

ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Autumn Term Newsletter 2020

Message from the Principal

Dear Parents,

It has been a fascinating, challenging and at times daunting start to the school year but the strength and warmth of our school community was immediately apparent as we opened the school gates on the 1st of September which further buoyed us all up for another year. I am delighted to be part of the team leading such an exciting and vibrant school. I am very proud of the friendly, happy and supportive environment that we all continue to develop and grow.

I've been hugely impressed with the commitment and conscientiousness of our team, especially in the recent months, navigating the unusual circumstances created by the Covid restrictions to make sure that our pupils still receive the attention and education we value so highly. This is new territory for us all. We as a school are working hard within our community to encourage and support everyone as we get through this together.

Thank you too to the wider school community for playing their part in continuing the education and ensuring the wellbeing of all the children in a safe and enjoyable environment. Thank you, the parents, for your tremendous support, kindness and patience.

We are seeing examples everyday of confident, kind and imaginative children working well together. The tangible atmosphere in the school is one of happiness, engagement and friendliness, which encourages us each day.

Here are a few highlights of the year so far....

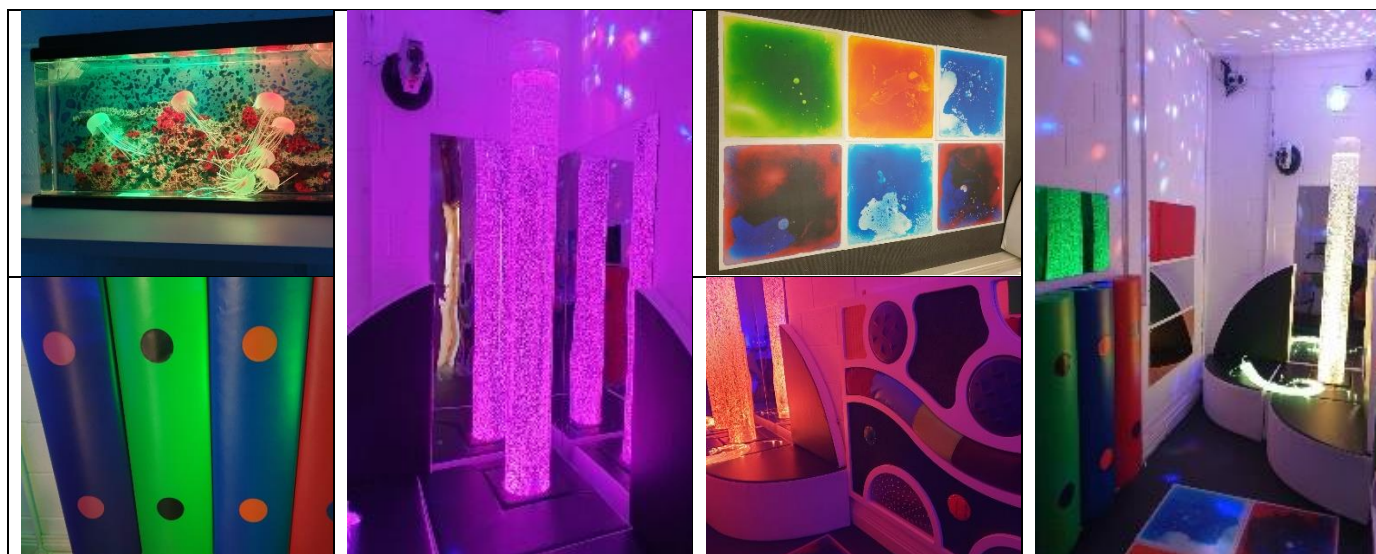
Rachel Harper

Sensory Room

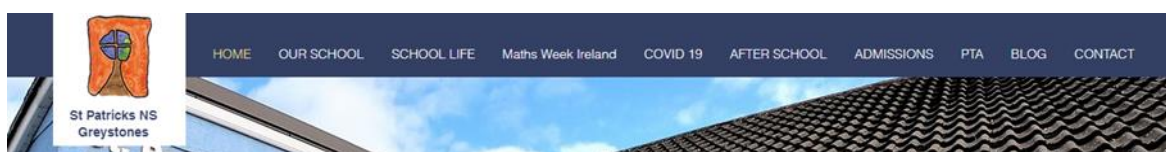
We are delighted to say our new Sensory Room was installed in time for the start of our school year. The children are thoroughly enjoying it and seem to be getting a lot from it. We will be uploading a video of the Sensory Room onto the website in due course.

