



We wish you a MERRY Christmas!

ST. BRIGID'S BOYS' SCHOOL

CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2021

Principal's Welcome

Welcome to our Christmas Newsletter of 2021. This term has once again been a challenging year for us all in terms of Covid-19 and keeping our school community safe. However, despite the challenges that Covid presented, we have had a very happy, busy and fun term here in St. Brigid's!

I would like to thank you all for your continued support in helping us overcome the many challenges related to Covid-19. The cessation of contact tracing in schools, the subsequent introduction of antigen testing, the introduction of mask wearing for our 3rd-6th class pupils and the constant monitoring of cold and flu symptoms has been challenging. This, coupled with the day to day task of teaching and learning has certainly kept us busy! You have worked with us through all of these measures and we are extremely grateful for your support.

The staff of St. Brigid's BNS, our dedicated team of teachers and 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 we have been able to remain open each day to welcome the boys. I would also like to thank the numerous subs who have passed through our doors this term and helped us in our hours of need.

Thank you to our dedicated Board of Management and Parents Association for their continued support and dedication to our school.

As we break for the Christmas Holidays I wish you all a happy, safe and healthy Christmas from the team in St. Brigid's. We look forward to 2022 with hope in our hearts. We hope you enjoy our newsletter.

Fiona Griffin, Principal

Message from the Board of Management

2021 has again been a challenging year for us all, as Covid-19 continues to disrupt for every aspect of our lives. Vaccination continues to provide hope, but yet we end the year with a spectre of a fourth wave very much looming. Despite all this, St Brigid's BNS and our fantastic community of staff, boys and parents continue to come together to provide the best possible learning experience. We are by no means operating at 'normal', but we have at least been able to stay open, and re-introduce some of the activities which are vital in supporting the broad holistic development of the boys, all in a safe, creative and fun way. There have been many asks of parents throughout the year, and I sincerely want to thank you for your committed support in these and also in the incredible resilience your instill in the boys. This makes navigating this uncertain time while delivering learning so much more manageable.

Alongside this, we continue the business of the Board in supporting school management and in planning ahead. Covid-19 continues to complicate this, not least because guidance provided in complex areas is often at best opaque. However, we endeavour to always balance the needs of school community and the guidelines we are required to implement in a practical way and to the best of our ability. In this I want to thank my Board colleagues, Fiona Griffin for her superb and dedicated leadership, the school management team, and our staff.

I hope you all enjoy a safe, relaxing break over Christmas, and like you all, I look forward with hope to a better 2022.

Nick Baird, Chairperson, Board of Management

Message from the Parents' Association

On behalf of the Parents' Association we would like to say a massive thank you to all of the parents who contributed so generously to our 2021 Christmas raffles, both through prize donations and the purchase of tickets. Our annual Christmas Fair fundraiser was again greatly missed this year so to have such fantastic support for our raffles is hugely appreciated. We would like to say a big thank you to all the parents in our school community who have already contacted us with their very kind offers of assistance and time in our Donate an Hour campaign. We look forward to our official launch in the New Year. A huge thank you also to Pauline and Elaine for their ongoing assistance and to Ms. Griffin and Ms. Carroll for their continued support of the PA. A special thanks to Dave Breslin from Pace Print for supplying the raffle tickets again this year. On behalf of the PA we would like to wish all the families in our school community a very Happy (and safe) Christmas.

Louise Donnelly - Chair BNS

Ruth Keane - Chair GNS

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. Our corridors have been transformed with Christmas themed doors creating a very festive atmosphere!



All classes took part in the annual Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Recycled Christmas Decoration Competition again this year. We have received some fantastic entries from all classes. Our school Christmas tree is

looking spectacular as a result. Thank you to all boys and their families for getting involved again this year. Congratulations to Joshua Hennessy 6th class, Sean Keane 5th class, Karol Ocwieja & Kevin Farinas 4th class, Jack Meehan & Hugo Breslin 3rd class, Guorui Sui & Oisín Quinn 2nd class, Cillian Mooney 1st class, Henry McNamara, Oisín Byne & Cameron Rothschild Holt Senior Infants, Ben Waldron, Anthony Chalominiuk & Charlie Gibney Junior Infants for receiving highly commended certificates for their decorations in each of their categories.



Some 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!



Merry Christmas!

The boys enjoyed the virtual Helix Pantomime, 'Red Riding Hood'. It went down a treat with all classes. We hope to be back in the Gaiety Theatre for a live show in 2022!

The boys in Junior Infants have had a very busy couple of weeks participating in lots of amazing webinars. They had a wonderful drawing workshop with cartoon artist Sarah Bowie, a novelty baking workshop with Kater4Kidz, a storytelling webinar with an author and a number



of Christmas Chemistry webinars. We also had a Christmas Sing-Along with Aileen which was lots of fun and a Let's Play with Clay workshop with Patricia Howard. Look at the delicious treats the boys made in their baking session!

