



Welcome to the second edition of the Piercestown Post for the school year 2024-2025. October was an exciting month full of fun and learning, problem solving, singing and indeed signing! And just a year on from breaking ground for our modular, contracts were signed for the new build! Teaching and learning were at full tilt, with a focus on Maths, lámh and Irish to name but a few and who could forget the excitement of our Student Council Elections! So, if you have a few minutes, with the evenings being longer, pour yourself a hot cuppa and catch up with all that we have been up to!

New Build Update **

Friday 18th October will go down as a significant date in the history of Scoil Náisiúnta Baile an Phiarsaigh. A large meeting gathered of the full Design Team for our new build. Roles were explained, visions were shared and contracts were signed! Now the real work begins with gusto. Many thanks to Board of Managements, past and present, for leading us to this point and to the staff and community of Piercestown National school who work tirelessly to constantly progress and improve and to all for their unwavering support. We are so excited to have started this new chapter in our school building and look forward to reaping the rewards upon completion. As various stages progress, we will work hard to share our updates along the way.

Nasal Flu Vaccine

Many thanks to our local GP in Whiterock Family Practice who facilitated staff and students who wished to avail of the flu vaccine. All classes were offered except for Junior infants, who had recently received their immunisation schedule from the HSE. Whiterock Family Practice will return on November 11th to offer flu vaccines to the junior infant class and for those who wished to avail of the flu vaccine but were absent on the last day. Many thanks to Siobhán in the office also for her role in this collaboration.

Tionól Scoile (School assembly)

Gach mí bíonn tionól scoile ar siúl sa halla. Ar maidin bíonn tionól na bunranganna agus tar éis am sosa bíonn tionól na hardranganna ar siúl. I mbliana beidh deis ag rang amháin ó Naíonáin Bheaga- Rang 2 agus rang amháin ó Rang 3-6 cur i láthair ranga a dhéanamh.

I mí Dheireadh Fómhair bhí deis ag Naíonáin Bheaga agus Rang 5 píosa a thaispeáint don scoil. Bhí an craic ag na Naíonáin baill choirp a thaispeáint, dhá amhráin a chanadh agus cluiche a imirt. Bhí spraoi ag na hardranganna amhráin a chanadh chun tús a chur le cheiliúradh Oíche Shamhna. Maith sibh na páistí uilig. Bhíomar go léir an bhróidiúl asáibh! Ní féidir linn feitheamh chun na ranganna eile a fheiceáil i mí na Samhna

Each month we have a school assembly. The junior classes attend in the morning and the senior classes attend in the afternoon. This year one class from the junior end and one from the senior end have the opportunity to perform in Irish.

In October the Junior Infants and 5th Class presented! There was great craic with the infants demonstrating their knowledge of the body parts, singing two songs and playing a game. 5th Class kicked off the festive season with a Halloween song. Well done to all, we were extremely proud of the knowledge and presenting skills. We can't wait to see what the rest of the classes have in store.

Congratulations to our Artist Finalist

Huge congratulations to Arina in 5th class who reached the final of category Primary 2 in our Artist Of The Year competition and Joey, Kate and Pippa in 2nd class who have reached the final of category Primary 1. There was a small prize giving ceremony on **Saturday 2nd November at 1pm** at the Talbot Hotel, where the overall winner and the runner up in their category were announced. The students and all their family were invited to attend on the day. Well done to all for their success in reaching the final.

Piercestown Parents' Association

Following on from the success of last year, our amazing Piercestown Parents' Association once again held their sustainable event and offered a pre-loved Halloween costume sale. Many thanks to all involved, those who donated

costumes, those who hosted and those who bought. €280 was raised and many a dress up box was topped up in the process.

Upcoming Piercestown Parents' Association AGM – Date for your diary!

