

BALLYMURN NEWS – 17TH DECEMBER 2020



Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of all the staff and students at Ballymurn N.S., I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every family in our school community a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year. We hope that this new year that we are looking forward to will bring an end to the pandemic and pray that normal life may soon be able to resume in some way. I extend my thanks to all the staff in the school, who have since August, put such an amazing effort into ensuring that the children experience some level of normality in school, whilst being kept safe each day.

Christmas Performances

We are very busy preparing for Christmas celebrations in our school this week, and we are greatly looking forward to tomorrow, when a videographer will come to the school to record each class putting on their Christmas performance. Although this is very different to what we are used to, our students have had a really enjoyable few weeks preparing for the occasion, and we greatly look forward to seeing the finished products. The children cannot wait for their families to see what they have been up to, and we hope that families get to spend an enjoyable evening together viewing them. The videos will be posted to a private youtube channel, and a link to the videos will be sent to parent emails that have been provided to the school. Thank you to all staff for the fantastic effort that has gone into this production.

Uniform

From tomorrow onwards, children may wear their own clothes until the Christmas break begins. Please remind children to wear clothes tomorrow that will not interfere with the wearing of their costumes.

Enrolment for School Year 2021/2022

In line with the Admissions Act 2018, we will be accepting applications for enrolment for the 2021/2022 school year from **January 14th- January 28th**. Our Admissions Notice has been posted on our website with all of the relevant information. Please contact the school office on 053-9138435 or office@ballymurnns.ie for an application form. I ask that if you have any family/friends/neighbours who have children who will be starting school in September, please let them to get in touch with us.

Parents' Association

As we approach the end of the year, I'd like to thank most sincerely all members of our Parents' Association for all the support that they have given to us in school. They have a lovely gift prepared for each child on Tuesday, and treats left in for them to enjoy in class. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, we didn't get to hold an AGM for our P.A this year. Many current members have been on the P.A for many years now, and are ready to step away from these roles. We hope most sincerely that, when we can hold an AGM, that parents of other pupils in our school will get involved- There is no onus on P.A members to be available during the school day, or to be present at every single school event. All support is truly appreciated, at any time you can offer. A strong Parents' Association in a school benefits everybody's children.

Virtual Tara Bishop Memorial 5K Fun Run

Our annual Fun Run takes place in a virtual capacity this year, in aid of our school and Temple Street Children's Hospital.

I'd like to thank all of those who have registered to support this event so far, in what is a very difficult year for fundraising, meaning that school finances will be under more pressure than ever. Thanks to Bobby, and our sponsors KDK Scaffolding, each registered participant this year will receive a free commemorative t-shirt. Many families availed of the offer where they named five registered adults to get free t-shirts for the pupils in the school. Those who didn't have five adult names, or who would still like to participate can register both adults and children online for €10 at the following link:

Cash for Clothes

Thank you to all who contributed items to our recent clothes recycling collection. We raised €204.

Attendance

Our attendance rate for November was 96.8%, which was an improvement on November 2019 figures. A huge well done to all pupils and parents on achieving this rate, which is excellent under current circumstances, where families have had to isolate whilst awaiting the results of Covid tests etc. We look forward to doing our very best to keep school attendance rates high for the remainder of the year, and to keep improving on previous figures. If your child is absent from school, please complete the return to school form and send it into the school office with your child on their return to school.

Finally, I'd like to wish all members of our school community and their families a very Merry Christmas, and a happy, healthy New Year.

Is mise le meas,

Emer O'Gorman

Dates/Upcoming Events

- School closes at **12.15pm** on Tuesday 22nd December for all pupils
- School re-opens on **Wednesday 6th January, 2021** at 9.20am
- Virtual Tara Bishop 5k Memorial Fun Run - Weekend of 29th - 31st January
- Mid-Term Break 15th-19th February inclusive- school closed on these days
- Exceptional Closure Day for ASD training- **Friday 26th February**. School closed to pupils on this day
- St. Patrick's Day 17th March - school closed
- First Holy Communion - Saturday 15th May at 11am.