STEM

The boys in 5th class are currently engaging with lessons on the Ireland's Future is MINE project through the subjects of Maths, English, Art, SESE, and SPHE. After Christmas, the boys will put all they know to the test, and take part in a competition to build a more sustainable version of our community using Minecraft: Education Edition.



The boys in Junior Infants have been learning how to code by giving instructions to a Beebot. A Beebot is a programmable robot who helps the boys learn skills of sequencing, directional language and problem-solving. They work with the Beebots during their station time, where they're still working hard at fine motor skill development and phonological awareness. Well done Junior Infants!

This year we purchased an additional two i-pad trolleys for our school. This was a significant investment and was funded by the proceeds of the Christmas raffle in 2020. We now have four i-pad trolleys in our school with 16 i-pads per trolley. Each class has scheduled slots where the boys engage in digital learning.

The Board of Management has also made a significant investment in our ICT infrastructure this year. We purchased 9 additional interactive screens for our classrooms (an investment of in excess of €25,000). This brings the total number of interactive screens to 16. These are an excellent resource to aid the teaching and learning experience in our classrooms and both the teaching staff and boys are delighted to have them. Items such as these could not be purchased without your generous voluntary contributions and we thank you for your generosity.



Sport and Fun Runs

All classes from Junior Infants to 6th Class have been taking part in the Fyffes Fit Squad initiative since the beginning of November. Fyffes are on the hunt to find 'Ireland's Fittest School' and we are well on our way to achieving this goal. With the Fit Squad coaches, Olympians Phil Healy and David Gillick, providing the exercises each week online and our wonderful teachers guiding the boys, our school is a hive of activity. Each week we earn some banana points by completing weekly exercises to move up the school leader board. This initiative will run into the New Year and ends in April. Many thanks to Ms. McAdam for leading this initiative and keeping us all so motivated!

The boys from Junior Infants to Second Class have enjoyed GAA with Johnny Magee, our Gaelic Promotions Officer from Geraldine Morans in Term 1. Johnny has been very impressed with the boys Gaelic skills. Our 3rd – 6th class boys will benefit from Johnny's coaching skills in Term 2.

The boys in St. Brigid's were all supporting Geraldine Morans in their big final in November. The school was adorned with Gers flags and signs reading 'Gers Abú'. Although it wasn't Gers day this year, we look forward to supporting them in the Championship again next year.

Congratulations to our 5th class boys in St. Brigid's Rugby club. They represented the Club in the RDS recently at the half time match in the Leinster Connacht game. The boys displayed wonderful teamwork and rugby skills. Their performance was enjoyed by all. Well done boys!



Our Annual Halloween and Christmas Fun Runs took place in St. Brigid's Park again this year. Well done to all of the boys and their teachers for taking part!

Cycle Safety

The boys in 5th and 6th class have been engaging in cycle safety training over the past number of weeks. This will continue into term 2. The boys have been learning about cycle safety and were very active on their bicycles each week. We are delighted to see the large number of boys cycling to school this year. We remind the boys to ensure they are wearing their helmets at all times on the journey to and from school.

Other Events

The year we have also celebrated Science Week, Friendship Week, Climate Action Week and National Tree Day with the boys engaging in lots of activities with their teachers.

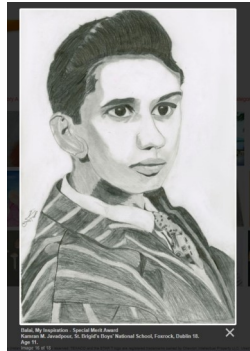
Our caretaker Barry has been busy planting our Spring Bulbs. He was assisted by the boys in Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class. We look forward to watching the flowers bloom in Spring time.





Congratulations to our boys in 3rd class, 4th class and our 6th class of 2021 who finally received their Sacraments of Communion and Confirmation this Term in St. Brigid's Church, Cabinteely. It was a very special day for all involved.

Congratulations to Kamran Javadvour who received a special merit award in the Texaco Art Competition for his entry entitled, 'Balai, My Inspiration', a drawing of Kamran's Grandfather.



Picker Pals

As part of our Green Schools Programme the boys in 3rd class are taking part in the Picker Pals Initiative this year. Our current 2nd class boys engaged in Picker Pals last year and were so successful, they were chosen to be the face of Picker Pals this year in conjunction with Dunlaoghaire Rathdown County Council. We had a visit to the school from an Cathaoirleach Cllr. Lettie Mc Carthy and her team. The four boys chosen to represent St. Brigid's were Harry Keane, Ryan Lambkin, Harry Dalton and Cillian O'Connor. The full press release can be viewed at <https://www.dlrcoco.ie/en/news/general-news/picker-pals-primary-school-programme-launched-dlr>



Fundraisers

Our Annual Christmas Jumper Day and Fun Run was held on Friday 17th December in aid of our two local St. Vincent De Paul Conferences (Foxrock and Cabinteely). We raised a total of €1,645.00 which will be shared equally among the two charities. Their leaders, Therese Day and Brenda MacHugh pass on their gratitude to you all. This money will make a big difference to many families over the Christmas period and into January to assist with rising energy bills.

