

St. Helen's JNS

Newsletter - March 2024

Seachtain na Gaeilge

Seachtain na Gaeilge a bhí ann i mí an Mhárta agus céiliúradh iontach a bhí ann dár dteanga agus dár gcultúr! D'eagraigh ár bhfoireann imeachtaí éagsúla i rith na seachtaine ina raibh ceol, cluichí, damhsa, scéalta, agus ár tráth na gceist cáiliúil bliantúil! Cuireadh tús leis an tseachtain le ceolchoirm iontach de cheol traidisiúnta agus thug Momo Productions cuairt orainn a léirigh a dhráma sár-ghreannmhar Trioblóid sa Chaisleán chun taitneamh a bhaint as! Ar Telifís na Gaeilge - Scoil Naomh Léan, a cuireadh ar líne i rith na seachtaine, léirigh muid ár ngrá don Ghaeilge trí na comhráite, na hamhráin agus na dánta a bhí á gcleachtadh againn sa rang a roinnt. Ghlacamar páirt i seisiún aclaíochta dian le Mr. Jennings trí Ghaeilge agus bhí tionól speisialta againn agus chuir ár múinteoirí dráma craiceáilte de Na Trí Mhuc Bheaga ar siúl do na páistí.



Chríochnaigh an tseachtain lenár Lá Glas bliantúil ar an Aoine. Ar an lá seo, bhí paráid againn sa chlós, rinne muid rince agus canadh na hamhráin is fearr linn, agus bhaineamar an-taitneamh as céilí iontach le Rang a hAon - faoi stiúir Ms. Manning. Sílim gur féidir linn go léir aontú gurbh í seo an Seachtain na Gaeilge is fearr a bhí againn riamh! Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine

Mr. Jennings

<https://youtu.be/IQWBcLoc7e4>

<https://youtu.be/QB3qzY-vyFk>



Planting Sunflowers

The children put sunflower seeds into clear bags, ensuring they had water and light. Once the seeds were germinated they planted them into small pots, ensuring they had light, water and soil. The first shoots have appeared already.

Senior Infants Ms Rooney





Music Workshop in Cabhair Centre



News from the Cabhair Centre!

This month the children from the Cabhair Centre attended dance classes in Baldoyle Community Centre organised by Fingal. We were very excited heading off each week in the taxis. The classes were given by Carolina. She did lots of dances with us and with children who attend St Michael's House.

In January it was our turn to host an assembly for the whole school. Some of our pupils read our news on the microphone. Claire taught the whole school some Lámh signs and we played a video showing all the hard work we do each day in school.



Moon and Sixpence Puppet Theatre

In January we were treated to a highly entertaining and amusing performance of 'Little Red Riding Hood' by the Moon and Sixpence Puppet Theatre Group.



Children of the Eucharist Room

Condolences

St. Helen's Junior National School would like to offer our sincere condolences to all those who have lost loved ones this term. Our thoughts are especially with The Collins Family, The Leen Family, The McGowan Family & The O' Sullivan Family. Our prayers and thoughts are with all at this time.





Pancake Tuesday 2024

We had an extra special Pancake Tuesday this year in St.Helen's Junior School. The wonderful Parents' Association served us pancakes with delicious toppings of fresh fruit and honey as well as the traditional lemon and sugar! Each child in the school enjoyed receiving a warm, tasty treat on a cold February morning!



Dates for Your Diary...

Easter holidays: School closes Friday 22nd March at 12pm
School reopens Monday 8th April

Primary Maths In service: School closed Friday 12th April (Training for teachers)

Midterm break May: School closed - Monday 6th to Friday 10th May (incl)

June Bank Holiday: School closed - Friday 31st May and Monday 3rd June

Summer Holidays: School closes Friday 28th June at 12pm

New School Year

School reopens Wednesday 28th August 2024 - New school year 2024-25

Engineers Week 2024

At the beginning of March we celebrated Engineers Week organised by Engineers Ireland. We learned that there are many different types of engineers that help solve problems in the world. Each day in school we heard from our Engineers of the Day. Lots of our parents are engineers and they told us all about what it was like to be an engineer. Thanks to all our parents who completed engineer interview forms. We also listened to some stories and read books about being an engineer. The children loved the books from the "If I Built a ..." series by Chris Van Dusen. In class the children engaged in some STEM activities and had lots of fun building and experimenting.