Tuesday 12th November at 8pm is the date that has been set in our diaries for the Parents' Association Annual General Meeting. Come along to hear everything about our brilliant PA and their integral involvement in our school community. New members are always welcome. We would love to get new committee members and/or names of people who are interested in helping at many of our much-loved annual events throughout the year. Many thanks to all PA members, past and present, for all their contributions.

Maths Week 2024

Maths week 2024 did not disappoint! With new staff (and old staff) came more new ideas from new Maths trails to Maths dances, to introducing the option of 'problems for parents' and the continuation of much-loved events such as Tables Bee, Countdown Champion, Monster Maths quizzes and bingo sessions! Fireworks night was further enhanced despite the inclement weather by the announcement of the 'Guess the Sweets' in the jar prize – congratulations to Kayla and Nicole. Congratulations to Heath in 5th class who was crowned the 'Countdown Champion' and Tom in 3rd who took the junior 'Tables Bee' title and Donagh in 5th who took the senior 'Tables Bee' title! Congratulations to the parents who were treated to a coffee and a bake for their efforts at 'solving our problems'. Special shout out to Ms Sinnott who kicked off the week with a maths-tastic dance and Becky who closed the week with the same! Congratulations to Kate Kenny in 1st class who won the 'Guess the Weight of the Pumpkin' competition and got to bring home the heavy pumpkin with a few extra grams of sugar added to it! Weeks like this don't just happen. At our Maths prize giving assembly, Ms Walsh gave particular thanks to the Maths committee who has worked behind the scenes to ensure that all staff could participate fully in our Maths Week menu of activities. Special thanks to Ms Hearne, Ms Sheehan, Ms Roche, Mr Furlong, Ms Sinnott, Becky and Ms Lyttleton for going the extra mile to make Maths 2024 as good if not better than ever! The enjoyment levels of Maths in our school should see the new maths curriculum being fully embraced in Piercestown National School.

National Lámh Day

National Lámh Day 2024 took place on 16th October 2024. This year's theme was 'Let's Learn' and our school community made a video to share with you all to demonstrate our daily efforts to follow this mantra. Special thanks to Fiona, our lámh tutor (how lucky our school is to have this talent and experience) who is instrumental in keeping us all up to speed, affirming our efforts (which may be less than perfect at times) and continuing our journey to share lámh within all our classes throughout our school. If you missed the video on the day, why not go to the following link, scroll down our page a bit and check it out. <https://piercestownns.com/>

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 2024 – Hybrid Approach Week of 18th November *

As per last month's newsletter, PT meetings will be scheduled with the majority **taking place the week of the 18th of November. Provisionally, we are blocking off Tuesday 19th and Thursday 21st that week.** Last year, we also offered a hybrid approach to parent teacher meetings for people who might find it difficult to make it to the school. Our communication will start this week to establish the interest level in this and then opening time slots for scheduling meetings via Aladdin Connect as always. We look forward to welcoming you all in and updating you on how your children have settled back into the school year and answer any queries that you may have.

Christmas Card Creations!

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 personal way. **The card samples will be due to return to the school shortly. The card sample will be sent home in the coming weeks, and we ask all parents to please contact us if your child's name has an error before it goes to final print.** Well done to all the boys and girls on their wonderful Christmas cards.

Class of the Month October 2024

Class of the month for October was announced at the November assembly which took place this morning. Word has it, it was a close call in the lead up to the final scores before midterm. The question on everyone's mind was who would follow in the footsteps of sixth class, or would indeed sixth class retain their title for a second month in a row? We can *now* announce that 4th class were the worthy winners. Well done to Ms. Sheehan and 4th class. It is all to play for in November, as new goals have been set by the classes! With two senior classes having taken the goods in the first half term, all eyes are on the junior end to see if they can get a class across the line for November.

Gymnastics is back!

Gymnastic coach Tommy and his team will return to our school for a six-week block starting this Thursday Nov 7th. This will be an opportunity for all classes (except 3rd who are busy swimming this term) to engage in all aspects of gymnastics of the Physical Education curriculum. The children are looking forward to gymnastics coaching very much. A reminder to wear appropriate clothing and shoes every Thursday. More information about the gymnastics coaching will be sent out via Aladdin tomorrow.

