

St. Brigid's Boys' School

Christmas Newsletter

December 2020



Principal's Welcome

As Term One draws to a close, I want to thank our entire school community for your positive attitude, resilience and support over the past number of months. It is great to see the many happy faces bouncing in our school gates each morning. It is a pleasure to greet all of the families at drop off and collection times. There is a real sense of community spirit in St. Brigid's BNS. Well done to all involved.

The staff of St. Brigid's BNS, our dedicated team of teachers, Special Needs Assistants, Pauline our secretary and Barry our caretaker deserve a special word of thanks this Christmas. They have gone above and beyond to ensure the boys are safe and happy in school each day and it is due to their dedication and diligence that the reopening of the school has been such a positive experience for all involved.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work which has been undertaken by the Board of Management over the past number of months to prepare the school for its reopening and to ensure the safety of staff and pupils since September. We thank them for their continued support.

This year has brought many challenges, new routines and adjustments for all of us. As we break for the Christmas Holidays I am delighted to report that there has also been plenty of opportunities for active learning, fun and adventure in St. Brigid's BNS. We hope you enjoy our newsletter.

Fiona Griffin, Principal

Message from the Board of Management

2020 has been a challenging year in every aspect of our lives, but against this St Brigid's BNS and our community of dedicated staff, wonderful boys and committed parents have come together to keep the show on the road. It was hugely important that we got back to learning onsite in September, and I want to thank Fiona Griffin and her team for the tireless work over the summer to ensure that this was achieved. Because of everyone's efforts, we have got through the first term without major incident and embedded handwashing, one-way systems and physical distancing seamlessly in daily life.

So much of what we enjoy in school life has been curtailed – sports, after school activities, Christmas plays, the School Fair, swimming, class trips – the list is endless. In spite of this, all our staff have gone above and beyond to ensure the boys enjoyed a great term of learning, fun and creativity. For their part the boys have demonstrated incredible resilience, which is a testament to the

support they receive from home. The school and the Board are very grateful to parents for this.

The business of the Board has continued, albeit online, in supporting school management and in planning for the future. We have welcomed a new Father's representative, Brian Gaffney, to the Board, and the aim would be that the current 8 members now continue through to the end of the Board cycle in November 2023. A big change this year has been the introduction of a new Enrolment process which applies to all schools. A key aim of this has been to improve transparency so parents can plan appropriately, and I'm delighted that we have been able to implement this effectively while protecting in our priority criteria, the vital link between the school and the local community. Connected to this at the other end of the school journey we have established a new feeder relationship with CBC Monkstown. This, alongside existing feeder arrangements, supports St Brigid's boys in transitioning to the next stage of their education.

I hope you all enjoy a safe, relaxing break over Christmas, and like you all, I look forward with hope to a better 2021.

Nick Baird, Chairperson, Board of Management

Message from the Parents Association

On behalf of the Parents' Association we would like to say a huge thank you to all of the parents who contributed so generously to this year's Christmas raffles, both through prize donations and purchase of tickets. The annual Christmas Fair is a huge event in the school calendar and it was sorely missed this year but to have had such support for our raffles is hugely appreciated.

The total raised from the two raffles is €20,000 which is an amazing total. Each school will receive a cheque for €10,000 from the Parent's Association as a result of your generosity and support.

We would like to say a big thank you to all the parents who have attended our virtual meetings so far this year. A huge thank you also to Pauline and Elaine for their ongoing assistance and to Fiona and Elaine (Carroll) for their continued support of the PA. A special thanks to David Breslin from Pace Print for supplying the raffle tickets again this year.

We would like to thank all of the sponsors of the raffle for their very kind donations. Our sponsors are listed on the last page of our Newsletter. On behalf of the PA we would like to wish all the families in the school a very Happy (and safe) Christmas.

Sinead Clarke and Laura Herangi
Chair BNS Chair GNS





School News

This year we welcomed 60 Junior Infant to St. Brigid's BNS. I am delighted to report the boys are a wonderful addition to St. Brigid's and are thriving under the direction of our Junior Infant team, Ms. O'Sullivan, Ms. O'Neill, Ms. McNerney, Ms. O'Kane and Ms. Burke.