Thank you to all the parents for fundraising for this hugely valuable room and especially to Louise Swaine and Belinda Curtis for coordinating the design and installation of the room.

We have the ability to play music for relaxation and also to listen to audio books through the sound system installed. However, we are need of an IPod/MP3 player for this. Therefore, we are putting out a request if anybody has an older IPod/ MP3 that you would like to recycle, would you please pass it onto us.



Website (www.stpns.ie)



Huge thanks and appreciation to Brigitte Hart (a 3rd class parent) for the incredible work she has done on our new school website which we are very proud of. Brigitte has been voluntary working on this for the last number of months. Nothing asked of her has been too much for her and she has been so kind with her time and dedication to it. We really do appreciate this and I think we can all agree that she has done a fantastic job....

Highlights of the website:

- + **Absence Form** – replaces the yellow slip and is available on the Home Page. Please complete if your child has been absent from the school.
- + **School Payments** – a button for school related payments through Easypayments is available on the Home Page – use for Arts, Crafts & Sundries Fee, Voluntary Contribution, tours etc.
- + **Blogs** – see what classes have been up to and admire their lovely work.
- + **Covid 19** – Response Plan and any new guidelines
- + **Absence, Attendance & Illness** – there is a great reference sheet available here from the HSE outlining when your child should return to school following various illnesses



Parents Teachers Association (PTA)
Annual General Meeting (AGM) via Zoom

Thursday 22nd October @ 7:30pm

Link to Zoom invite emailed to parents – please advise Dee if you require duplicate email

Enrolment for Junior Infants 2021

Enrolment commences Monday 2nd November until midday Monday 23rd November 2020.

Application Forms & our Admissions Notification will be available online from Saturday 24th October

Completed forms (with all required support documentation) will not be accepted before 2nd November and should be returned to the School Secretary at St Patrick's NS by Midday, Monday 23rd November 2020



Science Week

Space week 2020 was a roaring success. We had so much participation from senior infants wearing space themed raincoats and bringing in homemade rockets to 6th class listening and responding to David Bowie's Space Oddity with drawings. We studied the International Space station and Neil Armstrong in 6th, 5th Class built and tested their own rockets, 2nd class learned about constellations and drew their own after and of course we had some fantastic entries to the Planet you would like to visit competition.



The winners were:

- ☼ Emily Shevlin in 6th Oak
- ☼ Robert Langton in 6th Ash
- ☼ Poppy Smullen in 5th
- ☼ Kanav Sukhija in 4th
- ☼ Fred Swaine in 3rd class

3rd Class Birch brainstormed lots of space questions and had a busy week discovering the answers. Here are some of the interesting answers that we found:

How do astronauts get their air supply in space?

The astronauts bring oxygen from Earth, and they **make** oxygen by running electricity through water. This is called electrolysis.

How many exoplanets have been discovered?

A total of 4,354 confirmed exoplanets are listed in the Extrasolar **Planets** Encyclopedia. Explanet- a planet outside of the solar system.

What happens if you burp or hiccup in space?

You can't **burp in space** because the air, food and liquids in your stomach are all floating together like chunky bubbles. If **you burp**, **you** throw up into your mouth.....not very nice!



The children in Senior Infants worked collaboratively to create this super spaced themed display. It is “out of this world”.



This year's Math's week was one of our busiest ever. We solved Maths problems daily on our website and our classes took part in lots of events from with 6th Ash competing in a Mangahigh Maths Competition and doing a Maths Olympiad test to 4th Rowan class coming up with creative solutions to Maths problems showing great critical thinking skills. We played Maths games, we watched Mathematicians online that taught us great tricks involving Maths and we learned that Maths is important as it's everywhere.

Non Uniform Day

Friday 9th was a fundraising day organised by the PTA in aid of the Greystones Community Garden and our own school garden. We saw great outfits and hair-dos. Staff even got out of their own daily “uniforms” and donned the school uniform for the day. Here is a few pictures of us in our blue! We raised an amazing €602.80. Thank you.



