



Welcome to the second edition of our monthly newsletter and we hope you are all well rested after the midterm break. October proved to be an exciting month with lots to look forward to from Maths Week, to our Beginning of Year Service, GOAL jersey day, to the return of our much-loved Halloween walk. It was all go, as we completed our first half term, free from 'restrictions' after two long years. With the dark evenings officially having kicked in, why not sit back with a cup of tea and catch up on what we have been up to since the start of October.

Class of the Month – 1st class

Congratulations to 1st class who were the worthy winners of the much-loved Pizza Party, homework pass and certificate of achievement for the month of October. This month Mrs. Walsh and 1st class edged the competition by a mere 0.5 of a score. They worked hard on one voice at a time and on sitting on their chairs in the classroom setting. Congratulations to Mrs. Walsh, Teresa Roche Murphy and 1st class who can look forward to their 'pizza party' this Friday and the use of their homework pass!

Congratulations to St. Martin's Ladies Gaelic Football Team

There was great excitement on Thursday 13th October as the Intermediate Ladies Football team arrived into school with the Ger. Mullery Cup in their hands. Past pupils Orla Griffin and captain Mary Barret alongside Amy Cardiff and Rachel Bridges were on hand to talk the children through their exciting championship, culminating in their win over Gusserane in the replay of the final in Taghmon. Fiona Hayes, chairperson of the Ladies Football and Alan McCluskey, one of the coaches, were also in attendance. The team arrived to the rapturous applause of the children of Piercestown and Freddy Mercury's 'We are the Champions' playing as they entered the PE hall. Ms. Hearne was very proud of her past Rackard league pupils and the ladies were on hand to offer words of advice to the current Rackard league team as they progressed through the knockout stages. It was so wonderful to celebrate this achievement of winning the cup and progressing to senior football next year. We also wished the players the best of luck as they headed into a semi final camogie match AND their first round of Leinster football, all in the one weekend. The players and their mentors had one special announcement before they left the building, that to celebrate their success, there would be NO HOMEWORK for everyone that night! Many thanks to Fiona Hayes, Alan McCluskey and the players for taking the time to visit us and offer words of inspiration for the future GAA players of our clubs and county!

GOAL Jersey Day 2022

GOAL jersey day followed the arrival of our successful ladies' team on Friday 14th of October, and there were Martin's jerseys a plenty. However, in the midst of the maroon and white, we saw other club colours, from Bannow to the Shels, the Faythe Harriers and Rathnure. There were rugby jerseys, soccer jerseys, county jerseys and national and international jerseys galore. The staff got into the spirit of it too, getting some 'team' photos taken with their mix of colours. Many thanks to everyone who donated on the day, or online. A grand total of €580 was raised and all funds went to the much-needed GOAL charity. Check out the school blog for some photos from the day.

Beginning of Year Service 2022

After two long years, we returned in full voice to our church on Friday October 7th 2022! Having not been together in a church setting as a school community since December 2019, one could not be accused of being over sentimental when the entire school community opened the service in full voice with 'Back to School'. Each class took part by participating with either song, prayer or poem throughout a simple service where we recognised our hopes and wishes for the year ahead and asked for God's blessing as we made our way through this school year. We were delighted to welcome another school pupil into our community also at this event. Many thanks to Fr. Aodhán for his lovely words and taking the time to allow us to be in this sacred space together. In many ways, it was the 'coming back together' that we so badly needed after the pandemic, and it really was truly special. Many thanks to those who were able to join us in person on the day and to those who took the time to join us virtually. Even pandemics had silver linings with the availability to access Church events and services from home or work online thus allowing us to connect to a wider audience. The children's participation and spiritual engagement was exemplary with all classes eagerly asking Ms.

Walsh when was the next time they could return to the church together. The excitement and anticipation about a live Christmas Carol service has already begun! So, mark Wednesday 14th December in the diaries, as Piercestown N.S prepare to return to the Church with the community at the most special time of the year!

Big Birthday Shout Outs November!

We would like to wish the following children a big happy birthday: Scarlett, Dylan, Kate and Reuben from Junior infants; Cara, Donncha and Nora from Senior infants; Beau and Eve from 1st class, Francis, Eoin and Myah from 2nd class; CJ and Katie from 3rd class; Kiara and Dylan from 4th class; and Alisa and Kelly from 5th class. We hope you all enjoyed your special day!!!