We bid farewell to Mr. John Sheanon and Ms. Donna McMahon, along with Mr. Chris O'Sullivan and Ms. Laura Hughes who have been on career break for a number of years. We thank each of them for their dedicated service to St. Brigid's over their careers with us and we wish them all the best in the future.

We welcomed Mr. Brian Neary and Ms. Niamh O'Brien to the staff and welcomed Ms. Caoimhe Cooke back from her career break. The sound of wedding bells was also in the air this term as two staff members celebrated their weddings. Congratulations to Ms. Joanne Buckley, Ms. Caoimhe Cooke and their new husbands on their recent wedding celebrations.

Christmas Activities

The air in St. Brigid's BNS is filled with Christmas spirit this year! Our staff and boys have outdone themselves in the area of Christmas decorations. The corridors have been transformed with Christmas themed doors and the boys' recycled Christmas decorations adorn the school Christmas tree.



We had some very worthy winners in the DLR recycled Christmas Decoration Competition this year. Congratulations to Barra Martin (Junior Infants) who came first in the Junior Infants to First Class category for his beautiful decoration. Hugo Breslin (2nd Class) was awarded a Special Merit award for his creation in the 2nd – 4th Class category. The following boys were highly commended in their categories: Edward Richardson, Patrick O'Shea, Joseph O'Shea, Christopher Murphy, Yash Varadharajan, Gabriel Hurezu, Kevin O'Shea, Daniel Harnett, Conor McKiernan, Charlie Cannon and Hugo Breslin. Well done to you all.

Our classes have been busy rehearsing and recording Christmas plays over the past number of weeks. We have certainly missed having a live audience but we hope you enjoy our efforts from the comfort of your homes. We are very proud of the boys and our staff for their recording and editing skills.



Our resident school elf has returned again this year and can be found swinging from trees all over the school campus. We decided it was finally time to give him a name. The boys contributed many suggestions and after much deliberation we settled on Marty as a very apt name for our school elf. Congratulations to Andrew Williams in 6th class who proposed this name.



The boys enjoyed the virtual Helix Pantomime, 'The Sword in the Stone'. It went down a treat with all classes and it was reported to be as good as the Gaiety! The boys also tuned into, 'Sammy Snowflake', the Christmas play created by Paul and Ciara Cullen in Arclight Speech and Drama. It was lovely for the boys to see familiar faces on the screen from their speech and language classes over the years.

A Christmas writing competition kept the boys busy in December and got their creative juices flowing. We all enjoyed some wonderful stories. One winner was selected from each class and the lucky boy received a chocolate Santa.

Congratulations to our very talented winners:

- Junior Infants: Ollie McLoughlin, Seán Russell & Oisín Byrne
- Senior Infants: Jamie McAuliffe Keogh & Billy Byrne
- 1st Class: Cillian O'Connor & Ryan Broughan
- 2nd Class: Jonathan Hickey & Ben O'Beirne
- 3rd Class: Ben Crowley & Harry Walsh, 3rd Class
- 4th Class: Charlie Duggan & Jonathan Reynolds
- 5th Class: Evan Fanning & Matthew Whelan
- 6th Class: Ryan Dennis & Neil Richardson

Fun Runs

The boys have put on their running shoes on two occasions this year. A Halloween themed fun run and a Christmas fun run have taken place and were thoroughly enjoyed by all. The Christmas Jumper Day and fun run was held as a fundraiser for the two local St. Vincent De



Paul offices in Cabinteely and Foxrock. Our Students' Council were responsible for selecting this very worthy charity. Thanks to





your generosity a total of €2424 was raised. This has been divided equally between the two offices who were extremely grateful. The contributions will make a big difference to families this Christmas.

MS Readathon



In November St. Brigid's BNS took part in the MS Readathon under the direction of Ms. Ruth Sheehy. Due to the engagement and generosity of the whole school

community it quickly grew to become one of the biggest fundraisers St. Brigid's BNS has

ever seen! Over the month of November, 336 boys in St. Brigid's raised over €24,200 for MS Ireland by reading 3,336 books! We would like to offer our huge congratulations and gratitude to every single boy who took part. You have made such a difference in the lives of people living with MS. You should be very, very proud of yourselves. Thank you to all the parents, families and friends who supported the participants and donated to such a wonderful cause. MS Ireland have been in contact and said they were "in awe" of the boys in St. Brigid's as they watched the numbers rise every day.