Eimear Kane





Catholic Schools Week: Grandparents' Day

As part of the Catholic Schools Week programme we celebrated Grandparent's Day on the 24th of January 2024. We welcomed the grandparents of our first and second class pupils to our school as our honoured guests! Grandparents visited the classrooms to see where the children learn and play and were treated to special performances of songs, poetry and written work. They then enjoyed refreshments over a chat in the school hall. The school corridors and the hall were decorated with beautiful portraits and written projects the children had created. We concluded Catholic Schools Week with a whole school assembly to share all the work done in each class across the school to celebrate our grannies and grandads. Gwen and Marcella, two very proud grandparents, read lovely prayers. Second Class raised the roof with their beautiful rendition of "When I Grow Up" from Matilda The Musical.



Buíochas ó Ms Lavin...

A thuismitheoirí go léir,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every member of staff for their commitment and wonderful work that has taken place to make the last term so exciting and enjoyable for our school community. To the parents, grandparents, creche facilities and other minders, míle buíochas for all you do to support the school.

The children in 2nd class made their First Confession earlier in the month. I would like to convey our appreciation to the parish of St. Anne's, especially to Ersilia and Canon John for their ongoing support to the class teachers in preparing the children for the sacraments. I also want to take this opportunity to thank our parent volunteer, Norma, for her dedicated work in delivering the Children of The Eucharist Programme. The children and teachers look forward to Norma's regular visit to us as she makes each lesson with the children so special, inclusive and peaceful.

The staff of the Junior School hope that our termly newsletter in addition to the school website will provide a glimpse of some of the fantastic work which is taking place to ensure pupils enjoy and experience a broad, engaging and inclusive education.

The Board of Management would like to acknowledge the supportive and encouraging response to our school's Revised Code of Positive Behaviour Flyer. It is very reassuring that the Health & Safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff is a shared priority for school and home.

Many thanks to our Parents' Association for their huge contribution in making all our school events very special this term and especially for giving the Easter Bunny such help during our annual egg hunt.

On behalf of all the staff of the Junior school, I would like to wish you and your families a very happy Easter. Beannachtaí na Cásca oraibh go léir!

Lorna Lavin and the staff of the Junior School

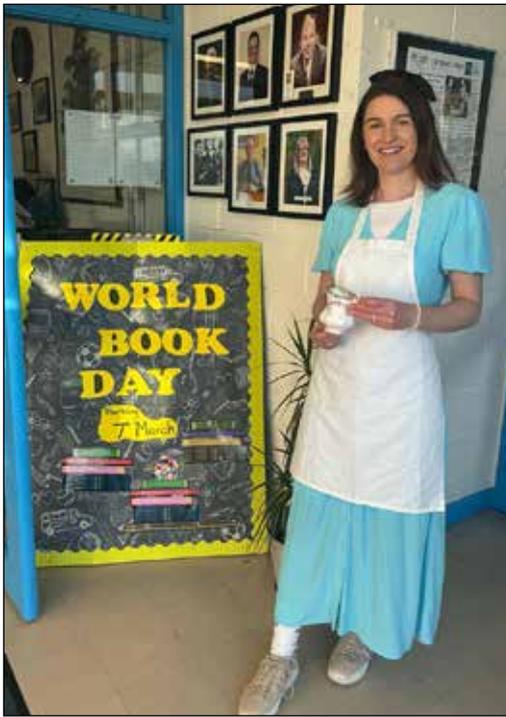
Shared Reading with the Transition Years

The Senior Infant classes are continuing to enjoy a weekly visit from the TY students attending Portmarnock Community School. The children read a variety of books with their buddy during these sessions. It is a really special time spent sharing stories together. The children also write and draw in their copy with the help of their buddy.

The classes will have another chance to read with the Transition Years in term 3.

Andrea Smith





World Book Day 2024



We celebrated World Book Day on Thursday the 7th March. The Children entered a class competition where they designed a book cover of their favourite book, wrote book reviews about books they have read, and created fantastic character profiles.

Mr. Read visited our school and read with each year group. We loved listening to his fabulous stories and exciting voices as he read. The children were captivated. A huge thanks to Mr Read, William Morgan

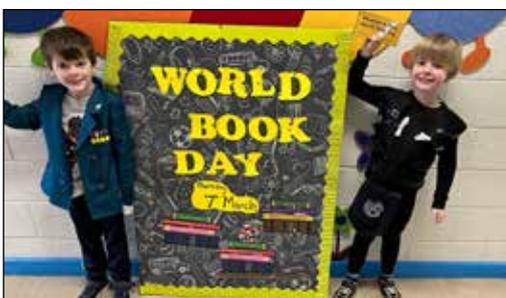


All classes participated in a wonderful 'Where's Wally' Walk around the school. The children found each Wally and answered questions about some of our favourite fairy tales and picture books. The children loved working together to find out their answers to the questions.