Beginning of Year Service - Thursday 17th Oct.

The Beginning of year service took place on Thursday 17th October. Many thanks to all those who attended and/ or tuned in. Apologies to those who had to relocate to the gallery, we literally were a tight squeeze as a school community downstairs. It was so wonderful to be together and I am sure you will agree, it was a lovely experience for our entire school community. Junior infants were worthy of a special mention celebrating their first service with us. The music, poetry, and use of lámh warmed the hearts of all who witnessed it. Special word of thanks to Fr Aodhán who goes above and beyond to make our children feel so special and our staff feel so appreciated for all that they do. We look forward to future events and hope to have a date for our annual evening Christmas Carol service soon.

Jersey Day - Friday 11th Oct

As per last month's newsletter, this year we hosted our jersey day on Fri 11th, with all proceeds going to the charity GOAL. Many thanks to Mrs Larkin who has been busy uploading blogs to the website www.piercestownns.com We raised a grand total of €347.15 for GOAL charity. Many thanks to all who donated and got their jerseys on. There was a great selection of jerseys to be seen on the day but overall the maroon and white definitely won out! For a look at some of the pictures, why not check out the blog on www.piercestownns.com

Acting Principal Appointment

As Mrs Corrigan is job sharing this year, she is required to temporarily relinquish the post of Deputy Principal. Interviews were held in recent weeks, and Ms Hearne has been appointed to the post of Acting Deputy for as long as the post remains. This in turn has opened up another position on the in-school management team which will be interviewed for in the coming weeks. The Board of Management welcomes Ms Hearne's appointment and wishes her the best for her new role in the school. The Board would also like to commend the school on the interest expressed in the position. This is further testament to the excellent leadership that exists across all areas of our school community.

Appointment of new bus escort

Interviews were held for the position of bus escort. Ruth Bridges has been appointed. We will be in touch to announce Ruth's start date and arrange for her to meet the children with one of our familiar faces. Many thanks to our SNA team who kept the ship afloat, or in our case the bus on the road in the interim period. It is greatly appreciated.

REMINDER: Hairbrushes at the ready! School Photographer - Image Masters – CHEESE! - 20th and 21st November 2024

As per our last newsletter, a reminder that the official school photographer will land this month. Photos of Junior infants and their siblings will be taken. Group photos will be taken, and the siblings and other individual photos will also be taken as we do this on a bi-annual basis. The photographer will work from the PE hall on Wed 21st and the Knockingall Community Centre on Thursday to facilitate our gymnastic coaching. As always, the purchase of these photos is voluntary.

Enrolment for the school year 2024 2025 -opening to be announced!

It is hard to believe but enrolment for the next school year will commence soon. Keep an eye on the blog for the Admissions notice. We will also be announcing the Open Night date in the coming weeks, scheduled to take place in the next few weeks for those who have a child due to start school next year.

Student Council Elections

Never mind the Whitehouse, there was MAJOR excitement in our school community during October, with the election process for our new Students Council for 2024 taking place. There were speeches and manifestos galore from 3rd to 6th class and Ms Walsh was only sorry that she couldn't have more places on her Students' Council as the standard was so high. But the speeches were delivered, the posters were hung, and the ballot papers were counted and on the final day of midterm our new Students Council were announced- congratulations to Harry and Oliver in 3rd class, Niamh and Myah in 4th, Heath and Emily in 5th, and Malachy and Mia in 6th. Ms Walsh looks forward to working with you and there will be no delay as the first meeting is scheduled to take place on November 6th when we return. Many thanks to everyone who put themselves forward, we are so proud of you all and encourage you to keep making sure your voice is heard across all walks of life! Final thanks to the outgoing Students Council- you were an absolute pleasure to work alongside and we look forward to the unveiling of our first ever Student designed school jersey which was your final act as our Students Council and what a job you did!

