

Welcome to the ninth and second last edition of our newsletter for this school year. It is hard to believe that the finish line is in sight for the end of yet another school year. It has been all systems go in the last few weeks and even though our time is short for the remainder of the school year, there is a lot to look forward to. So, with that, why not sit back and take a few minutes to catch up with what we have been up to and the remainder of our plans for this school year.



Special Guest to Piercestown N.S. – Verona Murphy

There was great excitement in the building on Monday 15th May as our Students' Council waited for the arrival of local T.D. Verona Murphy. Having had Verona advocate on behalf of the school recently in our efforts to secure essential accommodation for the next school year, we were delighted to be able to offer Verona a brief tour and show case some of what we do at Piercestown N.S. Our Students' Council took on the role of detailing their functions and some of what they got up to this year. Our Green Committee were delighted to showcase the recently received Green School flag and a selection of our musicians and choir, under the direction of Ms Sinnott, got to showcase some of our talent. It was a very timely visit, in that our recent Annual Art exhibition had taken place Thursday previously and the school could be mistaken for a wonderful art gallery! Verona was presented with a bouquet as a token of our appreciation for her advocacy efforts and taking the time to come and visit the school and continue her discussions with Ms. Walsh. She also gave a talk to the senior classes on her role in the Dáil. We have no doubt, based on our Students' Council and Green Committees' public speaking abilities alone, that some politicians of the future are within our very building! Check out the blog for some photos from the day. <https://piercestownns.com/>

Enniscorthy Hub May 17th

Wed 17th May saw over 40 children, ranging from 1st to 6th class, head off to represent our school in the Schools Athletics competition in Enniscorthy Athletics Hub. Many thanks to the parents who facilitated their children attending on the day by driving them there. Many thanks to Ms Hearne and Mrs Newport for supervising the children and ensuring that all children got to each of their events. A great day was had by all, and silverware was even brought home by Rory O'Connell in 4th class for the under 11 long jump event and Tommy Codd in 6th class for the under 12 high jump! Well done to everyone who took part and to Ms Hearne for co-ordinating the participation of our school in this much-loved event. See school blog for photos! <https://piercestownns.com/>

Rackard League finale

The month of May brought huge excitement to the school as our Rackard League boys team booked an evening in Wexford Park against our nearby neighbours Rathangan. After two months of training and matches our boys were hitting the peak of their ability just at the right time. On a beautiful evening both teams showed the quality that had brought them this far in the competition. Rathangan looked dangerous from the off but a stellar performance from our goalie and backs kept the game tight. At half time against the wind, we were down 1-7 to 1-4. In the second half our luck was just not in with some wayward shooting and a couple of goal line blocks halting our scoring progress. Rathangan kicked on in this final third, pulling away to win 3-11 to 1-6. The score did not truly reflect the game however, as we pushed to get back into the game, Rathangan took advantage of the spaces. The boys can be hugely proud of themselves and the performance they gave against a strong Rathangan side. The whole school would like to thank all the parents from both the Rackard League and Rising Stars who gave up their time to collect from trainings, drive to matches or support us at games.

Medal Presentation in Murrintown on Thurs June 1st

The success of Rackard League school year 2023 2024 was evident when the staff and children of Piercestown N.S. travelled to our neighbouring school for the medal giving ceremony on Thurs June 1st. The girls received their runners up medal for their place in the Rackard League football final back in November and the boys received their runners up medal from their recent final in Wexford Park. Many thanks once again to the parents for enabling their children's participation. Many thanks to Mr Colloton and the staff for hosting this lovely event. Mr Kevin Waters, the chairman of St. Martin's and Cumann na mBunscoil was on hand to present the medals and remind the children that some

schools rarely get to secure a place in a Rackard League final, thus reminding them of the significance of their achievements this year. Many thanks to all the mentors, Mr Murphy, Mr Whyte, Mr Howard, Ms Brazill and Mr Colloton from Murrinstown N.S. and to our very own Mr Murphy, Pat Quigley and Ms Hearne for all they do to keep our strength, success and skill in hurling and football well and truly alive!