The Masked Reader made a return to our screens. The children were so excited to guess which staff member was reading each popular children's book. They were so pleased when the staff member was revealed and especially when the children guessed correctly. We also put a focus back on D.E.A.R. time (Drop Everything And Read). This is where the children read as a class or independently for 10 minutes every day. This literacy initiative takes place daily in every classroom.

The pupils and staff dressed up as book characters or wore their cosy clothes to read their favourite book. Well done to all - everyone looked fantastic!





Our School Trip to the Lark

News from the Parents' Association...

We started the day by taking down our homework (Miss Ahern was not letting us away with that one!) Then the fun began. We were given our partners and we went on a double decker bus. The boys warmed up their voices by singing "The Wheels on the Bus" and "Old MacDonald." When we got to Lark, we went to the theatre and took our seats. Then we started the workshops. The first workshop was an Irish music workshop with a music teacher called Seán. We learned that Seán was in a band. He taught us how to play the bodhrán. We each got a turn. It was great fun! He taught us about jigs and reels. He taught us that the rhythm found in a jig was like "energy energy energy" and the rhythm found in a reel is like "coca cola coca cola coca cola." He also played the banjo for us. After a small snack we had the second workshop. We were really excited to try some African drumming with John. He started by saying hello in a bunch of different languages. It was fun to learn some new words! We each had our own djembe drum or shaker. Conor was given a Dun Dun drum. We really enjoyed learning how to play the drums. We created our own piece of music. The next workshop was the ukulele workshop. We each had our own instrument which Breda taught us how to play. We learned Row Row Row Your Boat. We had a competition between the two groups, The Watermelons and the Mangos. It was fantastic. After lunch we had a big sing song. We all got up on the stage and did some dancing and singing. We learned the song Che Che Coolay. Finally, we petted the lovely fluffy dog in the hallway before we boarded the double decker bus to go home. What a great day! Thank you to Mr. Horan and Ms. Lavin for organising it.
By 2nd class, Room 7 (Ms Ahern)

The year is flying in and we have enjoyed helping out at so many joyous occasions in the Junior School! We had great fun in the school for our first Pancake Tuesday party. The children were delighted to pick their toppings and relished their pancakes with their pals. There was also great excitement on the avenue last week when all dressed up for the school St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The children were very proud wearing their festive Irish colours.

We had super fun when the Easter Bunny visited the boys and girls this week for the annual egg hunt in the Millennium Garden! The children were so excited during the egg hunt which took place for each class. A big thank you to the Easter bunny who gave all the boys and girls a special Easter egg to take home.

Both myself and Sarah Murphy (Parents Association in Senior School) are committed to working with the school community to try and ensure that arrival at school and hometime is safe for the children and families. Thank you to Clare, our traffic warden and to the caretakers Gerry and Paul for their diligent help to keep the road and school avenue safe for the children. We will continue to work on this important issue in the next term and welcome any suggestions from the Parent body.

Wishing you all a happy and safe Easter

Ger Keogh - Chairperson Parents' Association



SAFER INTERNET DAY

In February the children in first and second took part in Safer Internet Day. The children learned all about the motto of the HTML heroes "Stop Think and Check". Each class went to the library to read the story 'The Internet is Like a Puddle'. Each child designed a poster for the Safer Internet Day art competition. Two winners from each class received a homework pass for their prize. Congratulations to all our winners. Every child also received a wristband at the end of the day in praise of their wonderful work to mark Safer Internet Day 2024.

Eimear Kane



A Word from the Chairperson...

Happy Easter – and thank you to everyone for another term of great work and commitment, in particular the children.

There has been a huge amount of work taking place in the school over the last term. It is evident to see how the various occasions, events and initiatives happening every week in school creates such positive and happy learning experiences for all pupils. Grandparents' Day, World Book Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge and Engineers Week were particular highlights enjoyed by the whole school community.

St. Helen's Junior School is renowned for having Wellbeing high on the agenda and all stakeholders have been invited recently to partake in a school survey as part of the School Self Evaluation Process on which there will be a report next term.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all families for their kind support to the school Voluntary Contributions. Due to your generosity classes have enjoyed various opportunities and wonderful experiences in the Visual Arts over the term. To the delight of all pupils and staff the 'Moon and Sixpence Puppet Theatre' performed for the whole school on their return in January. A visit to the Lark Musical Academy in Balbriggan was a delightful experience for the second classes in February and is planned for the first classes after Easter. Pupils in the Cabhair Centre have enjoyed their Tuesday taxi trip and dance class in Baldoye and all participated in a musical workshop which took place in school this week. These experiences could be organised due to the generosity of Voluntary Contributions.