News from our Classrooms

Report from Ms. Ormonde's Crescent Class

December has been a super exciting month in the Crescent Class. We were learning about 'winter' and we did all kinds of winter art. We learned a lot about snowmen. We painted a snowman on paper, we made a snowman from clay and we even became snowmen ourselves for our Christmas concert!

We have been working on our life skills this month and have been baking every Thursday. This month we have been working on baking cupcakes. The children know exactly what to do now and are almost making them themselves! They are much better than Ms. Ormonde at baking!

Integration has been going particularly well this month as all the children have settled so well into their mainstream classes. James goes up to visit Ms. Morrissey and all his friends in 3rd class, Cristian and Kwame go to visit their friends in Ms. Lawlor's class and James and Evie love going up to see Ms. O'Gorman. This is such a fantastic opportunity for the children in the Crescent Class and the boys and girls in mainstream to build friendships and foster our inclusive school environment.

I would like to wish everyone in the Crescent Class a very happy and safe Christmas and look forward to welcoming everyone back in January. 😊

Report from Ms. O'Gorman's Junior/Senior Infant Class

December has been a really busy, but also really fun month in our classroom. Our Aistear theme earlier in the month was 'The Post Office', and we designed amazing stamps, and purchased passports, driving licences and dog licences in our role play area. We then wrote nice letters to Santa to be posted, although we had all done that at home beforehand, so instead of posting a second one, we hung them up in our room. Our next Aistear theme was 'Santa's Workshop' and we have had great fun playing in role as Santa and the Elves, constructing toys, and getting them ready for children. We even designed our own wrapping paper to wrap them up!

Our favourite Christmas rhyme that we learned was 'I'm a Little Reindeer'. We completed the 'Caitheamh Aimsire' topin in Irish and moved onto 'An Nollaig', where we learned some fabulous Christmas songs and rhymes.

We created some beautiful pieces of Christmas artwork which we will bring home over the next few days.

Juniors were very excited to have completed our last 'Junior Infant' Jolly Phonics sounds this week, and Seniors started to learn their new sounds for this year. Both classes have been doing fantastic work at home on their reading, and I look forward to hearing the continued progress in reading after Christmas.

Our main focus this month has been our Christmas performance of 'The Innkeeper's Breakfast', which we are really looking forward to recording tomorrow. We hope that all of our families enjoy watching.

Report from Ms. Lawlor's Senior Infants and 1st Class

We've had a busy month preparing for our Christmas show. The children have really enjoyed our Nativity called "A Wiggly Nativity" and we are looking forward to recording it on Friday. We hope you enjoy it!!

During December we learned all about the story of baby Jesus' birth and we've been counting down the days to Christmas on our Advent calendar. The children have been making gold stars for our Nativity and completing many other art projects during the month.

Our theme for the month was The Arctic and our role-play area was transformed in to an Arctic exploration station. The children have been learning all about the different animals that live there and also a little about the Antarctic too. We have some very knowledgeable children in our class who were able to teach us some interesting facts such as, that there's a forest in the Arctic called the Boreal Forest.

In Maths we learned all about 3D shapes and in English we've been busy practising our reading and our writing every day.

Have a lovely Christmas everyone and we will look forward to lots more fun learning in 2021!

Report from Ms. Boggan's 2nd Class

December has been yet another busy month in 2nd class. In English this month we have been doing further work on exposition writing. We have been learning about the structure of an exposition beginning with a title, then stating the argument or problem, listing 3 reasons to justify their opinion and then they finish off with a conclusion. We have been discussing topics and doing exposition writing based on the topics such as: pocket money, eating vegetables and caging animals in the zoo. The children came up with lots of great ideas arguing for or against the titles. The topics we covered provided some great discussion opportunities.

In S.E.S.E we have been learning about Christmas in other countries, it's been very interesting learning about traditions, food and weather in countries such as Australia, Poland and Mexico. The children have also been busy asking older family members about their memories of Christmas long ago; it was lovely to hear what Christmas was like for their grandparents when they were young.