*"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday dear Scarlett, Dylan, Kate, Reuben, Cara, Donncha, Nora, Beau, Eve, Francis,
Eoin, Myah, CJ, Katie, Kiara, Dylan, Alisa and Kelly
Happy birthday to you."*

Maths Week – 17th to 21st October 2022

Maths week 2022 without restrictions promised to be bigger and better than ever and it did not disappoint! Maths Week was alive and kicking and evident from outside the building, thanks to the Maths Week signage on display in 5th and 6th class windows, and inside every single classroom and corridor space. The week began with Maths Week assemblies bringing our awareness to Maths being everywhere in our daily lives from the moment we wake with alarm clocks to the moment we go to sleep after a 'maths filled day'. We examined all the jobs that involved maths from bakers to engineers, to doctors, builders and games designers! In fact, we found it hard to imagine a job that existed that did not involve Maths in some shape or form! The buzz around the school was electric as children battled it out in Tables Bee competitions, Countdown Championships, played Bingo over zoom, entered competitions to solve the 'Problem of the Day' daily, used their 'Maths Eyes' for homework and so much more! The week ended with a prize giving taking place on the Monday with over 70 fun prizes being given out. There was Maths galore for the children over the week and yet not a textbook was in sight! Check out the school blog for a taster of some of the photographs and video footage taken over the course of the week. Many thanks to Mrs. Corrigan who leads the way on the school blog in keeping the school community up to speed with everything that goes on inside of our four walls.

Enrolment for Piercestown N.S. – to be announced

We have yet to be informed by the patron as to when schools may publish the Annual Admission Notice, however, as soon as we have been informed, we will send a message out to the school community and upload the admissions notice to the website. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 053-9158854. Information about our Open night will be available in the coming weeks also.

Say Cheese – Official School Photographer – November 9th and 10th Reminder

Image Masters will return to the grounds of Piercestown N.S on November 9th and 10th. *A gentle reminder to return all consent forms if you have yet to do so. These were sent home prior to the midterm break but if one has gone astray just call us in the office and we will send a copy home.* This year we can return to traditional individual, sibling and class photos. So, don't forget to comb the hair that one last time on November 9th and 10th. The photographer will aim to get as many photos as possible taken so if they get the whole school across the line on the 9th, we will update you with a text at the end of the day. If a small number of classes are left to be completed on the 10th, we will update you on Aladdin as to which classes these are. We will send a reminder text the day before also.

Tractor Run – Fundraiser for Ms. Sinnott's Class

All roads led to the Coal Bunker Bar last Sunday October 30th as a 'Tractor and Truck' run had been organised by the parents of our families from Ms. Sinnott's Class. Following on from the success of last year, the day promised to be a roaring success.

There were tractors, trucks and vehicles galore making their way from the Coal Bunker Bar up past the school and following a route through Mayglass before returning to the Coal Bunker Bar for some much needed warm stew! But

the fun didn't end there. DJ Johnny Whizz was on site to put the children through their paces with their dance moves. Many thanks to member of Infosys who donated their time and offered face painting for free to the children. The disco was followed by an auction and raffle and without a shadow of a doubt the whole event was a marvellous success. Many thanks to our local business, the Coal Bunker Bar, and in particular Larry and Emer Coleman for providing us with a venue close to home which allowed many more of the school community to attend. **A staggering €6,610 was raised. As mentioned by Ms. Walsh on the day, while the majority of the funds are raised for the ASD class, in Piercestown N.S. our inclusive approach sees the children from the rest of the school benefit from the resources purchased also.** Such events don't just happen and while it is impossible to name everyone for fear of leaving anyone out, the following people deserve a special mention- our committee, namely Jenny, Mairéad, Siobhán, Emma, Fiona and Linda and their families and friends, Larry and Emer from the Coal Bunker Bar, all the boys and girls in Ms. Sinnott's class and everyone who entered the run on the day. The generosity of the community on Sunday last will ensure that Ms. Sinnott, Bryan, Fiona and Ms. Walsh can continue to plan ahead, buy resources and organise trips that otherwise would not be possible. Having only opened our Class in 2019, mere months before the pandemic changed the landscape of our world, this is only the second time a fundraiser could be organised. Check out some of the photos from the day by going to our school blog.