Prader Willi Syndrome Awareness Day 26th May (usually 27th May)

On Friday 26th May 2023, Piercestown N.S. looked beautiful with bright and vibrant orange balloons and decorations hanging around our school building. This was done to create awareness for Prader-Willi Syndrome. There are approximately 120 people in Ireland with PWS, more information can be found out on <https://pwsai.ie/>. Our very own, Teresa Roche Murphy, went to great lengths to make sure that 1st Class had a very memorable and wonderful day. The boys and girls started the day off watching a video on Prader-Willi Syndrome Association Ireland. The children then all had some delicious, healthy foods, all colour coordinated for the day that was in it. To name a few, they sampled orange peppers, hummus, crackers, cheese and juicy orange segments. The children thoroughly enjoyed all the healthy foods kindly prepped by Teresa. Mrs Walsh never heard the class so quiet as the children all happily munched and crunched. There was a fantastic atmosphere in the school on Friday. The rest of the school joined in with 1st class in raising awareness and wearing Orange. Go to the school website homepage to check out some photos from this event! <https://piercestownns.com/> Many thanks to 1st class for leading this event and sharing your knowledge with our school community.

Rounders

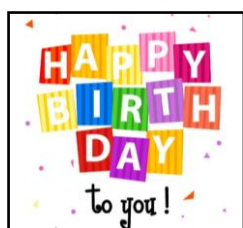
It has been full steam ahead with both the boys and girls rounders teams this year. Their hard work, dedication and teamwork has been fantastic to see. The children are a credit to themselves and their families. Both teams made it to the knock out stages, securing places in the quarter finals for the girls and semi-finals for the boys. It was all systems go last Tuesday week, with the girls heading to Barntown for their semi final. Despite a gallant effort, things didn't go their way on the day and unfortunately they weren't on the winning side. But what an achievement it was to secure a place in the semi final! The boys were also pipped at the post the day before our midterm break with a Trojan effort and just coming up short versus Raheen. The coaches and school are very proud of their fantastic performances and teamwork throughout the tournament. 6th class still have the Nuala Stafford local tournament to look forward to versus Rathangan. Special shout out to the staff, in particular Ms Lyttleton, Mrs Brady, Mrs Walsh and Trish who volunteered to lead the teams for this school year. Without staff stepping up to the plate, our participation in the wide range of activities would not always be possible.

Gymnastics Success

On Sunday 21st of May, Nicole Rossiter entered a gymnastics competition in Dublin. She competed in the trampolining session and brought home a silver medal! Huge congratulations to Nicole on this success! It is great to see so many Piercestown children fly the flag in a wide range of extra curricular activities!!!

Big Birthday Shout Outs - June!

We would like to wish the following children a big happy birthday: Adam from Junior infants; Daniel, Eva and Conor from Senior infants; Lucy from 1st class; Maddi, Amara and Ashton from 2nd class; Sam and Tomás from 3rd class; Charlie, Jack, Trinity and Eva from 4th class; Caoimhe from 5th class; Estelle from 6th class. We hope you all enjoy your special day!!!



*"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday dear Adam, Daniel, Eva, Conor, Lucy, Maddi,
Amara, Ashton, Sam, Tomás, Charlie, Jack, Trinity,
Eva, Caoimhe and Estelle.
Happy birthday to you."*

June homework wind down

June will see a reduction in the homework given by all class teachers. Active Week will focus mainly on 'active' homework and all staff have agreed that homework will be kept to a minimum for the last few weeks with an emphasis on reading. Many thanks for the support you have given to both your child and their teacher throughout the year with regards to homework. While we appreciate at times, the completion of homework can be challenging at the end of a busy school/workday, we see it as a link with home and school and at times a means of communication that can benefit all parties. We hope that the reduction in homework is beneficial to all as the children wind down for the end of this school year.

Student Council

Hello everyone, I am Seán from the Student Council. We have been very busy this month. Our coin challenge is complete. There is a competition in place to see who will design the crest on our jerseys. At the beginning of this month Verona Murphy visited our school and we showed her around. This week the school is very busy with Active Week and there are lots of fun activities planned. Coming up this Sunday is the Family Fun Day, we hope to see as many of you there as possible!

Coin collection and school crest competition

Our coin collection exceeded our expectation and not only was the bottle filled but it was actually overflowing!!!! We look forward to completing the count in the coming weeks and in the meantime, the students' council did not let the grass grow under their feet, as before the midterm, they hit the corridors and announced the 'Crest Competition'. Given that we have no uniform, we have decided to call on the creativity of our school community and look for a school crest to be designed for our set of jerseys! We are so excited to see the ideas that come back to us! What comes to mind when you think of Piercestown N.S.? What would your crest look like? The competition is open to all classes and will remain open this week during Active Week. We look forward to updating you on this exciting competition!

Pen Pals

For the month of May the boys and girls in 1st Class have been learning about letter writing. They have really enjoyed the process. They were so excited to become pen pals with another 1st Class in another school in Co. Wexford. The idea of becoming a pen pal in the digital age is nearly historic, however the children are so enthusiastic. Writing to a pen pal has been a great way to encourage the children to practice their communication skills, writing and engaged reading. All children made a number of drafts of their letter and some children put in pictures for their pen pal too. We posted our letters at the end of May and we wait in excited anticipation to receive our replies from our new pen pals in June.

