

Piercestown Post February 2020

Welcome to the February edition of our newsletter. We hope you all had a lovely midterm break as we 'spring' into the next few weeks. There is a lot to look forward to and thankfully the weather appears to be getting milder and the evenings are getting longer. Before you rush off to do a 'spring clean', take some time to make a cup of tea and catch up on what we have been up to!



Folens - Transition from primary to post primary

The publishers Folens have partnered with Graham Richmond, an experienced teacher and counsellor, to author an online advice booklet for parents to help prepare themselves and their children for the move to post primary school. The booklet includes advice on several different topics including the practicalities of adapting to a new timetable, screen time, etc. The booklet is available for parents to download from www.folens.ie

Autism Course

Tony Attwood, clinical psychologist and world Autism expert, is coming to the UK in June. His talk, organised by The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, is entitled 'Autism essential for Parents' - 'Managing Feelings and Cognitive Abilities'. The event is useful for school staff and parents. A flyer is located on our Parent noticeboard outside of the reception office. His talk is being streamed live at €59 per person. For more information go to www.acamh.org/event/tony20

Cake Sale Dogs Trust

Books flung aside, aprons donned and 5th class pupils took to the wooden spoon and baking bowl on Thursday night 13th February. All in a very good cause – a fundraiser in aid of Dogs Trust. The boys and girls were full of enthusiasm when they decorated their classroom to reflect Valentine's Day on the morning of the Great Bake Off Sale. 5th class are very appreciative of the work the parents did in ensuring there was adequate goodies to go round and the pupils raised a whopping €575.92 to support our canine friends who really need our help. On Wednesday 4th March at our Dogs Trust Educational Workshop that we booked last October, one of those four-legged grateful doggies will be presented with a cheque by two of the 5th class pupils who can be very proud of the efforts made by their class mates.

Chess success... Masters and Buds are registered and ready to 'make their moves'

We have now entered the final round of the in-school chess competition. Well done to every child from 3rd to 6th class for their sportsmanlike participation and enthusiasm. Eight players at the top of our leader board, from 3rd/4th class and 5th/6th class, will represent our school in the "Ficheall" competition which takes place on 10th March in Bunscoil Rís in New Ross. This is a great achievement and the competitors' names will be revealed next week. On the home front we are eagerly awaiting the announcement of our in-school chess champion who will be crowned next week at assembly. Class winners and runners up will also be announced and receive medals on this day.

First Day at School for our Furry Friends

Senior Infants have been learning all about the vets this month as part of their integrated learning through play time in Aistear. As part of this learning experience the children welcomed some of their very own pets into the classroom. Each pet was different and the children learned something new with each visit. This was such a fun and memorable learning experience. Many thanks to all the parents for their cooperation. But most importantly a huge shout out goes to Coco, Molly, Fish Two, Conor, Brodie, Blue, Bali, Rosie, Callie, Ruby and Gizmo!!!

Dust off those hurleys!!!

And hot on the heels of Wexford pulling a win out of the bag versus the Dubs at the weekend, the Rackard league committee have pulled the fixtures for the hurling and camogie season out of their bag. Training will begin this week for camogie and hurling. The match fixtures look like as follows:

Camogie	Hurling
March 2-6 Rathangan versus Piercestown	March 2-6 Piercestown – BYE
March 9-13 Piercestown versus Kilmore	March 9-13 Piercestown versus Rathangan
March 16-20 Piercestown versus Castlebridge	March 16-20 Horeswood versus Piercestown
March 23-27 Piercestown BYE	March 23-27 Cushinstown versus Piercestown
	March 30-April 3 rd Piercestown versus Glynn

As always, we will be looking for lifts from garda vetted parents for our away games. Without lifts, it is not possible to travel. We appreciate all you do in this regard. A text will be sent requesting lifts and reminding about matches. As this goes to press, we have been informed that the first round of Mini 7's will take place before Easter. So, dust off those hurleys and get practicing those skills!

Junior Golf Season – March to September

Junior Golf Season takes place from March to September. Hurling stalwart, George O'Connor, will be running golf lessons from 1st class up every Wednesday evening, weather permitting. Sunday morning sessions will also run in the Burrow Course from 11am-12pm for beginners and birdies followed by scrambles, singles, eagles and improvers from 12pm-1pm. For further information, contact Paddy Loneragan on 0863596644.

6th Class Confirmation Preparation

As this newsletter goes to press, all the cupboards around Piercestown have been emptied and all the contents were used in the Pancake Tuesday efforts. This signifies the start of Lent, today Ash Wednesday. While many people associate Lent as a time for 'giving up something', 6th class have 'taken something on'. To assist with their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, they are going to attend mass every Wednesday at 9.30am.

Class of the Month

Congratulations to 2nd class who were the worthy winners of the much loved Pizza Party, homework pass and certificate of achievement for the month of January. With February, being a particularly short month, many of the classes are hoping they did enough to get across the line and be the winners for this month. All will be revealed at assembly on Monday 2nd March.