Communication for Parents – Aladdin Connect

Many thanks to all new parents and existing parents who have signed up to Aladdin Connect. We will be using it to schedule 'PT meetings' in November and to continue to grant permissions going forward. **Should you have changed your mobile number or email address or emergency contact numbers, please log into your Aladdin Connect app and update these.** We also communicate on the school's webpage <https://piercestownns.wordpress.com> and we issue a monthly newsletter that will now be sent home via Aladdin Connect. The school can also be contacted by phone at 053 91 58854 or by email at piercestownns@gmail.com

Parent Teacher Meetings 2022 – Hybrid Approach Week of 21st November *

As per the text sent out on Friday 28th October, PT meetings will be scheduled with the majority taking place the week of the 21st of November. Provisionally, we are blocking off Tuesday 22nd and Thursday 24th that week. Following on from the post covid parental survey last year, we have taken on board the desire to offer some sort of hybrid approach to parent teacher meetings but ultimately, we are reopening our doors and the traditional face to face meetings are back. However, we will be in touch this week to see who would find the telephone contact more accessible and hopefully by the end of the week we will be able to update you so that this can take place via Aladdin Connect similar to last year.

Christmas Cards

Over the last number of years, we organise a small fundraiser for our school by the children designing their own personalised Christmas Cards. It is always well enjoyed by the children and offers a lovely opportunity to share Christmas spirit with family and friends in a really personal way. **The card samples will be due to return to the school shortly. The card sample has been sent home today and we ask all parents to please contact us if your child's name has an error before it goes to final print.** The packs contains 10 cards and costs €8, with €3 per pack coming to the school as a fundraiser. Well done to all of the boys and girls on their wonderful Christmas cards.

Science Week 2022 – 13th- 20th November 2022

We barely draw a breath after Maths Week when Science Week takes place. Dr. Anna Fenlon has once again offered 5th class the opportunity to visit the EPA for a Science Workshop and Mrs. Corrigan and 5th class are delighted to avail of this opportunity from within the local community. We have an exciting workshop booked with the Nutty Scientist, for all classes and scheduled to take place on Friday 18th November. We have no doubt that all classrooms will be awash with Science Experiments over the course of the week too. With restrictions lifted, like Maths Week, we will be embracing collaborative learning and offering younger classes the opportunity to visit older classes for demonstrations of circuits of science experiments. Congratulations to Mr. Murphy who was instrumental in ensuring our latest STEM award, proudly being hung in our reception porch just in time for Science Week 2022.

Lunch time League Update

October saw the football lunchtime league reach the quarter final stage after 5 groups games per team. Both quarter finals were tense affairs that could of went either way with the victors having booked their place in the semi-finals. The semi-finals will take place in the coming days. It is great to see the boys and girls, experienced players and new beginners, take to the field together to show their skills and to see the sportsmanlike way in which all interact with each other and offer encouragement to all teammates. We are also developing the refereeing skills of our 6th class volunteers who organise and referee the games. We wish all four teams that have reached the semi-final stages the best of luck and we look forward to bringing you an update and answering the question of who will be crowned champions in our next newsletter.

Mini 7's update

In Mini 7's news, the boys travelled to our nearby neighbours of Murrintown for the next round of the competition. Missing players on holiday and through injury the boys put up a valiant effort in both games however Murrintown and Rathangan were just too big and strong. It was a fun day out and gave a lot of our boys with no previous mini 7s experience a taste of the competition.

The second round of the mini 7's competition saw three group winners, Piercestown, Rathangan and Kilmore come together in Rathangan to see who could progress to the semi-final stages. This was a day where all teams were fighting the weather as well as the opposition with a very strong wind going straight down the pitch. In our first game we played Kilmore who already had played a game and were more adept at using the wind to their advantage and much as the girls tried they couldn't make up for their slow start. In their second game they played Rathangan who had already beaten Kilmore and in the first half the girls from Piercestown looked the stronger team but failed to show this superiority on the scoreboard and in the second half the girls tired and the girls from Rathangan ran out as narrow winners of the group.

Rackard league Update

Our boys Rackard League campaign led us to a quarter final tie with Adamstown in October. After just missing out in a playoff against Barntown to make the A quarter finals the boys showed great resilience and put that disappointment behind them by winning a tough and high scoring game. The boys showed some tremendous footballing talent and speed to overrun the Adamstown boys. In the Semi-final we travelled down to Cushinstown on a wild and windy day. Conditions were difficult for both sides and after a strong first half showing with the wind we led at half time 2-4 to 0-1. However, a couple of early goals in the second half buoyed the Cushinstown team before they eventually rang out 4 point winners after a fine second half display. The boys left everything they had on the pitch and though disappointed, represented the school greatly. Many thanks to our very own Mr. Brian Murphy and Pat Quigley who were both instrumental in our Rackard league participation this year. Thanks also to Mr. Murphy, Mr. Whyte and Mr. Howard from Murrintown N.S.