Here are a few other Readathon achievements:

St. Brigid's is the top fundraising school in the entire country this year.

Ms. McAdam's 5th Class is the 2nd top class for fundraising.

Mr. Coleman's 1st Class is the 4th top class for fundraising.

Ms. McDonough's 2nd Class is the 8th top class for fundraising.

Jack Dunne, Harry Dalton and Matthew Brennan in Mr. Coleman's class all won individual awards for their achievements. Ms. McAdam, Mr. Coleman and Ms. Sheehy were nominated for teacher awards. Ms. McAdam was a very worthy winner of this award. Congratulations Ms. McAdam!

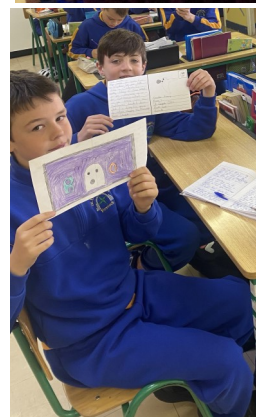
Needless to say, the MS Readathon was a huge success in our school this year! We hope it has fostered a love of reading among the boys.

Students' Council

Our school Student Council is up and running for its second year until the care of Mr. Coleman. Nine boys from 3rd-6th class make up the Council. The boys learned all about elections, manifestos and casting a vote during the process which took place in November. Thankfully it was a lot less contentious than other recent elections and the process was enjoyed by all! Well done to all the boys who ran in the recent elections and a special mention to our Student Council for the 2020-2021 school year. James Lawlor, Callum Barrett, Alex Kavanagh, Harry Malone, Harry Grennan, Fionn Ferris, Max Morgan, Evan Gill and Con Twomey. We look forward to working with you for the remainder of the year.

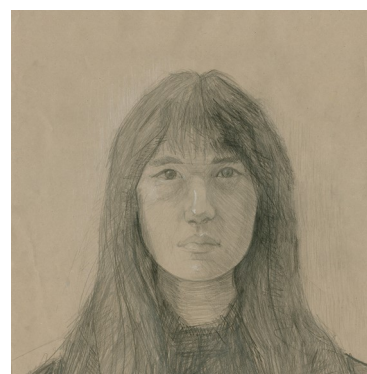
Other Events

Over the course of this term, we have celebrated Friendship Week, Science Week and Maths Week. The boys have engaged extremely well in all activities and the school was a hive of fun and inventive activities.



As part of Maths week the boys from 1st – 6th class engaged with the Mangahigh Challenge. As a school we finished 4th overall on 25,251 points. Mr Neary's 5th class came first in our school earning them a Pizza Party. Ms. Lynch's 6th class followed closely in 2nd place, with Mr. Melia's 6th class finishing in 3rd place. The Top Ten boys in the school were Lorcan Wong, Denis Fayden, Ciarán Wong, Ryan Stack, Steve Thomas, John Mc Coy, Yash Varadharajan, Eamonn

Bang Lyons, Edward Richardson and Kamran Jadavpour. Congratulations boys!



We are very proud of 4th class pupil, Jimmy Zheng who came first in the Texaco Children's Art Competition. Jimmy drew a very detailed portrait of his mother and is a deserving winner. Congratulations Jimmy!

As part of our Green Schools Initiative, our two 1st classes are taking part in the 'Picker Pals' environmental action programme. The boys and their parents have been busy keeping our local environment clean and tidy.

We received an early Christmas present in the form of an ICT grant from the Department of Education and Skills to the value of €18,000. We look forward to spending it on improving our ICT infrastructure in the new year.





Road Safety

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents of the importance of Road Safety in the areas surrounding St. Brigid's BNS. We ask all parents to ensure they park in a safe and legal manner at all times. Please do not mount the footpaths in St. Brigid's Park or on Mart Lane. Some of the local residents are wheelchair users and are unable to access the footpaths at drop off and collection times due to being blocked by cars. For safety we also remind you not to leave your car running when it is stationary outside the school gates at drop off and collection time, in particular when you leave the car. Finally, we ask for your cooperation and adherence to our informal one-way system which operates at drop off and collection time. Please enter via Kerrymount/St. Brigid's Park and exit via Mart Lane.

