



# O'BRENNAN NS NEWSLETTER

December 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of all the staff and pupils at O' Brennan NS I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward with optimism to 2024! As you will see from reading this Newsletter it has been a very busy few months here in O'Brennan. Assemblies, shows, Santa visits and trips out to Siamsa and the Wetlands! Our Fifth and Sixth Class boys will even be busy during the school holidays taking part in a basketball blitz in Castleisland. We all wish them the very best of luck!

## Christmas Mystery Movie Night

On Tuesday December 19<sup>th</sup> we held our annual Christmas Mystery Movie night here in O'Brennan which was extremely well supported. The children arrived with their pyjamas and pillows and made themselves comfortable while watching a Christmas movie. Thank you to all the staff who made the evening so enjoyable.

## Christmas Concerts

The children and staff worked tirelessly on the Christmas concert this year and we can all agree both shows were a great success. Thank you for supporting the night whether it be through attending the show, buying a raffle ticket or donating a prize. It is much appreciated. Junior Infants, Senior Infants and the Arabella room also performed a third time to some special guests. Well done to all involved but especially to all our budding stars of the stage.

## Santa's Visit

Everybody at O'Brennan got a huge surprise last Friday when Santa Claus called in to us for a pre-Christmas visit! After a quick hello to all in Tír na nÓg pre-school, he visited the classes before heading upstairs to his very own Santa's Grotto.

Many thanks to the Parent's Council who were on hand to help out with treats and pictures during Santa's visit. All the boys and girls got to have a photo with Santa and most importantly remind him of what they wanted for Christmas!

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.

Le gach dea-ghuí  
Mary Slattery

## Arabella

It has been a very busy half term in the Arabella room. We have really enjoyed spending time with our friends in Junior and Senior Infants and having the students from Senior Infants visit our classroom to play and learn.

We have been making the most of the mild weather and spending plenty of time outside in the fresh air, playing parachute games and enjoying sensory water and sand play. The children have enjoyed building their gross motor skills and using the climbing frame indoors and outdoors. In the classroom the children have all been enjoying using the play kitchen as part of our 'home' theme and playing pretend, developing lots of new skills with their classmates and friends. We have enjoyed reading the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' and making lovely Gingerbread artwork.

We have celebrated lots of birthdays in our classroom so far this year - Happy Birthday to Córa, Gavin, Salahudeen and Caragh.

Recently we had a very special day when the parents visited our classroom for our Christmas show. Our friends and classmates from Junior and Senior Infants came to our classroom to join our performance of some Christmas songs for our families. Before our visitors came to the classroom, we decorated our

Christmas tree by making a garland. We also painted some seasonal Christmas trees, handprint reindeer and decorated Christmas baubles. A big thank you to Ms Slattery, Ms O'Donnell, Ms O'Sullivan, Eileen, Regina and Anne, Tracey, Marian and Noel for helping us to prepare for this special day. The children enjoyed singing and listening to the songs and taking this chance to celebrate this wonderful time of year with their friends, family and school community.

All of the children enjoyed when a very special visitor from the North Pole came to our classroom. A big thank you to Santa for visiting us and for the chocolate treats.

The children have all done fantastic work since the beginning of the school year and are looking forward to a fun and relaxing Christmas break.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas.

Ms. Brennan

### Junior Infants

What a busy couple of months we have had in the Junior Infant room. The children have worked so hard and deserve a well-earned break for Christmas.

We now know 22 sounds and are blending words to read very well in lists and books. We have begun our cursive handwriting and are working hard on this tricky skill. In maths we know numerals 1, 2 and 3. And we have read some really fun and interesting books in school such as 'Baby Brains', 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', 'Dear Father Christmas' and 'The Night Before Christmas'.

In Aistear, the children enjoyed playing in 'The Hospital' and 'Santa's workshop'. Wrapping presents ready for Santa's sack has been a favourite activity.

We have had lots of Birthdays in Junior Infants recently; Jaye, Emily, Nathan and Ryan celebrated

their birthdays in November and Dáithí and Fionn celebrated their birthdays in December.

Our Christmas Play 'Ralph the Reindeer' was a huge hit. The children were so brave and worked hard saying their lines, and singing and dancing before a big audience. Well done, everyone!

Snowball our Christmas Elf arrived at the beginning of December and has been keeping a close eye on everything in the classroom. He was very impressed by all the hard work and beautiful handwriting happening in Junior Infants. I'm sure he will have a glowing report for Santa!

This week we had our movie night where we watched one of our favourite movies, 'The Grinch'. The children really enjoyed coming to school in the evening and watching a movie together. At school we baked Christmas cookies, to get us in the swing for the Christmas holidays.

Merry Christmas everyone and Happy New Year!  
See you in January 2024!