Enrolment for School Year 2020-2021

Piercestown N.S. are now taking enrolments for the school year 2020-2021. For further information, call Siobhán / Laura on 053 91 58854.

Eason's Spelling Bee Competition

Eason's spelling bee is celebrating its 10th anniversary. 5th and 6th class are looking forward to taking part in our in-school spelling bee competition on Wednesday 11th March. The winner will be crowned the Piercestown Spelling Bee. They will then go on to represent their school on March 25th in the county final. So, get your spelling hats on! Who will be crowned Piercestown N.S. Spelling Bee 2020?

World Down Syndrome Day March 21st- Let's rock our 'odd socks' on Friday March 20th!!!!

To celebrate World Down Syndrome day, we invite all children in ALL classes to rock their 'odd socks' on Friday March 20th. This is simply taking two odd socks and donning them with confidence and style for the day!

Epilepsy Day March 26th – Ms. Rea and Senior Infants to 'get their purple on'

Ms. Rea and Senior Infants will 'get their purple on' on Thursday March 26th to mark Epilepsy day. Please feel free to join in the fun on the day!

Inservice for the Primary Language Curriculum and exceptional day closure dates confirmed – first date this week

Following on from our letter last week, we would like to remind you of the first of our closures, which will take place this week, **tomorrow Thursday 27th February**. We thank you for your co-operation, understanding and patience in this regard and assure you that we are doing our best to ensure minimal disruption for all.

Does the internet frighten you? Are your children a step or two ahead of you? How do we cope in the era of technology?

As a school, we embrace technology but so too do we endeavour to protect our children from what can become one of the most dangerous tools of our time. While the internet has no doubt enhanced all of our lives, it has brought with it negative factors also. Cyberbullying, digital footprints, judgement errors and access to inappropriate material are just some of the concerns that come to mind when we worry about our children online. So, at Piercestown N.S. as well as educating the children through SPHE lessons, we have called in the experts. Zeeko will work with 3rd - 6th

classes on Monday 2nd March and will offer a Parent information evening at 7pm also. The children have been busy making invitations recently to entice you to attend this most important event. We have also invited our neighbouring schools to join us. Let's be proactive so we can avoid being reactive!

Piercestown National School Website to be relaunched***March 9th**

Ms. Rea will unveil the new improved website to all staff at a meeting on Monday 2nd March. We then aim for the website to go live to the public on March 9th. We are excited about showing you our new facelift and look forward to hearing your thoughts as we navigate through this new format!

5th Class ready to head to the ESB Science Blast

On Tuesday 3rd March 2020 fifth class will travel to the R.D.S. Ballsbridge to present their project on "The Invasion of Bacteria – How clean is our School?" The pupils need to be at the school for **6.30am** and they will be supervised by Ms. Twomey, Ms. Farrell, Ms. Teresa Roche Murphy and Mrs. Barrett. The bus will stop at McDonalds, Gorey on the way home. The pupils have been working very hard this week and are putting the final touches to their project. They are extremely grateful to Dr. Anna Fenelon, Teagasc for her help with this project and extend a warm thank you to her.

Engineers Week – Izak 9 and Little Medics arrive to Piercestown N.S.

Engineers Week takes place around Ireland from March 2nd – 6th. This year sees Little Medics arrive to the school from Junior Infants to 2nd class. This focuses on children learning about what medical professionals do every day in a fun and engaging way. We can't wait to explore the body and see how doctors assist us in our day to day living. The Izak 9 cubes have arrived to get everyone's mathematical hats on! Physically, the Izak9 product resembles a large cube made up of 27 smaller cubes. Each task focuses on a specific area from the maths curriculum such as algebra, sequences and number operations. Children work in small groups to solve the problem at hand, with the position of team leader rotated. Every child has physical involvement with the task and there are currently 30 tasks in the Izak9 portfolio.

We are Writers - Illustration of the Cover – and the winner is

There was great excitement at the last assembly as the winner of the 'We are Writers' cover illustrator was unveiled. Due to the high standard, our judge, Siobhán Berry, selected a winner from every class to receive a 'highly commended' prize. But there could only be one winner. Following in the footsteps of Aoife Cullen, can you put your hands together for the illustrator of our We are Writers 2020, Mollie Quirke in 5th class!! Mollie's illustration will be on the posters this week advertising our 'We are Writers' books and a sample copy will be available at the bookfair.

The Book fair is coming!!!!

We are excited to announce our Scholastic Book fair lands on Friday March 6th. It will be open for business, courtesy of our Parents' Association on Monday March 9th. There will be an evening opening to accommodate working parents on Tuesday March 10th. As last year was such a success, we have decided to once again organise a story telling session for the Junior end and Senior end of our school. The Junior end are invited along in their pyjamas with their teddies!