It is wonderful to see so many boys walking, cycling and scooting to school. We remind parents that boys travelling to school by bike or scooter should wear a helmet for the full duration of their journey.

Parents' Corner

We understand the past nine months have been challenging for our boys with lots of new worries and anxieties creeping into everyday life. I would like to draw your attention to the following resources which may be useful for you at home. These have been recommended by the schools NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service Psychologist). We hope they are of assistance to some families.

For Parents:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/how-to-calm-and-support-your-child-primary.pdf>

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/managing-stress-and-anxiety-a-guide-for-parents-guardians-primary.pdf>

Podcast: Asking for a friend by Dr. Coleman Noctor (available on Spotify).

For Students:

<https://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Announcements/new-relaxation-techniques.pdf>

<https://soundcloud.com/user-719669409/relaxation-techniques-30-03-2020>

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/managing-stress-and-anxiety-a-guide-for-students.pdf>

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/normalising-thoughts-and-feelings-a-guide-for-students.pdf>

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/panic-attacks-a-guide-for-students.pdf>

Christmas Raffle

On behalf of the Board of Management and School we would like to extend our thanks to the Parents' Association and Christmas Committee lead by Bronwyn O'Farrell for all of the work this year. We are blown away by the monies raised by the raffle and look forward to spending them on school infrastructure and activities which will directly benefit the boys.

Congratulations to the winners in our Children's Raffle:

IPad Mini - Oisín Boland
PS4 Fifa 21 Bundle - Henry Gilligan
Places in Dublin Stage School - Charlie Roche
250e Smyths Voucher - Charlotte Cahill
250e Dundrum Voucher - Eve Andrews
200e Smyths - Poppy Maher
200e JD Sports Voucher - Louis Holton
Family Membership to Dublin Zoo - Annalise Peet
Samsung Tablet - Aoife Prenter
Membership the St. Brigid's Rugby Club - Laura Merry
Saorbuga Bluetooth Bundle - Annabelle Wozniak
Membership to Geraldine's GAA Club - John Donnelly
100e Dundrum Cinema Voucher - Emily Kinnane
100e Smyths Voucher - Shai O'Connor
100e Smyths Voucher - Sarah Herangi
100e One4All Voucher - Finn Hanrahan
50e Dundrum Voucher - Josh Fitzpatrick
50e Dundrum Voucher - Oscar Looby
50e Smyths Voucher - Harry Fitzsimons
50e Grandstand Sports Vouchers - Charlie Roche
10"x10" Personalised Canvas - Lorcan Wong
40e Smyths Voucher - Kyle Lawson
30e One4All Voucher - Louise Purcell

Thank you to our Sponsors:

Ronan Daly Jermyn Solicitors (www.rdj.ie), Intelligo Let's Move Properties, Dublin Stage School, St Brigid's Rugby Club, Saorbuga, Geraldine's GAA, Kidzcanvas, Blackrock Builders Providers, Sacyr, Hiltons Pharmacy Cornelscourt, Purcell & Woodcock, Doyle's Nurseries, Lucynagle.com, Hyposlim Weight Loss Clinic, Fiona & Ken O'Connor Texaco Foxrock & Cornelscourt, Core Credit Union Cornelscourt, TJ O'Mahony DIY Stores, Wines Direct, Hostaro Tableware Ltd, Julia's Favourite Granola.

Looking forward – Term 2

St. Brigid's BNS will reopen on Wednesday the 6th of January 2021 for the new term.

In term 2 we are hopeful we will get to celebrate the remaining Confirmation and our Communion from the 2019-2020 school year. Boys, we thank you for your patience with the setbacks and delays we have experienced to date. We look forward to celebrating your special day with you in due course.

Parent Teacher Meetings will be conducted remotely via video conferencing from February 1st 2021 – February 11th 2021. The booking system on Aladdin will open in mid-January. We will inform you of this at the time.

From all of us in St. Brigid's we wish you and your loved ones a safe, happy and healthy Christmas. We look forward to 2021 with hope in our hearts.