We also held a non-uniform day in September in aid of SAFE (Support for Afghan Further Education) and raised a total of €1,771.00.

Our schools big Fundraiser this year was once again the MS Readathon. This charity initiative was led by Senior Infant teacher Ms. Ruth Sheehy who was assisted by 3rd class pupil, Donnchadh Ó Cearúil. Donnchadh made a weekly announcement on the intercom to inform us all of our progress and keep the momentum up. The top news from Readathon 2021 is below:

287 St. Brigid's boys took part in the Readathon

We raised an amazing €18,387.00!

We read an incredible 2449 books!

Mr. Devine's 3rd class topped the fundraising leader board of our school raising an impressive €2652.05.

Completing the fundraising leader board were Mr. Melia's 6th class, Ms. McAdam's 3rd class, Mr. Neary's 5th class and Ms. Lynch's 6th class.

The top fundraising students' leader board included Michael McShane (3rd class), Kamran Javadvour (6th class), Mark McCarthy (6th class), Thomas Donohoe (6th class) and Oscar Clancy (3rd class).

Ms. Sheehy's Senior Infants read the most books in the whole school....559 books making them the 5th best readers in the entire country! Ms. Costello's 2nd class followed closely behind in 8th place.

Congratulations and thank you to all who were involved by reading, donating and keeping the boys motivated. This donation will make a huge difference to those whose lives are affected by MS.

Parents Corner

We understand the past two years 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 help you to stay well at this time.

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>

Road Safety I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents about the importance of Road Safety in the areas surrounding St. Brigid's BNS. We ask all parents to ensure you 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 obstruction 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 operate 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.





We wish you a Merry Christmas!

Christmas Raffle

On behalf of the Board of Management and School we would like to extend our thanks to the Parent's Association and Christmas Committee lead by Bronwyn O'Farrell and Caroline Power for all of the work this year. We are so grateful to them for all of their work to raise funds for our school. I am delighted to announce I received a cheque this morning for €8,000 for the boys' school! We are thrilled and so grateful to the everyone for their support.

Congratulations to the winners in our Children's Raffle:

- 1st Prize Harry Whelan
- 2nd Prize Jack Mooney
- 3rd Prize Ellie Byran
- 4th Prize Saoirse Keane
- 5th Prize Molly Andrews
- 6th Prize Sarah Herangi
- 7th Prize Senan Ashe
- 8th Prize Sarah Keane
- 9th Prize Lila Totten
- 10th Prize Sarah Reynolds
- 11th Prize Alan & Chloe Reynolds
- 12th Prize Josie Bicknell
- 13th Prize Adam Lawlor
- 14th Prize Jack Cullen
- 15th Prize Laura Merry
- 16th Prize Luca Merriman
- 17th Prize Luca Byrne
- 18th Prize Edward Richardson
- 19th Prize Dylan Coleman
- 20th Prize Teagan Owens
- 21st Prize April Banashan
- 22nd Prize Tadhg Carroll
- 23rd Prize Laura Merry

Sponsors

We would also like to thank the sponsors of this years' Christmas Raffle:

- Askpaul.ie
- The Weight Loss Clinic
- Blackrock Builders Providers
- Carl Prenter Photography
- Capnua Corporate Finance
- LucyNagle.com
- Hostaro Tableware
- Hilton's Pharmacy, Cornelscourt
- Purcell & Woodcock
- Sacyr
- Irish Building Supply, Dun Laoghaire

- Doyles Nursery & Garden Centre
- Let's Move Properties
- The Allotment Wine Company
- Fiona & Ken O'Connor, Texaco
- WinesDirect
- The Hospitality Partnership
- Fleetwood Paint
- Urban Cafe
- iClothing
- Intelligo
- CMCC Financial Solutions
- Saorbuga
- Ronan Daly Jermyn
- Dublin Stage School
- Park Celtic Football Club
- Balloon Creations
- Cabinteely GAA

And all the parents who sponsored a prize or cash donation.

Absences and Punctuality

Please continue to keep your child at home if he or any member of the household is unwell. Up to date information on restricted movement and self-isolation for children can be found at <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/restricted-movements/> Please ensure you email principal@stbrigids.ie if your child receives a positive PCR test so that class can avail of antigen testing. Reasons for each absence should be recorded on Aladdin Connect prior to your sons return and a Return to School Declaration must be completed.

School Times: Our staggered drop-off operates from 08.45 – 09.00 a.m. sharp. Please ensure your child arrives to the school within this 15 minute drop off window. We expect all pupils to be present by 9 a.m. when teaching begins. Punctuality is very important.

Looking Forward – Term 2

St. Brigid's BNS will reopen on Thursday 6th January 2022 for the new term.

Parent Teacher Meetings for Junior Infants and Senior Infants are scheduled to take place the week of 7th – 11th February.

February Midterm break runs from Monday 21st – Friday 25th February.