Garden News

To coincide with our Non Uniform Day in aid of our garden, Ms Morgan decided to raise awareness of what you can grow in the garden.

They finished harvest and gathered all our produce which they then displayed at the front gate for anyone to take home with them. Items included beetroot, chives, onion, garlic, sweetcorn, potatoes, rhubarb, lavender etc.



More gardening news from Ms Sheil:



“These are pictures of the poly tunnel, showing everything that had been growing during lockdown eg. Tomatoes, cucumber, nasturtium, grapes and a sunflower. Thanks to the help of two school mums, the poly tunnel is all cleared out now and ready for this year's gardening season”. By Cian Swaine



Over the past few weeks, Hollie Fenton in 6th Ash has been helping to tidy up the sensory garden, which was a little dishevelled after nearly six-months neglect during lockdown. Hollie cleared and reset the gravel path, trimmed back the borders, and re-discovered the seating area. With the help of some of her friends, she cut back the lavender and tied the sprigs into beautiful bunches for every member of staff. Thank you Hollie - such a kind gesture, and they smell wonderful!

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at little break, a group of 6th Ash girls volunteer in the garden. They usually go to the polytunnel to check the list left by Ms Morgan and just get on with it! Here are examples of what they have done:

- bottled nettle-feed (made by 2nd class Hazel)
- weeded the paths
- harvested fruit and vegetables (which they get to bring home!)

Watch this space for more garden reports in the next issue! Or check us out on the website.

News from around the classes:

Junior Infants

Junior Infants have settled into life in "big school" extremely well, they have been working very hard and are getting to grips with all our routines.

One of the big books we explored in our September literacy lessons was 'Owl Babies' by Martin Waddell.

The children loved the story and we used it as inspiration for a printing Visual Arts lesson. Here are some pictures of our finished work!



Senior Infants

Senior Infants are well settled in now and have adjusted so well to our new routines and coming into class by themselves each morning. In October, the children have been learning through play through the theme of 'The Doctor's Surgery' - they have enjoyed role play, constructing their own hospitals from wooden blocks, along with art and other activities. We may have a few budding doctors and nurses in the class!



1st Class

Sophia



First Class enjoyed a nature walk around the school this term. We collected lots of beautiful Autumn leaves and used them to make hedgehogs

We have had a busy start to the school year and have jumped straight into Integrated Play (Aistear) each afternoon. We wanted to make up for lost time in Senior Infants and have been thoroughly enjoying the different activities that work on a rota basis. This year, our stations have been *playdough*, *building*, *crafts*, *puzzles* and *the water table*.



2nd Class – Hazel

We celebrated Tree Day on 1st October. Ms Morgan placed various varieties of trees around the school yard for children to look and recognise. Here is what some of the children said:

"It was Tree Day. It was the 1st of October. We learnt lots about our school trees. There are 200 million trees in Ireland. 15 billion trees are cut down in the world every year". (Kai Britton)

"It was Tree Day. It was the 1st of October. We learnt lots about our school trees. There are 3 trillion trees in the world. Trees get bigger every year. We hugged a tree. These are some names of trees: oak, ash, silverbirch, crab apple tree". (Zoe Brennan)



2nd Class – Holly



2nd class Holly has been settling into school life very well. I'm so impressed by their patience and understanding regarding the new COVID rules. During September we spent a lot of time focusing on our mental health and wellbeing. We reminisced on all the positive aspects quarantine brought into our lives. We spoke about how a dark and dreary day filled with clouds and rain can bring a bright, beautiful rainbow to our skies. We compared this to our experiences during the lockdown. Although scary and dark some days, there were plenty of positives to it as well. Many included more time with family, a lie in each morning, activities outside, visiting places around Ireland and a chance to reset themselves.

We created rainbows for our classroom during the first week, to remind us of this time in a positive light. These rainbows remind us of all the positive things that happened during the lockdown and brighten up our classroom!

We also planted garlic this week in the garden. We can't wait to harvest it so we can use it to make garlic bread!



