

Welcome to the ninth edition and the second last of the Piercestown Post for the school year 2023-2024. As we begin to enjoy the summer midterm break, it is hard to believe that there is literally just a matter of weeks to go to the end of the school year! June is always a much-loved month in school by staff and pupils, with an opportunity to relax the homework and curriculum and increase the socialisation and activity! But before we kick into summer season mode, let's have a look back to see what we go up to for the busy month of May.



Great news – hard hats at the ready!

I am delighted on behalf of the Board of Management to begin this month's newsletter with the exciting news of our building project that lies ahead. As per our email on Monday May 20th, we are delighted to announce that we have been successful in receiving approval for what the Dept. defines as a 2 Class SEN Base. We have already hit the ground running and the first step in progressing this project to appoint a Design Team to design and tender the project and oversee the construction is underway. Many thanks for your continued support as we work to continuously secure the best facilities for our school community.

3rd and 4th class headed to Chadwicks Wexford Park

Hurling 365 might have come to an end but the hurling buzz has not faded. We were delighted to receive an invitation to take part in a hurling blitz on Wednesday last. The blitz invited the school to enter teams from 3rd and 4th. Our school opted to send three mixed teams thus allowing all the children who attended our hurling 365 sessions from 3rd and 4th class to attend. Many thanks to Ms Roche and Ms Hearne who attended on the day. Check out the blog for some of the photos on the day! With Wexford still in the championship (after a hairy start!) we look forward to many more days of the purple and gold over the summer! Well done to all the children who took part!

Confirmation Class 2024

Congratulation to the Confirmation class who had their Sacrament of Confirmation on May 10th. The sun was splitting the stones from start to finish to add to the special occasion. It was a wonderful event and both the choir, and the class were an absolute credit to themselves. 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. Special thanks to Bishop Nash, who added to the occasion by being the main celebrant on the day. Many thanks to Mr Murphy and 6th class who reaped the reward of the hard work and preparation that had been put into the day. Huge thanks to Ms Sinnott and the choir who enhance the atmosphere beyond expectations at each 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!

Holy Communion 2024

The sun was shining, the choir was in full voice, the church was packed, and the atmosphere was one of innocence, positivity, community and fun! May 25th saw St. Martin's church bring together the culmination of months of preparation and weeks of practice to allow 2nd class children to make the third sacrament of their lives. With their baptismal candles on display, the connection from their initiation into the church was evident on the day. Huge thanks to Fr Aodhán who manages to strike a chord with all of us when he speaks so eloquently and honestly at our services. Fr Aodhán was so giving of his time in the lead up to the sacrament also. As a school community, we would like to acknowledge how lucky and grateful we are to have Fr Aodhán. Ms Farrell and Lena could not have been prouder of the class and as both principal and parent on this occasion, I want on behalf of all of the families to extend a huge thank you to Ms Farrell and Lena. All the behind-the-scenes work ensures that the children enjoy their special occasion even more. From the artwork, to the singing, the prayers and the gifts, thank you for making the occasion such a special and enjoyable one for all. The choir and Ms Sinnott need no introduction at this stage, but they are so deserved of our praise! Ms Sinnott succeeds in making ALL children not only want to sing but love singing. The music and choir

as always added to the ambience on the day. Take a bow. The Piercestown Parents' Association deserve amazing credit for their wonderful reception. Year on year, I hear guests and visitors to our school on the sacramental occasion praise and appreciate the lovely atmosphere and tasty refreshments available on the day. The work by 1st class parents and our Parents' Association reflects the warm atmosphere we aspire to create all every day in our school – so thank you. Finally, thanks to the boys and girls! Your enthusiasm, reverence, participation and joy were so evident on the day! It really was a day to remember!