Forest School Educational Field Trip

1st Class had a wonderful experience on their educational field trip. We dropped the pencils and books and donned our wellies as we went to Forest School and explored Forth Mountain. Austin was fantastic with the children, teaching them about the wildlife and the forest. To name a few activities the children thoroughly enjoyed, searching for frogspawn was near the top of the list and they were delighted when they got to see the Mammy frog up close. The children particularly enjoyed collecting wood for the camp fire and making s'mores. It was a great day out for all.

Art Exhibition

It was lovely to see the return of our Annual Art Exhibition on Thursday 12th May. There was a large turnout on the evening and the atmosphere was joyful as families gathered together to admire the amazing artwork which was on display both in the PE hall and down along the corridors. The children were very excited as they eagerly showed their parents their own particular piece. For some who attended the exhibition it was a return to a familiar event which had become a favourite in our school calendar but for others it was their very first time, with Covid having disrupted the 'Annual' aspect of this event in recent years! Special guests on the night included Helen Gaynor, artist and writer, who officially opened the exhibition and spoke not only about the art, but also about our newly published third edition of We Are Writers. Some children were beaming with pride as their artwork got a special mention. Junior infants were delighted when their peacocks in Johnstown Castle received a special mention. This year for the first time, each piece

of art was given a title by the artist, and this was also noted by Helen. Also speaking on the night was Colum Kavanagh, our BLAST comic writing facilitator. Colum was thrilled to join us again and blown away when he saw the finished comics by 4th, 5th and 6th class. He said that he had worked with as many as nine other schools this year but none had embraced the initiative with as much energy, enthusiasm and success as Piercestown N.S! Winning entries from each class for the 'We Are Writers' cover competition were also on display with Abbie Walsh from 4th class congratulated again as overall winner. Many thanks to the Parents' Association who gave generously of their time and energy to provide a much needed cup of tea or coffee to parents and some treats for the children. Special shout out to Mrs. Corrigan who lead this much-loved event and ensured that each piece of art was so exquisitely displayed! All in all, this was a very enjoyable event and a wonderful evening of celebration of the arts in our school.

Active Week 2023

The children will no doubt be excited returning to school today after their week off, knowing that Active Week 2023 will kick off first thing. The timetables were sent home before the June midterm outlining the huge range of activities that will take place over the course of the week. The week will finish on Friday with the ultimate highlight, that of school sports day. So it's runners, shorts, leggings, suncream and lots of drinks all the way this week as we get ready to try out all of the various events and lunchtime competitions. The week will kick off with the 'School Community Walk a Mile with a Smile event' first thing on Monday morning. As per the information letter sent out last week, we remind people to continue their best efforts at healthy eating and completing their 'Active homework' for the week. Why not get ALL the family involved in the active homework!

Family Fun Day – date for your diary: Sunday 18th June

With the arrival of June, the countdown to the Family Fun Day is well and truly on. With less than a week to go, we are looking forward to the second ever Family Fun Day. Sponsorship cards went home in bags on the Thursday before the midterm break and will be returned on Wednesday June 14th. It is imperative that all cards (even those not completed) be returned to the school in accordance with the guidelines of a permit being granted. Many thanks to the Parents' Association for all their hard work and effort. We can't wait for the big day and no doubt it will be a fitting event to officially close our Active Week 2023!

Hurling/Camogie Lunchtime League

Even though Rackard League is over, it's truly still hurling season here in Piercestown N.S. with the return of our much loved hurling lunchtime league. We have 5 teams and over 40 players from 4th to 6th class participating. In the group stages every single game has been very close with less than a goal separating the teams in many of the matches. With one final round of group games remaining, two teams have already booked their places in the semi finals but for the other three teams it's still all to play for if they want to make the knockout stages. The standard of hurling from all the girls and boys is commendable and also their encouragement to each other as team mates, as we have accomplished club hurlers playing with relative beginners. In the coming weeks this competition will come to what I am sure will be an exciting ending and for the very first time we will present the George O'Connor trophy, kindly sponsored by the St. Martin's Club, to the winners of this competition. George's accolades remain an inspiration to all here in Piercestown N.S. and maybe within this group we have the next young hurler/camogie player that will bring the Liam McCarthy or the O'Duffy cup back to Wexford!