Finally, a huge thanks to all the children, to all the teachers, Special Needs Assistants, Marcella and to our traffic warden Clare who make the school such a safe and happy place for our children. Thanks to our caretaker Gerry for all his wonderful work. A particular thanks to Ms Lavin, the Principal, who, with the help of the school staff, work so energetically and are always committed to the education and wellbeing of our pupils and their families. Thank you.

The Board of Management would like to wish all our families and staff a healthy and happy Easter break.

Celine O'Connell Chairperson BOM



2nd Class Music Talent Show



Easter Bunny Visits St Helen's Junior School







Green Schools update - Global Citizenship 2024

We currently have 6 Green Schools flags in St. Helen's Junior NS. They are "Litter and Waste", "Energy", "Water", "Travel", "Biodiversity" and "Global Citizenship Litter and Waste." This year we have been working hard to achieve our Seventh Green-Schools flag "Global Citizenship Energy". In order to achieve this flag we had to follow the seven steps of the Green-Schools Programme. We also had to show that we have been maintaining the work carried out for the previous Green-Schools Flags.

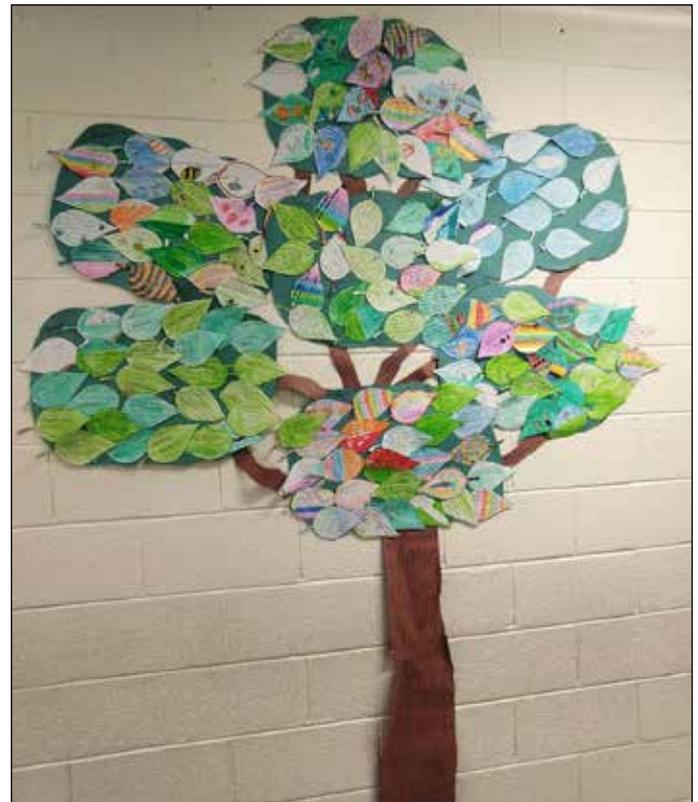
One of the key highlights of our efforts has been the implementation of energy-saving practices throughout the school. The students have learned about the importance of energy conservation and how small changes in behaviour can have a significant impact on reducing our carbon footprint. Simple actions such as turning off lights when not in use, unplugging electronic devices, and utilising natural light whenever possible have become ingrained in our school culture.

In addition to our work on energy conservation we have also been learning about what it means to be a good global citizen. We conducted a whole school nationality survey and celebrated Global Goals week in February 2024.

On March 1st we had a whole school Green-Schools action day. We learned about energy conservation and everyone took part in a whole school poster competition. We created a special Green -Schools tree for the school corridor. We enjoyed some Green-Schools themed walks and we also had a lovely time reading Guzzler's Big Book on Energy in the library. Second class focused on Global Citizenship. They learned all about the seventeen global goals and brainstormed simple ways they can help Planet Earth.

On March the 11th we had a very special Green Schools visitor, Róisín O'Connor Flanagan who came to see all the wonderful work completed by St. Helen's JNS. The Second Class Green-Schools committee members were wonderful tour guides. They showed Róisín everything in our biodiverse gardens as well as some of the features we have installed in the school to conserve water and electricity. They also showed off some of the fabulous work done by the students of our school on our beautifully decorated Green Schools corridor. She loved seeing our unique sensory garden, made up of upcycled materials and our very own bike shed full of bikes and scooters to help us learn all about environmentally friendly travel!

Overall it has been a wonderful term for the Green Schools in St. Helens. We have learned so much



Global Citizenship Committee

about our new topic of "Global Citizenship Energy" and have had a great time reviewing all the work we did on the six previous flags. More than anything we have become much more aware of the importance of energy conservation and how we are part of a much greater global community.

Mary Ahern