Girls Rackard League

Following two wins from two in September, October began with a trip to Hollymount in the final group match and on a day where the conditions were very tough due to a strong wind, the girls showed great tenacity to emerge victorious by a 4 point margin and ensure their place in the quarter final as group leaders. The quarter final saw us drawn against Kilmore and the girls really put on a great display to come out of this game as comfortable winners. The semi-final saw us battle once again with Castlebridge in the hope of booking our place in the decider. This game was an epic battle where both teams put in a great display of football and the excitement was fever pitch as it headed into added time with the Piercestown/Murrintown leading by the minimum. In the final moments the defending from all the girls in maroon and white and their wiliness to 'put their bodies on the line' ensured that the final whistle was met with whoops of delight from our girls.

The final saw us heading to the lights of Bellefield on a Thursday night and pitted against an undefeated Bree side. Unfortunately, the Bree team proved too strong for our girls on this occasion but all involved were so proud of all the girls efforts in reaching the Rackard League 'A' decider and the their great attitude to hard work, their high levels of skill and their 'never say die' attitude was still there for all to see throughout the Rackard League campaign.

Girls Rising Stars: In the Rising stars competition, we also emerged as group winners after defeating Rathangan and Cushinstown in our group games. The semi-final saw us meet Cushinstown again and after a tremendous battle we were very unlucky to have the tables turned on us with Cushinstown winning by 4 points after a thrilling game that

could have gone either way. These girls showed great determination and it is safe to say that the future of our Rackard team for the next school year is in safe hands!!

As the football season draws to a close a huge well done to every girl involved. It was great to see the skills develop from game to game and the determination to give their all in every game was evident from start to finish. It was a honour for the school to once again be represented in the Rackard League finals day and more importantly to see the sporting manner in which all celebrated victories and accepted defeats. We look forward to the hurling season and hope that we can go one better and replace the silver medals with gold!!! Many thanks to Ms. Hearne and Ms. Brazill from Murrintown for all their efforts for the footballing season! It is greatly appreciated.

Chess is back

Dust off those chess boards. With bubbles and pods a distant memory, the school chess tournament is back on track. Many thanks to Ms. Hearne who has been busy reminding everyone how to 'make their moves' on the boards and even communicated with us pre midterm as to how to fill many of the rainy days with practice for the tournament season.

All children from 3rd to 6th class will participate in this much-loved competition and be vying to be crowned our chess champion of 2022/2023. Each class will also have gold, silver and bronze medal winners when the tournament draws to a close. The tournament will see us host over 250 games of chess, with every child playing 8 - 10 games, in the coming months before our school champion is crowned. We will also host our very own 'chess club' for the month of November where every Wednesday children can choose to spend part of their lunch break inside playing chess and 'perfecting their moves'. The tournament officially starts next week and we look forward to keeping you updated as the competition progresses. Following this competition we will also have a school Buds(3rd and 4th Class) and Masters (5th and 6th Class) team that will compete in the Ficheall interschool chess competition. It is great to hear the excitement from the children as we head into 'chess season' and it is important to remember that the tournament is there for the enjoyment of all, from the proficient, past champions to the absolute beginner, Chess is a game for all to enjoy. Every Chess Master was once a Beginner! Get practising!!!

Parents' Association AGM Wed 16th Nov. 2022* (9th Nov. date POSTPONED)**

The annual Parents' Association AGM was scheduled to take place on Wed 9th November at 7pm however it must be POSTPONED. A new date has now been issued, Wed 16th November at 7pm. This meeting is open to ALL parents and each year the Parents' Association warmly welcomes new committee members. So come along to hear how the work of our Parents' Association progressed last year and sign up to the committee, should you wish to do so. Without our Parents' Association our school could not continue to function at the high level that it does. We look forward to seeing new and familiar faces on the night! Many thanks to the amazing committee currently in situ who led us through creative fundraisers over the last two years in the strangest of times. Special thanks to Amanda Whitmore chairperson, Jennifer McDonagh vice chairperson, Suzanne Connolly treasurer, Sharon Finegan our secretary and all the extended committee members. The Board of Management would also like to thank Laura Campbell, Shaun Ahern, Deirdre Newport and Amanda Whitmore as they step down from their roles on the committee. Their contribution over the last number of years has not gone unnoticed and is hugely appreciated by all.

Sing out Loud!!! Date for the diary Saturday 19th October 2022

The corridors are alive with the rehearsals from 5th and 6th class as the countdown to the return to the Opera House is officially underway. This year sees Piercestown N.S take to the stage for the Matinee, on Saturday 19th November at 2pm. In the lead up to the event, children from other classes will be invited to a rehearsal, as we celebrate the return of 'live music and singing'. Whether singing is your child's favourite thing or otherwise, the opportunity to participate on stage in the National Opera House is an experience in itself. We look forward to representing ourselves proudly on the day.