Student Council – welcoming committee

The Student Council undertook their first official duties recently by organising a welcoming committee for our Catholic Schools week events in Miss Sinnott's, Miss Taylor's and Ms. Hearne's rooms. The children were on hand to greet people, direct them to their classrooms and offer their special guests tea and coffee. They also taught their first 'Lámh song' to the entire school at assembly. 'You've got a Friend in Me' from Toy Story was signed by our Student Council, we can't wait to see what they have in store for our next assembly!

Catholic Schools Week – Grandparents and Special Person day

Grandparents and special people in our children's lives were celebrated before midterm break. Miss Sinnott's class kicked off the celebrations by hosting an event in their classroom on Thursday 6th February. Ms. Hearne and Ms. Walsh brought the 'British Bake Off' into Piercestown N.S. that afternoon, as 6th class took over the staff room to prepare scones for their special guests arrival the following day. Friday 7th February, we ventured back in time from 2020 to a few decades ago as the children shared their current school experience and asked their parents/grandparents about school in their time. There were stories of long lunches, harsh punishments and even

skipping school!!! Oh how times have changed! 6th class performed an acoustic song which had eyes fill with tears! Friday afternoon saw the Junior Infants welcome their special guests in. While the weather wasn't great, it didn't dampen spirits on the day. Junior Infants performed songs, actions and presented their special guests with a special gift. Miss Taylor's class was then transformed into a cinema as she had put together two movies to show ALL of the 'nothing-ness' that takes place in class every day. Many thanks to all who took the time to come and be with us. Days like this live in the memories of the children and their special guests. *'You never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory'- Dr. Seuss*

Thanks to our Parents' Association

Many thanks to our Parent's Association as they organise our much-awaited Book Fair. Parents' Association will also be on hand to provide tea/coffee at the Internet Safety talk for parents on Monday 2nd March. **Parents' Association will issue a newsletter next week with some updates of their upcoming events and activities.** Many thanks to the Parents' Association for all they do.

2nd Class – Sacrament of Reconciliation - take a bow

The children in 2nd class were outstanding in their recent participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We would like to thank Mrs. Corrigan and Miss Rea for their Trojan work in the lead up to this big event. Thank you to Fr. O'Reilly for making the night so special. Finally, thanks to the parents of 1st class children who co-ordinated a lovely reception afterwards for the children and their families to enjoy. Preparation is already continuing as we head towards the Sacrament of Holy Communion on May 16th.

Wexford Family Support Hub **New Resource for Parents/Families**

This is an online/virtual space for families to access supports/programmes/resources that may be useful to them. It has been designed by Wexford CYPSC - Children and Young People's Services Committee. They can be contacted by phoning 053 92 36343, emailing wexfordparentshub@barnardos.ie, on their Facebook page, Wexford Parents Hub or finally by logging onto <http://www.wexfordcypsc.ie/wexford-parents-hub>.

Agreed report from the Board of Management - Meeting 25th February 2020

The first meeting of the new Board of Management was convened. Please find below the agreed report:

- All new members of the Board of Management were welcomed. We thank them for volunteering to work on behalf of our school.
- The following policies were ratified: Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology Policy, Protective Disclosure Policy, EPV Days policy for Teaching Staff
- The Board work on the Admissions Policy in the coming months in accordance with the Education Act 2018
- The Board sanctioned the Parent Association fundraiser for June 2020
- The Board has sanctioned the establishment of a facebook page by the Piercestown Parents' Association
- The Board has signed off on the annual financial accounts for 2018/2019 to be submitted to the FSSU
- The Board wishes to congratulate the staff on the Trojan work to date in establishing our ASD class
- The next Board of Management meeting will take place on Tues 31st March

A Word from the Principal

After a full week off, the children are well rested and ready to take on the excitement of the next few weeks. From book fairs, to Spelling Bee competitions, to Rackard league and Mini 7s, Seachtain na Gaeilge, there is a lot to look forward to. But in a busy world, it is important to take time to be mindful of oneself and others too. Often, the pace of life distracts us from noticing important subjects such as feelings, friendships and how our actions can sometimes impact on others. As we head into Mindful March, I think we should take a moment to embrace the catchphrase in the media, *"In a world, where you can be anything, be kind!"* A 'kind' world would eliminate a lot of the anxieties that our children experience today. So, let's remind ourselves of this in our day to day actions.

Here are some dates for your diaries:

- School CLOSED for pupils this Thursday 27th February
- Swimming every Friday for 3rd class and gymnastics every Friday for all classes (except 3rd class)
- Little Medics visit Piercestown Junior Infants – 2nd class for Engineers Week Monday 2nd March
- Zeeko and Internet Safety parent talk 7pm ***** Monday 2nd March
- 5th class travel to ESB Science Blast Tuesday 3rd March

- **Book fair lands Friday 6th March – open for sales from Monday 9th March**
- **Rackard league hurling/camogie season begins!**
- **Eason's Spelling Bee competition 11th March**
- **Lá Gaeilge - Márta 12ú – get your Irish colours on!**
- **Epilepsy Day Thursday 26th March - get your purple on!**
- **World Down Syndrome Day Friday 20th March – Rock your odds socks!**