Mrs. O'Donnell

### Senior Infants

What a busy few weeks we have had here in Senior Infants getting ready for Christmas. In Aistear we have learnt all about how The Café works while in December we set up our very own Post Office and learnt about how Santa gets all our letters. We also wrote postcards to another Senior Infants class in Dublin, and we were super excited to get their responses delivered to our classroom by the postman.

Senior Infants worked really hard on their Christmas Show 'Santa's Broken Sleigh' which we performed not once, not twice, but three times for the whole school and our families. We put on a fantastic show and no doubt some of us will be on Broadway in years to come.

We also visited our friends in the Arabella Class- Fionn, Salahudeen, Cora and Oliver, and sang our

Christmas songs with them for their moms and dads. It was the perfect way to get into the Christmas spirit.

Senior Infants were very lucky to visit Siamsa Tíre with Junior Infants and 1st Class to watch 'The Little Mermaid' live on stage. There was lots of singing and dancing and we really enjoyed the performance. We also got a surprise visit in school from the big man himself, Santa Claus who invited us into his grotto and shared some sweet treats with us all. Our Movie Night was a great success and we loved watching The Grinch with our classmates while we enjoyed lots of lovely treats!

For the month of December, we have been joined in the classroom by a new student and one of Santa's elves- Charlie. He has been keeping a very close eye on us and reporting back to Santa each day while also causing some mischief! Charlie has told Santa that everyone in Senior Infants is on the good list this year because they have worked so hard on their sounds, maths, handwriting, artwork and they have shown so much kindness to their classmates. I have no doubt that Santa will be very good to all the boys and girls in Senior Infants!!

Caomhán, Daisy and Polina were our November assembly certificate winners while Cooper, Dan and Saoirse joined them in December. Star of the Day is still highly sought after every day and the whole class have worked really hard to fill the Star Jar and have earned a night off homework when we come back in January!!

Wishing you all a very enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year. Nollaig shona daoibh go léir.

Ms. A. O'Sullivan

### **First Class**

First class have had a very busy December preparing for Christmas. The children have been

working extremely hard and they are all ready for a well-earned break.

We had great fun preparing for our Christmas play 'Santa's on Strike'. The children enjoyed learning the songs and actions, and were excellent at learning their lines. They were delighted to perform on stage for all of the families. The children did a fantastic job and I am so proud of them all!

We have been busy creating Winter Art and learning about Winter traditions around the world. We made lovely snowmen, Christmas trees and even designed our own Christmas jumpers!

We have been practising our tricky words and have been putting a lot of work into our cursive writing. We have also been learning lots of new vocabulary and phrases as Gaeilge for our theme 'An Nollaig'. Our favourite song is 'Daidí na Nollag ag Teacht'.

Wishing you all a lovely break and best wishes for the New Year! Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir!

Ms O'Sullivan

### **Second Class**

What a quick and busy two months this has been for the boys and girls in second class! November and December have been bustling with lots of activities and everyone is ready for a well-earned Christmas break!

In November we celebrated Science Week. We took part in a paper chain challenge; we learned all about sound and different sounds around us and we participated in a CSI Webinar where we used clues from fairytale characters to solve who committed a crime.

One of the highlights of the year so far has been the School Christmas Show. The boys and girls worked so hard learning their lines, practicing on the stage and preparing for our show, *Christmas with the Aliens*. We had lots of fun rehearsing for

the final night and the boys and girls were excellent!!

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of December, we had our Enrolment Ceremony for the boys and girls making their First Holy Communion. Thank you to Fr Gearóid who helped us to prepare and who officiated the ceremony. Well done to the boys and girls who prepared so well.

As the Christmas preparations got under way, we counted down the days with our Advent Calendar. We welcomed Ralphie, our elf, into our classroom, we had a visit from Santa as well as visiting Santa's Grotto upstairs. We wore Christmas Jumpers on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December while we also had great fun at our Christmas Movie night on Tuesday!!

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas!  
Nollaig Shona Daoibh go Léir!

Ms Barry

### Third Class

3rd class had a very busy term! We worked really hard preparing our school play which was based on the story of how The Grinch stole Christmas. The children noted their favourite part was when the Grinch's small heart grew three sizes. Well done to all involved, the hard work paid off the performances were excellent!

As a treat for all their hard work the children went on a trip to the Wetlands where they took part in a scavenger hunt and had a hot chocolate to warm up!

Our classroom is decorated in lots of Christmas art. Fabric and fibre was one of our art strands this term. The children did an excellent job and I think we may have some budding designers amongst us.

In 3rd class we celebrated Clódagh, Ella-May and Isha's birthday in November. In December, we

celebrated Sabhdh S, Amelie and Jason's birthday.

I think it fair to say the children and their teacher are really looking forward to a Christmas Break.

**Wishing all of you a very Happy Christmas!!  
Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2024!**

Ms Carroll

### Fourth Class

We have had an action-packed November and December in 4th Class with lots of fun and learning taking place. Here is a little glimpse of life in 4th Class the past two months.