Halloween Fun – Freaky Friday Walk returned

Friday, October 28th, saw us return to our much loved 'Freaky Friday' walk from the St. Martin's centre down to school. Something that we took for granted, was so very badly missed during the pandemic. It was the first time for 1st class to ever participate in this event and it did not disappoint. Costumes were back bigger and better than ever and staff really got into the 'spirit' with an entourage from Super Mario making an appearance on the day, alongside Princess

Elsa who wanted everyone to embrace the fun and 'let it go'! While we introduced the DJ to brighten our spirits during the pandemic, a vote from the staff to keep him on board for more Halloween fun saw DJ Rob return to the school. He was out the front of the building to welcome us back from our walk and then having spent two years outdoors, he entered our PE hall for a day of Halloween fun and festivities. Many thanks to all the parents, staff and children for the Trojan efforts they went to. As usual, just for fun, classes voted for their favourite costume within their class or a winner was drawn out of a hat in some cases, with the winners as follows, Kate in Junior infants, Oisín Q in senior infants, Ollie in 1st class, Levi in 2nd class, Willow in 3rd class, Daniel and Annemarie in 4th class, Jane in 5th class and Alex in 6th class. We had many famous faces on site from Harry Potter, to Sonic the Hedgehog, Little Red Riding Hood as well as ghosts, witches and zombies! Once again, if you missed out on the day, check out the school blog, www.piercestownns.com where Mrs. Corrigan has compiled a brilliant video of the day!

Online book club

Our new Scholastic Book Club is up and running! The leaflets for the Setanta online book club were disseminated shortly before the midterm break. Many thanks to Siobhán in the office who facilitates this operating in our school. Go to <https://schools.scholastic.ie/s-n-baile-an-phiarsaigh/digital-book-club> to browse the latest books and order online. For every €1 you spend on this month's Book Club, our school will earn 20c in Scholastic Rewards.

Please place your order online by November 9th. As like the last order around Christmas time, should anyone wish to order online but would like us to keep them in the office for collection, please drop Siobhán an email/phone the office and she can hold them there.

Board of Management Agreed reports for Sept. and Oct.

Agreed report from Sept. 6th 2022

- Welcome back everyone
- Condolences to the Furlong family on the passing of Eoin
- Critical incident policy was ratified
- Child protection policy was ratified
- Antibullying policy was ratified
- Two classrooms were refloored over the summer
- Welcome to the new infants and one other pupil in the school
- Welcome to Tracey Walsh and Trish Jordan, new staff members for 2022

Agreed report from Oct. 25th 2022

- Congratulations to Shelly Roche, Richie and big sister Molly on the safe arrival of baby Ellie
- Congratulations to Ms. Hearne and the girls on reaching the final of the Roinn A league final in Rackard league – this is a great achievement having advanced from Roinn B just last year
- Congratulations to the St. Martin's intermediate ladies football team on their county final win!
- An APII post on the In-school management team will be advertised in accordance with circular 44/2019 in the coming weeks
- The Board of Management wishes the committee behind the Tractor Run the very best of luck in their upcoming fundraiser
- Date of next meeting is confirmed as December 6th 2022

A Word from the Principal

After an exciting half term, the midterm break was a welcome break for all. Huge congratulations to our newest school members on the successful completion of their first half term with us! They have settled in so well and grown so much in a short space of time! The first half term did not disappoint and things that many of us took for granted pre pandemic returned and we celebrated and enjoyed them like never before. Collaborative learning is truly back with children

within classes and between classes learning from each other and with each other. As professionals, this is always one of the most satisfying aspects of teaching. It offers opportunities for children to connect with each other and often we see strengths and skills that without these collaborative opportunities may have remain hidden. Having had the midterm to recharge our batteries, we can't wait to see what the remainder of 2022 has in store and what lies ahead for dare we mention it, the festive season!

"Life is not a solo act, it is a huge collaboration" – Tim Gunn

Dates for your diaries so far this year:

- School Photographer 9th and 10th November
- PA AGM Wed. 16th November 2022
- Science Week 13th-20th Nov. 2022
- Sing out Loud Sat. 19th November 2022
- Parent teacher meetings dates to be confirmed Nov. 2022 - week of Tues 21st November
- GAA Coaching continues with football on Tuesdays post midterm
- Board of Management meeting 6th December
- Christmas Carol Service December 14th 2022