3rd Class – Birch

3rd Class Birch have been busy learning all about the Stone Age and the Bronze Age. They have tried their hand at a variety of different Neolithic themed activities including writing their own Stone Age menus, designing Stone Age tools and they even made their own Stone Age and Bronze Age Pottery. Some of the children decided to make Stone age pottery (bowls) and others chose to make Bronze age pottery (taller beaker like pottery)



3rd Class – Willow



During Space week 3rd class investigated the solar system. In particular we studied the sky and all the stars we can see depending on the time of year. We had lots of fun and really enjoyed star gazing at home.



4th Class – Rowan

The pupils of Fourth Class Rowan really enjoyed Space Week and produced some beautiful artwork using a wax resist technique with paint and crayon. They also became poets this week, creating marvellously descriptive sensory poems on the theme of autumn.



4th Class – Larch

Hi from 4th class Larch. We are so glad to be back in school because home-schooling was a bit boring. School now is very different, but we have still had lots of fun so far with Ms. Murphy. We've learned loads and had lots of chats. It's been really fun catching up with each other. We've been spending loads of time outside doing trails, drama and PE. We have been working on these beautiful pieces of artwork. We hope you like them.



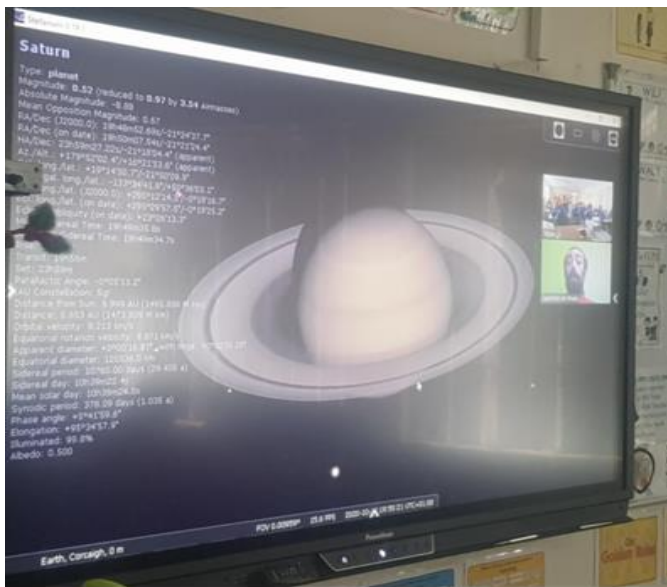
5th Class

5th Class have been very busy since returning to school in September. In History we learned about the Aztecs, we even discovered some artefacts from Aztecs times whilst conducting an excavation in a box activity. There has been great excitement in PE so far this term. We have completed some orienteering activities which required us to read maps whilst translating Morse code and identify pictures around the school grounds. For Space week we designed and made rockets using pipe insulation and rubber bands. Once we had completed the design and make

process, we got to launch them on the Astro pitch. Some of our rockets made it the full length of the pitch and others even went further afield!



6th Class – Ash



As part of Space Week 2020 6th class Ash had a planetarium show on Zoom with the BlackRock Observatory in Co Cork. We learned about how to recognise planets in the sky with our eyes alone. The stars twinkle but the planets have a steady light like a flash light. We also learned about creatures called water bears that live in water can survive being in outer space! They are pretty indestructible! It was a really enjoyable experience and we learned so much!

6th Class – Oak

6th class are learning about WW2 in history. In English we are reading the novel Goodnight Mister Tom, that tells the story of a young boy evacuated from London. In art we created silhouette images of soldiers on the battlefield and cities during the Blitz.



The Flower of Life



The flower of life is a symbol of circles that is often found on flowers and plants. Artists used it for pictures and architects still use it today. It is symmetrical so it relates to maths week. By Evie



Evie from 6th Ash has been learning to draw the 'Flower of Life' as part of her 'Well being ' journal with Ms Jordan. It's a tool for mindfulness really, and as part of it we went out to the garden to find it in nature. She took lots of good photos and drew one of them. She made the connection with 'maths in nature' with the symmetry observation.

P.E.

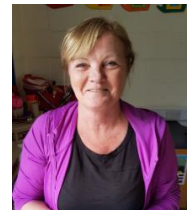
Following the update of our PE Curriculum, the school team have decided to teach PE themselves. You probably noticed that your children have PE timetabled for different days. This is why. As the weather has been so nice, every day we have seen numerous examples of active, enjoyable, curriculum centred PE lessons outdoors. Ms. Ryan and Ms. Roper have kindly taken on the responsibility of coordinating the various PE strands throughout the school year.