1st class headed to see Shrek! Sharing of Talent

There is nothing better than the sharing of talent and community links. We were delighted to be invited to attend the production of Shrek Junior by 6th class pupils of Scoil Mhuire, Coolcotts. Having hosted matinee performances pre covid for local schools, Scoil Mhuire Coolcotts were delighted to reignite this opportunity post covid. Our 1st class were delighted to join the unlikely hero Shrek and his noble steed Donkey as they embarked on a big, bright, musical adventure, based on the classic DreamWorks movie. The show was filled with toe-tapping numbers, laugh out loud moments and a reminder that "what makes us special, makes us strong!". Many thanks to Ms Lehane, Mr Lehane and Pat who attended on the day. But the biggest thanks go to the amazing production team in Scoil Mhuire behind such a performance and to the school for opening their doors to us! We can't wait to see what next year's show will be!

Chess Success outside of school

Keeping our chess success alive and kicking, huge congratulations to Heath Mahony and Donagh McGee who continue to exhibit their chess prowess at community games level. Back in April they were on the winning team in the Leinster final at Community games with their local community thus securing themselves a place to represent at All Ireland level. They recently secured bronze medals in the All-Ireland final with their teammates. Huge congratulations to Donagh and Heath and many thanks to them for continuing to fly the chess flag that we work so hard to uphold in Piercestown National School.

Testing, testing, 1, 2 3!

As per our school calendar, standardised testing kicked off the week of Monday 13th May. Before, we outline the information below, I would like to remind the school community, that these are one tiny element of our children's educational journey. As a staff, we use the information to help us plan for teaching and learning but the staff would agree with me that there is SO much more to teaching and learning than a standalone score. We pride ourselves in creating an inclusive environment, one that embraces all styles of teaching and learning. 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 standalone 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. Many thanks to the SET team and all involved in the co-ordination of this process.

Enniscorthy Hub School Sports Day

All roads led to the Athletics Hub in Enniscorthy on Tuesday 21st May where our school saw 40 children, ranging from 1st to 6th class, head off to represent our school in the Schools Athletics competition. Many thanks to the parents who facilitated their children attending on the day by driving them there. Many thanks to Mr Lehane, Mrs Newport and Pat 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 a selection of children this year. Congratulations Chloe O' Mahony who got a

bronze medal for under 9 long jump, Archie Devereux who brought home gold in the under 9 long jump, Conor Reed who brought home a gold medal, Ava Quirke who secured a bronze medal, Sean Power who brought home gold and Leah Healy who brought home gold also! Well done to everyone who qualified in the school races to get to Enniscorthy and 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/>

June homework wind down

June will see a reduction in the homework given by all class teachers. Active Week, the week of 17th June, 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.

Active Week 2024

The Active committee and Ms Hearne, Ms Walsh and Mr Murphy have been busy over the last few months ensuring that Active Week 2024 is as enjoyable and exciting as ever. This year Active Week will take place during the week of June 17th. The timetables and information letters will be sent home when we return after midterm, outlining the huge range of activities that will take place over the course of the week. The week will finish on Friday 21st with the ultimate highlight, that of school sports day. As per the information letter that will be sent out when we return, 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! We are coming to the end of the expiry date of our second active school flag and will be submitting information for our renewal early in the next school year. We hope that this Active week 2024 offers us further evidence of all we do as a recognised 'Active School'.

Primary School Books Grant for school year 2024 2025

As per correspondence, the primary schoolbooks grant has been secured for the coming school year. Like last year 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 pending recruitment and class allocation. Many thanks for your co-operation and patience.

New infants coming through – Introduction Day June 12th

While some of our bigger kids might be counting down the days to summer holidays, some of our smallest and soon to be newest school community members are counting down the days excitedly to their arrival. Wednesday June 12th will see the new Junior infants (class of 2024 2025) visit their school in two smaller groups to get to know their classroom and each other! We can't wait to meet with them all. We will ensure that anybody who has a sibling already in the school will get to drop by. Many thanks to Mrs Larkin who will be on hand to give the children their introduction! Never fear, our junior infants will not be given the day off. Instead, they will relocate to a different classroom with Ms Lyttleton for the day and continue their teaching and learning. It is hard to believe that they are almost senior infants now!