This month has also been full of song, dance and acting as we prepare for our Christmas play 'Christmas with the Aliens'. This involves a story of the aliens landing to a school where the children are practising for their Christmas nativity play; the aliens in turn get to learn all about the story of the first Christmas as taught to them by the children in the nativity play. The children have been fantastic at learning the songs, actions and lines. They are so excited for the play to be recorded so that their family get to see them performing their parts.

Report from Ms.Morrissey's 3rd/4th Class

It's hard to believe that it's time for the December newsletter already!

Christmas performance: This month we have been extremely busy preparing and rehearsing for our Christmas performance which we are all very excited about. The children have been busy working on a variety of dance moves, songs and learning off lines and scripts as well. We are excited to share it with you all very soon.

Literacy: We are coming close to the end of our class novel The Butterfly Lion, and so many great questions, discussions and debates have happened as a result of our reading and probing a little deeper. We are looking forward to finishing it off after the holidays. In our literacy stations, children have been doing lots of Christmas themed writing and they have been very creative and festive! Children have also been researching about Christmas traditions from around the world and compiling some very interesting fact files.

Maths: Kids are always working so hard when it comes to maths and this month has been no different. Division, length and long multiplication have been just a few areas that we have been working on this month.

S.E.S.E: we have been looking at Earth and our place in space this month. We have been learning all about the Solar System, and made up our rhyme to help us learn the correct order of the planets from the sun. We also looked at how day and night and the seasons come about! Kids have also been researching their own facts about a planet of their choice during literacy stations also.

P.E: Children have been enjoying a mixture of GAA coaching and fundamental movement skills with Murt and last week all participants received certificates as a result of their participation. This is a highlight for many kids each week and we are very grateful for the coaching, games and fun that it brings!

Report from Mrs. Brophy's 5th/6th Class

December has been busy in the senior class as we began practicing our Christmas play 'The Egyptian Nativity'. The children have been working very hard on this piece of work and we hope you will enjoy watching the recording over the Christmas holidays.

In English we finished working on our novel 'Holes' as we focused on the themes of 'bullying' and 'inheritance' amongst the characters. We compared the novel to the movie and identified many similarities and differences. We have also completed our 'Procedural Writing' genre.

In Maths we studied 'number theory' and 'multiplication'. The children also completed their Christmas assessment. In geography we have begun learning about 'climate and weather'. The children have been studying how clouds are formed and the many different types of cloud. They also finished their project on 'Russia' which were very enjoyable to read and of a very high standard.

Gaeilge - an téama 'ar scoil' (at school). Bhí na páistí ag foghlaim a lán rudaí faoi an téama seo. Scríobh siad aiste agus leigh siad scéaltaí agus cómhra. Rinneamar na briathra neamhrialta 'déan' agus 'téigh' freisin.

In history we wrapped up our topic 'Stalin' which linked into our geography project on 'Russia'. We learnt about Communism and what it meant to live under such a regime.

PE - we have been enjoying lessons with our GAA coaches and Murt Flynn. We have been working on our fundamental movement skills.

We had a fantastic 'Hour of Code' with John O'Brien from Microsoft on 9th December last. John is a software engineer and he spent time with us explaining what exactly his job entails and helping us to design our own basic code for a new invention. He was very interesting to listen to. We learnt about the 17 Global Goals that companies like Microsoft have signed up for. To find out more information, please follow the attached links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HW76iOQ7qVQ&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u1zNHoYmhUI&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzG1COqiEPs&feature=youtu.be>

Finally, from all of us in 5th/6th Class, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. Looking forward to seeing you all again in 2021!

A Message from Fr. Finn

Many thanks to everyone, children, school staff and parents who have made such a success of our school since September. This has been a year different from all others.

A great deal of hard work and a unity of purpose by everyone has enabled our school to have a safe and happy atmosphere for everyone.

Let us make the best that we can of this Christmas by staying safe and enjoying the festivities.

Fr. Jim

Christmas Mass Times

Christmas Eve 2.30pm & 5.30pm

Christmas Day 10.00am