

To you the parents, I have enjoyed our morning chats so much. Whether it is about the world cup, the weather or anything else, thank you for that! A school is made up of so many different parts and having a positive relationship is pivotal to the children's learning.

I would like to thank all our wonderful children for contributing so much to our school. Every morning when I see their smiling faces coming through the school gates it makes what we do worthwhile. I also want to thank the children for the fun that they have brought to our school. Their stories, their jokes and their laughs are so integral in creating a positive school culture.

I want to wish all our school community a restful, peaceful, and happy winter break.

I am looking forward to seeing you all in 2023. Bain sult as an am saor agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir.

Séamus

Green Schools Litter and Waste Flag

This year, Ashbourne CNS are working towards earning their first Green Schools flag for Litter and Waste! Throughout the month of November and December, our Green Schools Committee have been very busy litter picking and sorting through rubbish.



Now that the Green Schools Committee have gathered the data about litter hotspots on the school grounds and have classified what exactly is going in our school bins, they will be able to write up an action plan to help us achieve our overall target of reducing litter and waste in our school. Once the action plan has been written, the Green Schools Committee will share the targets with students, teachers, and parents. More updates to follow in the New Year.



Green Schools Committee

Missing from photo: Ana Barbu

Using our Maths Eyes

Maths Week 2022

The pupils and teachers in Ashbourne CNS celebrated Maths Week 2022 from 17th October to 21st October. This was a jam-packed week full of interactive and entertaining activities which facilitated the children to use their 'maths eyes' to solve everyday maths problems.

On Monday the pupils from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, guided by their teachers, carried out maths trails to solve maths problems about their school surroundings. On Wednesday, the pupils from Third and Fifth and Fourth and Sixth were teamed to play maths games. Here the children from Fifth and Sixth classes taught the children from Third and Fourth classes how to play the games. On Thursday, Mathematics took place on the school yard whereby pupils in classes from First to Sixth Class, competed against each other to be the quickest pair within the class to solve 10 maths problems. These activities coupled with 'Problem a Day' and classroom activities made for a 'mathtastic' week!

The week would not have been possible without the work of the Numeracy Committee, Múinteoir Muireann, Múinteoir Rebecca, Múinteoir Sathbh and Allison. Thank you most sincerely for your time and effort you put into making and organising all the activities.



Visitors to Our School

Heritage in Schools

On the 4th October 2022, we welcomed a special visitor to Ashbourne CNS to celebrate Biodiversity Week in Ashbourne. Annette Corkery, from Heritage in Schools, visited First, Third and Fifth classes to talk to the pupils about biodiversity and what we can do to protect the different animals and plants in Ashbourne.



Annette presented the information about biodiversity through videos, pictures, and games. The children engaged very well during the presentations with thought provoking discussion happening throughout the three classes. We look forward to welcoming Annette back to our school in the future.

GAA Coaching

In November, we welcomed two external Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) coaches from Donaghmore Ashbourne GAA Club back to our school to teach the children Gaelic football skills. All the students in Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First and Second classes got the opportunity to avail of this.

The coaching involved learning the basic skills of Gaelic football such as hand passing, soloing, and catching. Every Tuesday morning the children would partake in several activities/games that focused on developing their gross motor skills to help them play Gaelic Football. These skills included running, jumping, catching and hand passing. This was an exciting time for the classes as they got to experience some Irish culture in an active and safe way.



If any child/children would like to further develop their Gaelic skills, Donaghmore Ashbourne GAA Club are always looking for new players. Please see <http://donashgaa.com/> for more information.

In-Class Interventions

Literacy

A fantastic literacy intervention that took place in First Class during September and October is Guided Reading.

This intervention involved the children working at five different stations within the class: oral language, new reading, old reading, phonics and an independent working station. Each station was facilitated by a teacher to tutor the pupils on the different aspects of literacy that will help them to become independent readers.