Report Card writing is underway

As per the above paragraph on testing, reports cards are currently a work in progress. They will be released via the Aladdin app at least a week before the end of term. This allows you the parents an opportunity to touch base with the class teacher or SET teacher should you wish to do so. 6th class passports, which include the page from you the parents, a page from the pupils and the 6th class report will be transferred to all secondary schools upon request. We will send the parent forms out for completion upon our return on Monday 10th June. We will also in accordance with circular 0040/2024 send accompanying documentation on the reading of school reports and in particular standardised testing.

Niall Melon fundraiser 'Bake Sale' Monday 10th June

Monday 10th June will see us return with a pep in our step and a few coins in our pockets as 5th class will be hosting their annual cake sale, with funds this year going to the Niall Melon Building Blitz fundraiser 2024. Many thanks to Ian Mernagh from our school community for connecting in with 5th class to organise this event! Thank you in advance for your co-operation and support. Many thanks to Ms Caldicott and Mrs Corrigan who were instrumental in ensuring a much-loved bake sale takes place in 5th class this year. No doubt Sunday night will be busy for our 5th class pupils before we return next week.

Piercestown Parents' Association – Keeping Childhood Smartphone Free'

Our proactive Parents' Association cannot be accused of resting on their laurels with this initiative. Having connected with the school and all stake holders, a meeting was held on Tuesday May 21st in the PE hall, to share all of our findings. Sharon Finegan our PA secretary was on hand to share all the parental findings that had been prepared by Chairperson Stephanie Quigley and Ms Walsh presented the findings of the pupils from 3rd to 6th class and our staff. It was an open and interesting conversation, which confirmed an overwhelming majority as per the results from the surveys, are eager to pursue this goal and prepare a possible pledge for the start of the next school year. As suggested, the Parents' Association and Ms Walsh will share their findings with those who could not make the evening. We look forward to touching base with you all again before the end of this school year and making our best efforts to ensure the brightest and safest futures for our children.

Rackard league and Mini 7s updates – knock out stages

An update from Ms Sheehan

The girls' team delivered an outstanding performance in the semi-final against Adamstown, held in Bree. From the first whistle, the team demonstrated exceptional skill, coordination, and determination. Their relentless forwards and impenetrable backs left Adamstown struggling to keep up. The energy of the girls led them to dominate the field and secure a decisive victory.

All roads led to Wexford Park on Monday the 20th of May for the final against Marshalstown, marking a proud day for our school, club and families. The atmosphere was electric as the team departed the school with a guard of honour that showcased the community's unwavering support and pride. Throughout the match, the girls displayed tremendous skill and determination, embodying the spirit of our school. Despite their valiant efforts, they were ultimately bested by a stronger Marshalstown side. Nevertheless, their journey to the final is a testament to their hard work and dedication, making their families and school immensely proud. Their achievement is celebrated, and their sportsmanship and teamwork were commendable.

Mini 7s

The mini 7s team played in the 2nd round of the competition against Kennedy Park and St. Annes in Rathangan. The girls were victorious against Kennedy Park with a scoreline of 2-4 to 1-1. Unfortunately, they were beaten by two points by St. Annes.

Throw in on the George O Connor hurling league

We are excited to announce the start of the Georgie O'Connor Hurling Lunchtime League! This spirited competition brings together boys and girls from 4th, 5th, and 6th classes for an exciting series of hurling matches during lunchtime. The league promises to be an opportunity for students to showcase their hurling skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship. It's a time for working as a team with pupils from other classes, enjoying healthy competition, and fostering a love of one of our most cherished sports.

Each game so far has been filled with enthusiasm and energy, as our young hurlers have taken to the field in tight, well-contested games with fans from younger classes even sneaking a peak at some of the games.

School tours 2024 kicked off!