We celebrated Science week in November with some cool experiments. Our Magic Rainbow Milk experiment explored how some molecules in liquids can form bonds when they meet and our Floating Eggs experiment investigated density. We also learned a lot about Polar Bears and how the papillae on their paw pads allow them to walk on ice without slipping. As a follow-on Science activity, children came up with lots of creative designs and drawings for non-slip shoes.

Christmas and Winter have been big features in Art the past two months. Keeping with the theme of Polar Bears, children had fun drawing cartoon and realistic polar bears. Having read about the Northern Lights in English, children created beautiful landscape artwork depicting the aurora borealis. Clay was used to sculpt Christmas stars – some children opted to create an ornament while others opted to create a star to hang on their Christmas Tree. We enjoyed listening to 'Walking in the Air' while using chalk pastels to create Flying Snowmen. There was also lots of laughter and fun while creating sock snowmen with rice this week.

A big highlight of November and December was our preparation for Scrooge – our Christmas Concert. Drama and Music classes took on a life of their own with children really stepping outside of their comfort zone to get into character. Children enjoyed

exploring different ways of using their voices and bodies to give a character a stronger sense of identity. We also had wonderful choreography being put together in class and on the yard to go with our songs. There was lots of excitement and healthy jitters before going on stage, the children had a ball performing for you all. Thanks for being such a great audience.

In History, we have been learning a lot about our school in the past. Examining the old roll books captured the children's minds and imaginations – some looking for relatives and some in awe of the beautiful cursive handwriting of decades gone by.

In Religion in November we took time to pause and remember our loved ones who are in Heaven. In December, we have been learning about Advent as a time of preparation, the birth of John the Baptist, the Angelus and the Epiphany.

Finally, we are delighted to welcome Matvii as our newest member of 4<sup>th</sup> Class. Matvii joined us just in time to perform Scrooge with us. A big congratulations to our November and December assembly winners – Polina, Aoibhinn, Daniel, Ashley, Anna and Callum. All the boys and girls in 4<sup>th</sup> Class have worked fantastically the past two months and truly deserve a wonderful Christmas.

We wish you all a lovely Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Nollaig shona daoibh go léir.

Ms Brosnan and Ms Costello

### **Fifth Class**

What an action-packed term this was in fifth class. Everyone has been working really hard in class and are all ready for a well-deserved Christmas rest!!

Following the Halloween break as the evenings

became increasingly darker we started the month of November focusing on road safety awareness. The children did fantastic work in creating road safety awareness posters that are displayed around our class and school for all pupils to see.

Science week also took place in November where we began the "Meet the Scientist" programme for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> class children. This programme runs up to February and involves children seeing scientists from different fields explaining their area of expertise followed by a Q&A session from all participating schools. We had great fun doing our STEM paper tower challenge build which really uncovered some really creative design and engineering ideas in our class.

It was great to see all the children's hard work pay off in the run up to Christmas to perform brilliantly in the school Christmas show "Elf". A big thank you to all parents/guardians for providing the children with excellent props and costumes for their respective roles. Well done to everyone involved.

Lastly, I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and look forward to seeing you all refreshed in the new year.

Mr O'Connor

### **Sixth Class**

Everyone in 6th class was in the Christmas spirit over the past few weeks!

6th class had lots of fun making Christmas paper stars. We also made advent window displays using contact paper, crepe paper and card. Santa came in for an unexpected visit and answered many questions from all the class. Our Christmas show "Toy Show" was great fun and also hard work. Well done to all the class!

In other news the children had their enrolment night preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. We would like to thank Fr. Gearóid for all his help and

guidance.

We in 6th class have had so much fun this year and can't wait for what the rest of the new year will bring for us.

Merry Christmas and a Happy new year from everyone in 6th class!

Ms Buckley

### School Choir

Well done to our School Choir who sang Winter Song and Winter Wonderland so beautifully in our Christmas Concert. Lovely harmonies and melodies filled the corridors the past few weeks as they rehearsed.

There have been some enquires about new member joining the choir after Christmas. If any new members from 3rd to 6th class would like to join the choir, practice will be resuming in the New Year so feel free to come along. We would love to have you.

### Student Council

Our newly elected student council held their first meeting in November. They discussed their role as members of the Student Council, they brainstormed ideas and explored ways they could communicate with the rest of the school. Re-organising the new library upstairs was their first job.



Our student council assisted with the collection of the Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal. Team Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal is an annual campaign that delivers gifts straight into the hands of children affected by poverty. Often these shoebox gifts are the only gift that a child will receive at Christmas and the joy that they bring is incredible. Thank you to everyone who contributed by dropping in a shoebox or by donating. The school received over **130 shoeboxes** which is incredible!! Thanks to local volunteer Paula for assisting with the shoebox appeal.