The children really enjoyed the interactive nature of the guided reading process and looked forward to the activity every day. The reading levels of each child significantly improved over the six weeks, and the children gained a broad range of

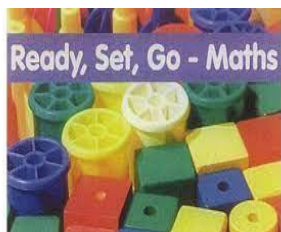
vocabulary on the themes that they read about during the intervention.

The intervention will take place in Third Class in the New Year.

Numeracy

Another effective in-class intervention that has returned is station teaching. The children in Junior and Senior Infants have been having lots of fun in maths class while learning how to count, classify and sort hands-on materials at maths stations.

Maths stations enable the children to work with a teacher in smaller groups. By working at stations, the children are provided with the opportunity to carry out maths activities at their own pace and level of understanding. Each week, the teachers at each station explicitly teach maths language to the pupils via questioning, and problem-solving strategies through practical activities that the teacher assigns to the pupils.



Station teaching has brought a fun element to maths class in Junior and Senior Infants as maths concepts are often reinforced through playing maths games. We look forward to another busy term of maths learning in the New Year.



Promoting Student Voice

Action Team for Partnership

The Ashbourne CNS Action Team for Partnership have been helping to shape the school into a more positive learning environment. We would like to thank all teachers, staff, parents and community representatives for assisting the Action Team's growth.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the other pupils that are part of the Parent School Partnership Team. We have all been giving out 'Growth Mindset' awards every week at assembly.

One of our main focuses was improving oral language and public speaking, so once a week we are replacing written homework with oral language homework. Other examples include things like two pupils telling their news to the whole assembly on a Friday morning. Each class has also gone on a trip to the library where the students have gotten to meet an author and discuss their book.

We look forward to being part of this team and in the next few months we are excited about bringing more enjoyable activities to our school.

By Lily and Marcus, 6th Class, Action Team Partnership

Winter Show 2022

Preparing for the performance

Over the past few weeks, we have all been working very hard on decorating our Winter-themed doors for a Winter Door Competition.

We used fairy lights, paper snowflakes and winter art done by all of the students in the school to decorate the GP area for our Winter Show. After that, we prepared dance routines and musical pieces for all of our parents and guardians to see.



School News

Blast 2022

We are delighted to announce that Ashbourne CNS has been successful in our application for the Arts in Education BLAST 2022 Residency Programme.



BLAST which stands for Bringing Live Arts to Students and Teachers is an initiative which aims to give pupils in schools the opportunity to work with a professional artist on unique projects, to be originated and planned between the artist, the teacher(s) and the school.

This initiative supports children for the future, where skills like the ability to connect and collaborate with others, engage in creative and critical thinking and practice inclusivity at every level will be paramount.

We are thrilled to have been matched with our preferred artist Olywn Lyons. Olywn is a Dance Choreographer, Performer and Teacher and will be leading dance workshops with both 3rd and 4th classes. Our chosen theme for the residency is Cultural Diversity, to celebrate all that we are here in Ashbourne CNS.



The children met with Olywn on Monday 19th December for their first taster sessions. The programme will commence in early Spring 2023. We look forward to bringing you more updates on the programme.

Competition Winners

Second Class have been crowned the winners of the REA Grimes Classroom Christmas Decoration Competition for the Junior Infants to Second Class category! The theme of the competition was to reduce, reuse and recycle. In keeping with this theme, Second Class came up with the novel idea of reusing CDs to create snowflakes to decorate their classroom door. The class were presented with their prize by Yvonne from REA Grimes to use towards the school's Green Flag. Comhghairdeas to Múinteoir Geraldine, Múinteoir Niamh and all the boys and girls in Second Class. We are so proud of you.



We practised really hard to perfect our performances. Then finally the day arrived. We were excited to show off our hard work to our parents and guardians. On the last Friday of term, we got the chance to see our friends in the other classes do their performances too. We were really proud of our hard work.