School tours kicked off on Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th last week with three classes heading off. It was wetsuits, change of clothes and towels at the ready for 5th class as they headed off to the outdoor education and adventure centre in Sheilbaggon. The weather thankfully remained on side for the day but with the water based activities the rain would not have mattered. 5th class showed their sense of adventure when they took part in climbing, caving and

surfing! A great day was had by all and all returned happy, tired and no doubt hungry after such a fun filled day. Many thanks to Mrs Corrigan, Mr Lehanne and Pat who embraced their sense of adventure for the day!

Our senior infants recently enjoyed a very exciting school tour, filled with adventure and teamwork. Their first stop was at Forest School, where they had the joy of meeting Ziggy the lamb, a friendly and curious companion. The children explored different flora and fauna in the forest, made s'mores over the campfire, and worked together to build shelters while soaking in the natural surroundings. They spent the day exploring the forest, reconnecting with nature, and engaging in hands-on activities that sparked their curiosity and wonder. The adventure concluded with a visit to McDonald's, where the children enjoyed a well-deserved meal, sharing stories and laughter. Great fun was had by all children and memories were made.

Not to be outdone, Ms Hearne's class, accompanied by Niamh, Fiona and Mr Lehanne headed off to the north of the county to hit Pirate's Cove for their school tour! Mr Lehanne was living his best life having been on two tours this week but given his time spent in Ms Hearne's class, all agreed this was only fair. There was great excitement from crazy golf to boating and so much more. And a day is never truly complete with a trip to the Golden Arches. Many thanks to the team for ensuring that the children had a great day. All other classes are counting down the days to return in June and go on their school tours! These are the days that children remember for a long time!

Reading Recovery Accredited School

Piercestown National School is delighted to announce that we are now a 'Reading Recover Accredited School'. Many thanks to the Board of Management who supported our application form this time last year. Huge thanks to Mrs Newport who has engaged in a huge amount of continuing professional development and upskilling while taking on this role and leading this area within SET. We can proudly say that one year on, we are reaping the rewards hugely. The difference that is has made to the teaching and learning for some individual children and within our area of SET and our classrooms has been impressive! Many thanks to the parents who consented for their children to take part and we look forward to continuing our Reading Recover journey into the future.

Class allocation and staffing for next year

As per last month's update, our staffing at present remains unconfirmed for next year. We are delighted to say that the process of recruitment was recently sanctioned to begin, and interviews will be taking place in the coming weeks. We will work to the best of our ability to communicate class allocation by the end of the school year. Many thanks to the Board of Management who have a busy time ahead.

Rounders update!

The matches against the CBS took place with both boys and girls team securing a win and getting into the knockout stages. With different midterms in school, logistics were challenged but as always, a solution was found. There will be local rivalry when we return on Tues 10th when the girls take on Murrinstown and the boys will take to the field against Kilrane. There has been training in preparation for the matches and with the competitive nature of both teams, we can't wait to see what happens on June 10th. Best of luck to all involved.

World Prader Willi Syndrome Day May 31st -Happy Orange Day

The last day before midterm was full of cheer, as Piercestown NS school community was a vision in orange! Led by Lena and Ms Farrell, information about Prader Willi syndrome was on display throughout the school in the lead up to the annual awareness day. A lot of awareness and understanding about Prader Willi Syndrome was shared in the classes with special celebrations taking place in 2nd class. To have a look at some of the photos from the day go to <https://piercestownns.com/2024/06/04/piercestown-school-community-turn-orange-for-prader-willi-syndrome-awareness-day/> . Many thanks to all the boys and girls who got their 'orange on' to raise awareness on the day. For more information about Prader Will Syndrome go to www.pwsai.ie

6th class preparing to fly the nest

As a follow on from our last newsletter, we will wish 6th class all the best for the last few weeks. Recently, we were delighted to have Aurelia Glynn from our School Completion Project spend a day with 6th class pupils working around

the area of 'transition to secondary school'. Many thanks to Wexford School Completion for this invaluable input. This has whetted the children's appetite for next year and all that lies ahead. But before we say goodbye, there are still three weeks of memory making opportunities.