Jim Stewart has also started to come in to do cricket with 4th Class.

Our congratulations to Jessica Boland who welcomed a baby boy Patrick.



We also extend a warm welcome to our new cleaner Avril



Parking



It is fantastic to see so many children walking, cycling & scootering to school in the morning. Huge thanks to Geoff Langrell for adjusted the turn-style at the Health Centre gate to enable buggies, bikes etc to come in. We are currently on the lookout for a new bike rack for that entrance.

For those who drive, just a reminder that the official car park for the school is at St Patrick's Church (entrance at the junction of Church Road and Church Lane), where parking is available for all parents and visitors. Those who use this facility may cross Church Road with the Traffic Warden at the school entrance. For safety and logistical reasons, the small car park at the school is strictly limited to Staff and those who require disabled parking facilities. There is strictly no parking on footpath right of teacher's car park spaces as access is required at all times for emergency vehicles,

deliveries etc. We are also asked to remind you to respect any requests by Centra Garage and the Health Centre with regards to their parking policies.

A Child's Prayer

The Children's Choir from Junior Musicals and the adult choir, The Upbeat Choir, joined forces during lockdown, via zoom, to record a truly beautiful and moving rendition of the song "A Child's Prayer". The message is one of hope and guidance as we all settle back into what is the new "norm" of this academic year. The choirs were proposing that this version of the song could raise funds for the two venues where they rehearse (Sunbeam Services & our own school). We are currently uploading the video of them singing onto the website and also a donate button should you wish to do same.

See if you can spot a mother and daughter duo from our own school singing so beautifully...



News from Canon Mungavin

We have had visits every Wednesday since our return from Canon David Mungavin & Rev. Rebecca Guildea. David spends most of his time with both our 6th Classes while Rebecca rotates between the remaining classes week by week.

Here is a few words from David:

"The rain and wind subsided for Outside Assembly with 6th class TG!

We talked about the theme of being lost ... we heard a story of being lost in a supermarket then the relief and joy of being found again. Sometimes when we get lost it is the only time we realise the value of the people and things we take for granted every day.

We heard the great story Jesus told about the Lost Son; he had everything he ever needed but decided he could do better by himself so off he went and made a haimes of his life only to finally realise what a fool he had been when he was feeding the pigs and eating their food . So off he headed home and was amazed at the welcome his father gave him when he arrived home ...

Well, all of us feature in this story, all of us lose our way, usually when we think we are totally in control and don't need any help. The great thing is that we have a God who is longing to welcome us home and always hoping we will remember who we are and where we are from.

Some great questions, answers and a bit of fun - thanks everyone; we beat the weather and enjoyed a warm glow outside!"



Future Events

- + Dress up Day – Friday 23rd October.
- + Mini Marathon – more information will follow in due course from the PTA.

Language Curriculum

We would love for the parents to encourage a “cúpla focal” (couple of words!) around the home and in daily life. Phrases such as:

- + Dia Duit – *Hello (to one)*
- + Dia daoibh (*Hello to more than one*)
- + Dia’s Muire duit/daoibh – *reply to hello*
- + Conas atá tú – *how are you?*
- + Tá mé go maith, go raibh maith agat, agus tú féin – *I am fine, thank you, and you?*
- + An bhfuil nuacht agat – *any news?*
- + Óíche mhaith – *good night*
- + Tá an dinneár réidh – *dinner is ready*
- + Slán – *goodbye*
- + Bíodh lá maith agat – *Have a nice day (to one)*
- + Bíodh lá maith agaibh – *Have a nice day (more than one)*

School Uniform

Just a reminder regarding the school uniform as there has been a few alternative bottoms creeping in!! Parents may choose from the following (with the school crest):

- + Blue fleece jacket
- + Blue hooded top
- + Blue rugby shirt
- + Blue tracksuit top
- + White polo shirt (generic)



The “tops” may be themed with:

- + Navy blue or black trousers
- + Navy blue or black skirt/pinafore
- + Navy blue or black shorts in warm weather

Please remember:

Children who have travelled during the Mid-Term Break from countries not on the Green List should not attend school during the 14-day self-isolation period.