We would like to thank the parents, guardians and family members for supporting all of the children. Finally, a special thank you goes to all of the staff members of ACNS. We could not have done it with you. Of course, we can't forget all of the children that participated in the show. Thank you for your impeccable performances and the effort you have put in over the past few weeks.

By Olivia Hayward and Ciara Moore, 5th Class.

Class News

Junior Infants

The children in Junior Infants have really settled in well to their new school and classroom and have built strong friendships. As a class, we have gotten to know one another as individuals by identifying each other's likes, dislikes, and interests. This has greatly helped the children develop their social and communication skills. The children have been learning about different letters; the sound these letters make and how to form them. So far, they have learned about the letters s,a,i,p and n. The children enjoy learning Irish too. They practice their Irish throughout the day especially when saying the colours. The junior infant children have worked so hard this term. They were delighted to show off their new school and wonderful singing and dancing to their friends and family at the Winter Show.



Senior Infants

Water Fun

The children in Senior Infants were working on the theme 'Water' for November. Some of our activities included 1. Finding out what materials were waterproof and not waterproof. 2. Making sea creatures out of playdough. 3. Building car washes out of Lego. 4. Investigating what materials float and sink. The activities were hands on and lots of ideas were shared within their groups. They had lots of fun.



First Class

The Importance of Light

In Science we were looking at light, the main source of light and how light can transfer through different materials. We completed an investigation to see if a material was opaque, translucent or transparent. The children really enjoyed these activities and showed great enthusiasm throughout the lessons. We further discussed and investigated which material would be best to create a greenhouse for growing. As a result, we constructed our own greenhouses and planted seeds in the soil. Due to the lack of sunlight in our class, they had to be moved to Senior Infants where they were well taken care of. Our findings of the investigation are visible in the pictures.



Second Class

Teamwork

We have had a very busy first term in Second Class. During the week, the students work hard and earn points by showing respect, kindness, and good participation in class activities. We love making efforts to further develop our positive classroom environment and have been making great progress in growing together as a community.



For the month of December our theme was "Winter". We learned about Snowflake Bentley, who was the first person to photograph snowflakes. We used this as our inspiration to create our own winter door, featuring snowflakes which we made from old CDs. We have a very artistic group of children in Rang a Dó and we enjoyed making beautiful winter collages featuring penguins, cute polar bears and snowmen.



We also have many talented singers, and we worked really hard on learning our songs and poems for our winter performance. The children all felt very brave singing in front of the whole school and were especially proud singing for their families.

Third Class

Our Trip to Ashbourne Library



On Thursday 25th October 2022, Third Class visited Ashbourne Library. We took part in a quiz about books, as a part of the Children's Book Festival. There were 8 teams in the quiz. All the rounds were based on popular children's books and

authors. The winning team won vouchers for the bookshop. There were also spot prizes given out to our classmates in between each round. We really enjoyed our trip to the library and had lots of fun taking part in the quiz organised for us!



By Ryan Aggarwal, Third Class

Fourth Class

Active Learning

In 4th class, it has been a fun and exciting first term! We have had some particular highlights including Science Week, Maths Week and the Winter show. For Science Week, 4th class experienced being young scientists by working their way around a variety of problems through thoughtful experimentation and



evaluation. We also loved getting practical in the great outdoors during Maths Week, putting the theory of our lessons into practice, such as finding 3D shapes around our school yard and creating our own maths games. The cherry on top for our first term was the winter show, and what a way

to go out! It was so wonderful to see so many parents come out and see us perform *Let it Go* and *Feliz Navidad* along with a joint performance with 3rd class.

Fifth Class

Lettuce Tell you about Food!