Class of the Month – and the winner for April was

It was all to play for with the month of April as it was another short month. The winner was revealed on May 7th at our school assembly, and we were delighted to announce that the worthy winners were Ms. Lehané's 1st class. There was great excitement at the prospect of the pizza party, and a win that was so sweet for the children. With just two more months up for grabs, the tempo is increasing! The next class of the month for May will be announced on Monday 10th June when we return after the June midterm break.

Condolences

The staff and school community would like to offer our sincerest condolences to the Cullen and O'Mahoney family, on the passing of Clare Cullen recently. Keith is a serving member on our Board of Management and we offer our deepest sympathies to him on the loss of his mother. Keith, Jenny, Eve, Leo, Séamus and Laura and all members of the Cullen and O'Mahoney families are in our thoughts. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.

Cairde Conor

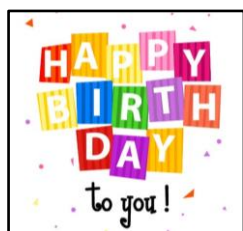
As many of you will have heard, a fundraiser has been organised by the wonderful local community for Ms. Hearne's son Conor. Ms. Hearne is overwhelmed by the showing of support not only from her own community in Screen but from the many walks of life that both Conor and her family share. We have connected in with the organisers of 'Cairde Conor' and before the end of the year, our students' council will organise a school event so that Ms. Hearne's Piercestown family can show our support for her and Conor. At all times, sensitivity and care for Ms Hearne is our priority. We continue to offer our prayers and good wishes to Ms. Hearne and Conor on the journey ahead.

Official Opening of the Modular TBC next week

It has been an exciting year this year in Piercestown NS. October saw our pupils watch the skeleton frame of our modular physically pieced together in front of their own eyes. Much co-operation and community partnership kept our school together, while we awaited the arrival of our new modular. New chapters were written that will go down in our Piercestown N.S. history. And then finally, in 2024 our modular build was ready (bar the exterior which is nearing completion). We hope to have an official opening of our modular before the end of the school year pending completion of some works. Ms Sinnott is busy working behind the scenes to co-ordinate this event. As soon as we return, we hope to be in a better position to inform you of a date and extend an official invitation to our school community.

Big Birthday Shout Outs - June!

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



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

A word from the principal

Milder days are upon us and fingers crossed for more days of sunshine ahead as we make our way through the last few weeks of the year! Time has simply flown by this year. As we all know, the children love the summer season, school tours, Active Week, sports days, icecreams, trips to the shop (ssssh!) and so much more. Since our last newsletter, we have had the privilege to share two school events with the parish, that of Holy Communion and Confirmation. Having made the decision to bring my own children to school here, I had the privilege of a dual role at our recent Holy Communion. Regularly, I speak in my role as principal of all that I am proud of within our school community. I get the opportunity to recognise hard work among our staff, achievements among our pupils and partnership among our school community from pupils to parents to Board of Management. It was an absolute honour to be able to indulge in the hard work of all at Piercestown National School as a parent and experience an occasion such as Holy Communion with my own family recently. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, this time on a personal level, for all you do on a regular basis. I have always been confident in my choice to bring my children to the place I work, and I believe it is a privilege to do so. I look forward to sharing the enjoyment of the last few weeks of this term with you all. June let's be having you!

"We didn't realise we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun!" – Winnie the Pooh

Dates for your diaries so far this year:

- June mid-term 3rd- 7th June
- 5th class Bake Sale Monday 10th June
- Jun infant tour 11th June
- 3rd class tour Tues 11th June
- Welcome day June 12th new infants
- 6th class tour Wed 12th June
- Ms Sinnott's class Wed 12th June
- 1st class tour Wed 12th June
- 2nd class tour Thurs 13th June
- 4th class tour Fri 14th June
- Active Week 17th – 21st June
- Tues 18th June 6th class Nuala Stafford Rounders tournament in Rathangan
- Sports Day 2024 21st June
- Graduation Tues 25th June
- Official opening of the modular – date in late June TBC
- Summer holiday Fri June 28th
- Summer programme July 1st-19th inclusive