Standardised Testing

Standardised testing took place in accordance with DES requirements in classes from 1st to 6th class. The results for literacy and numeracy are returned to the DES in 2nd, 4th and 6th class and form part of statistics that calculate support provided to schools in the form of Special Education Teachers. In Piercestown, as a result of School Self-Evaluation and a focus on spelling in particular in recent years, we carry out an additional standardised spelling test. The results of the tests will be detailed to all parents in the end of year reports which will be accompanied by an explanation letter. However, as always we caution too much emphasis being placed on any one stand alone result. Often, a result may not reflect a child's day to day performance and overall ability. It is important to remember that they are just a snapshot of a moment in time. In accordance, with best practice, school reports will be sent out in advance of the summer holidays and there will be an opportunity for people to liaise with the class teacher should they feel the need

to do so. As always, our Special Education Team have done their best to ensure that any children absent for the test sittings were facilitated to complete the test at a later date.

School Inspection - May 19th

The sun was shining and the mobile library was busy out the front of the school on Friday May 19th. One could have assumed passing by the school, that this was just another ordinary day in the school year. And while that is exactly what it was, we also had a surprise visit from our school inspector. Mrs Noreen Bambury completed an incidental visit to ensure all was going well in school and her feedback was commendable. It is always reassuring to have our best practice affirmed and know that as a school community, we are working extremely hard and that this is reflected in the visits organised by the DES.

School Tour Season kicks off!

With the educational tours having returned for this school year, the summer term brings with it the fun schools tours! 3rd class were first to kick off the tours by taking to the waves in Tramore. Hot on their heels were the junior infants, senior infants and 1st class who made their own separate journeys in their class groups to Woodfield house to go back in time and get lost in the wonder of many activities from washing clothes, to dressing scarecrows, to water fights, to building turf towers and so much more. June will see all other classes head off on their tours. Once again, keep an eye on the blogs for updates and some photographic moments!

Class of the Month winner for April /May

With two short months, April and May are to be combined and the result will be announced at assembly this week. Who will the worthy winners be? No doubt you will all hear about the coveted Pizza Party, but we will update you as soon as the information is released!

Green Team – Flag brought home

May brought exciting news that the green team had secured their 'Global Citizenship - Energy' green flag award. This theme gave our school the chance to revise our theme of energy and to look at the issues surrounding energy use in our homes, school and our responsibilities in relation to Climate Change globally. We were invited to the Awards ceremony in Kilkenny to collect our flag, meet fellow Green School committee members and have a sit-down lunch to celebrate. On the 10th May, Miss Ryan and our two sixth class committee members – Teegan and Cora, travelled up to Kilkenny to collect the award. There were games and photo opportunities on arrival. The team listened to some speeches from members of the Green Schools organisation among others and picked up lots of ideas to possibly run in our own school. The girls eagerly awaited our name to be called and Teegan and Cora went up to the top of the room to be presented with the flag and award. This was followed by a delicious hot lunch and dessert. The next day the Green Committee visited all of the classrooms to show off the flag and chat about the day out. The Green Committee looks forward to raising the new flag on our school flagpole in the coming weeks! Check out the blog for more photos from Kilkenny. <https://piercestownns.com/green/>

Primary School Books Grant

The primary school books grant process is well under way at this stage. As per correspondence, all books, workbooks and copies are funded by the DES for the next school year. There will be a stationery list and a small number of additional items required but costs will be kept to a minimum. Stationery lists will be issued before the end of the current school year. Many thanks for your co-operation and patience.

Confirmation Class 2023

Congratulation to the Confirmation class who had their Sacrament of Confirmation the day after the release of last month's newsletter. It was a wonderful occasion and both the choir and the class were an absolute credit to themselves. We were blessed with the weather and reaped the reward of the hard work and preparation that had been put into the day. We hope all the children and their families had a fantastic time and that memories were created for some time to come. Many thanks to Fr Aodhan and Fr Cleary, who were so giving of themselves and their time to ensure a wonderful ceremony took place. Many thanks to Ms Hearne, Lena and Trish who had 6th class in tip top shape on the day itself. Huge thanks to Ms Sinnott and the choir who enhance the atmosphere beyond expectations at each and every event. Final thanks to the Parents' Association and the parents of the children in 5th class who go above and beyond to host a wonderful reception afterwards that allows the children and their guests to relax, mingle and enjoy some gorgeous refreshments!