We spent a lot of time learning about food. We learned about the food pyramid and how that helps you know which foods are healthy and which are unhealthy. We also learned about food groups and how different types of foods are grouped together. We learned what the different foods do for our bodies, and how they help us to grow. After that we made up a superhero/supervillain nutrient character. We designed a costume for the character and gave him/her a superpower. Then we had to prepare a speech to tell our teacher why our character was the best one. We learned about Giuseppe Archimboldo and used pictures of food to make food collage characters. In history we learned about the Great Famine. We practised writing recipes, and we even designed our own Doughnut Stack! We gave them cool names and made up signs to advertise our doughnuts. Finally, we learned about the digestive system, and we made a comic strip to show what happens to food in each organ. It was fun and also a little gross! We enjoyed learning about food and we are looking forward to learning more in the New Year.



By Meher Sharma and Helena Sulowski Moreno, 5th Class

Sixth Class

Project Work

Over the course of the first term, 6th class have worked on a number of different SESE projects both in small groups and individually. In September, we learned about Nomadic lifestyles, and we worked in groups to create projects on a number of different nomadic tribes. In October, we focused on the USA, and we researched different aspects of life in the USA, different states, etc. We then presented our individual projects to the class, sharing what we had learned. Science week also fell in November this year and we enjoyed a week full of science experiments and STEM challenges! In December, we worked on creating projects focused on the countries of the World Cup, we researched each country and compiled a large scrap book full of facts about the different countries. We hope to continue our project work and research into the New Year!



Growth Mindset

Recognising positive thinking

This year saw the introduction of Growth Mindset awards to Ashbourne CNS. These awards are given to one pupil from Junior Infants to 6th Class each Friday at our assembly. The teachers in each class watch out for pupils during the week who are displaying a Growth Mindset, whether that be trying something new, or persevering through their work when it gets a little bit more challenging. Each Thursday afternoon, our pupils on the Action Partnership Team collect the Growth Mindset award from each class teacher. They laminate these awards ahead of Fridays' assembly, where they have the important job of announcing each week's deserving Growth Mindset award winners. The winning pupils share why they won their award with the rest of the children at assembly and get their photo taken to be displayed on our Growth Mindset board in the GP Hall. These awards have been a very positive and welcome addition by pupils and staff alike.



Growth Mindset Awards

Award Winners

We extend our congratulations to: Corey Lynch-Loftus, Ianais Ion, Maite Araujo, Fatima Ikhtyar, Dillon Myles, Darii Kelbas, Ahmed Arafa, Simon Sekoni, Natalia Tybus, Gabriel Barbu, Zoya Ali, Ruslan Rotari, Zoe Kean, Horiya Ali, Lia Popa, Christabel Okafor, Katelyn Hayward, Parker Innes, Fabian Dzieledziak, Eva Lari, Ihtisham Haider, Daisy Dunne, Grofokina Pohlodkova, Kajin Khalil, Katrina Strauta, Abdul Ahad Saqib, Francis Kalu, Alex Rogers, Francesco Maracinaru, Alex Wilson-Ronan, Freya Ballard, Dominykas Rudys, Lumi Gillanders, Volodymyr Prindyn, Mark Bausov, Elqueen Ndaya, Kiefer McMahon, Ugo Nnannah, Dmitrii Poplaski, Abi Burton, Julia Podlodkova, Milena Janocha-Kordasiewicz, Bube Nnannah, Sophia Sekoni, Olivia Musgrave, Quddus Hussein, Lia Zalucean, Chidera Nnannah, Stanislav Mindziak, Grace Kavanagh, Marcus Hernandez, Christian Van Nierop, Reid McMahon, Logan Myles-Power, Sophie Lattimore, Edgar Mereuta, Aire Buivydaite, Alyah Muhsin, Waaris Ghazanfar, Momina Aziz, Iusti Ganda, Arley Murphy, Mia Carroll, Aimee Moore and Illia Fyrsa

Important Dates for your Diary

Parent Teacher Meetings 31st January – 2nd February 2023

School Closed - Bank Holiday Monday 6th February 2023, Mid-Term 16th-17th February 2023, St Patrick's Day 17th March 2023, Spring Break April 3rd-April 14th 2023 (school reopens Monday 17th April 2023)

NB: Staff Meeting 2nd March 2023 – school closes at 1.40p.m. for all students.