Bake Sale for Zambia

Friday 26th May saw a bake sale being organised by 5th and 6th class. Thanks so much to all families who supported this worthy fundraiser. With people still sending in donations after the bake sale finished up, the final total was close to €700!!! This money will go with Donal Howlin, past pupil and parent of current pupils, Eve and Ruth, as he journeys to Zambia with teachers and students from CBS Wexford. The money will be used to help build a new school there and provide education for the poorest children, mainly orphans, giving them the chance of a better life. Hats off to the children in Rang a Cúig and Rang a Sé who did a fantastic job baking the delicious treats and selling them on the day. Some of them definitely have a promising career in sales ahead of them! See photos of smiling children and their treats on the blog! <https://piercestownns.com/>

Holy Communion Ceremonies 2023

Saturday 27th of May saw the sun splitting the stones in county Wexford. With a huge second class this year of thirty five children, two ceremonies take place. It was an early start for Ms Sinnott and her class, as they made their first Holy Communion at 10am. Accompanied by a select choir from 5th class who volunteered to join us on our early start and Gigi and Teegan from 6th class, there wasn't a dry eye in the church by the end of the service. The music and participation by all present were very moving. Special shout out to class teacher Ms Sinnott, Fiona, Bryan and Pat for all of their work in the lead up to this special event. The second service took place at 11am and with barely a ten minute turn around for the church and roles, a special mention must go to Ms Sinnott who transformed from class teacher to choir teacher extraordinaire and to Fr Aodhán for having the same energy, enthusiasm and gusto for both ceremonies. Ms Farrell's preparation with second class is to be commended and the children were so well prepared that they were relaxed and able to fully enjoy this very special occasion. The music as always was phenomenal, with the choir accompanied by Ger Griffin on the day. Once again, huge thanks to the Parents' Association who had such a massive crowd to cater for. All of your hard work and efforts are greatly appreciated and talked about near and far in such a complimentary fashion. Many thanks to 1st class parents who hosted the event for 2nd class and who will reap the rewards next year when it is their turn.

Board of Management meeting – agreed report

The Board meeting took place on May 16th and the following was the agreed report:

- Congratulations to the pupils who made their Sacrament of Confirmation recently
- Congratulations to Mrs Ryan and the Green Committee on successfully achieving another Green Flag for the school
- Congratulations to the Students Council on completing their recent survey on Child Protection on behalf of the Board of Management. They were very impressed and look forward to further examining some of the suggestions in the coming school year
- Best of luck to the children in 2nd class with their upcoming special occasion of the Sacrament of Holy Communion
- Hard luck to the boys on their defeat in their Rackard League hurling final but huge congratulations for their successful run this year
- Many thanks to Deputy Verona Murphy on her work recently advocating for the school. The Board were delighted that the school had the opportunity to host Ms Murphy on a tour of the school also.
- Thanks also to James Browne and Paul Kehoe for their efforts on our behalf too.
- Congratulations to the school community on the recent Art Exhibition. The Board were delighted to see the return of this much loved event.
- The updated curriculum policy worked on by the staff in recent months for the subject of Maths has been ratified by the Board of Management.
- The next Board of Management meeting will take place on Tuesday 20th June 2023.

A Word from the Principal

It is hard to believe that another year is almost complete. It only feels like yesterday that our new junior infants were arriving and 6th class were stepping up the plate as the role models for this school year. It has been such a busy and successful year, with the arrival of new pupils, sanctioning of a new class for 2023/2024, reestablishment of the Students' Council, return of all of our much loved events, launch of our 'We are Writers' and so much more. We hope that you have enjoyed this year as much as we have and we look forward to continuing to enjoy the remainder of the

school term with you. For 6th class, they will be writing the last few paragraphs in their 6th class chapter, the final chapter of their primary school experience! We look forward to celebrating with you all before you fly the nest. The next few weeks, will see the arrival of our new pupils for 2023 2024 and we have no doubt that the whole school community will look forward to welcoming our newest members. So, while momentum has been slightly broken with our midterm, we ask you to get back on board with us for the last few weeks so we can finish the school year 2022-2023 on the high that it deserves!

*“Although no one can go back and make a brand new start,
anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.” – Carl Bard*

Dates for your diaries so far this year:

- GAA reverts to Tuesdays
- Active Week 12th-16th June
- Ms Sinnott’s tour 15th June
- Sports Day 16th June
- Family Fun Day June 18th
- 2nd class tour 20th June
- Nuala Stafford Rounders tour in Rathangan June 20th
- Welcome Day for incoming Junior infants June 21st
- Transition programme for 6th class to secondary school June 21st
- School reports to be released 21st June
- Graduation for 6th class June 22nd
- 4th class tour June 23rd
- 6th class tour 23rd June
- Tuesday 27th June cricket match at home versus Murrintown
- 5th class tour June 29th
- School closes for summer on June 30th
- Summer Programme will run from July 3rd-21st