Sporting update from Mr Lehané

The final week of term was full of football finals. On Monday our Rising Stars picked up the first silverware of 24/25 when they defeated Gorey in the final. We had some wonderful performances from Piercestown boys in an impressive victory. All roads lead to Bellfield on Thursday evening where the Rackard League football reached its conclusion when the boys took on Castlebridge in the Roinn A final. A tight encounter was expected between two strong teams with great rivalry over the years. The two sides did meet in the group stages of the competition with Piercestown coming out with a narrow victory. It was a tough competition, but with some fine performances from the boys of Piercestown and Murrintown the Castlebridge side had no answers and boys of Piercestown celebrated a win for the second time in a week! The final score was not reflective of the commendable effort from Castlebridge and how tightly fought the match was. The boys have represented the school admirably on our Rackard league and Rising stars journey this term. Many thanks to Mr Lehané and Mr Murphy who both brought home the silverware in the football.

Girls Rackard League: Update from Ms Sheehan

In a thrilling Rackard League quarter-final at the Rathangan GAA pitch, the girls battled fiercely against St. Anne's, showcasing remarkable determination and spirit throughout the match. Despite a valiant effort, they fell short, losing by just two points with a final score of 2:4 to 2:2. The team's resilience and fighting spirit were evident, and their performance left a lasting impression on all supporters. Well done to the girls for their hard work and dedication! Special shout out to Ms Sheehan and Ms Hearne for all their efforts with both Rising stars and Rackard league football this term. With football season over, bar our lunchtime league, it won't be long before we are dusting off the hurleys!

Lunchtime League: The Daithi Waters Trophy

The competition for who will be crowned lunchtime league champions and presented with the Daithi Waters Cup is really heating up. With one more round of the league stages left to play there are still semi-final places up for grabs. We are looking forward to the knockout stages in the coming weeks and crowning our new champions. This competition is a great way to prepare 4th class for their Rackard League journey when they enter 5th class and also gives every child a chance to play full competitive games and develop their football, team work and leadership skills.

With over seventy boys and girls choosing to play this year the competition is bigger than ever, and it is great to see the seasoned pros encourage the relative beginners as every person is vital to the team effort.

Freshtoday Hurling 365 Skills Competition:

We are delighted to let you know that we have registered in the Fresh Today hurling 365 skills competition. This competition is open to 3rd and 4th class children all around the county with some amazing prizes on offer for the overall winners. The first prize is a 4-day family stay in Centre Parcs, WOW!! This competition will run all over the winter for us to pick our school winner, there is also recognition given to the most improved in the school. There are 5 individual skills that will be demonstrated to the children and practiced and then scored before the next skill is introduced. The aim is that they will practice the skill at home over the 2 weeks before they are then scored in school and then the following Monday we will move in to the next skill. After all 5 skills are finished and scored (February) we will have our school winner that will represent us in the Skills Finals evening where those amazing prizes are up for grabs!! Our first skill is the high catch, so 3rd and 4th class get the hurls back out and get practising!!!

County Final Champions 2024!!

And hot off the press, the great news, that the silverware continued to roll into the Parish, with a most deserved wins against local rivals St. Anne's in Wexford Park yesterday! With so many past pupils on the team, we can't wait to deck ourselves out in our maroon and white and have an opportunity to welcome our local heroes into our school. St. Martin's Abú!! The team arrive tomorrow as per our email today and we are SUPER excited!!! Let the celebrations continue!

Chess: Who will be the next winner on our Eamonn Barrett plaque?

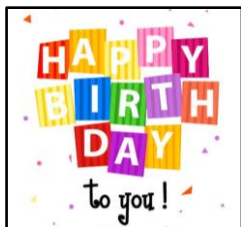
Following on from some practice sessions in the first half term, with 6th class sharing some of their expertise with the younger classes, our return after midterm will signal the beginning of our much-loved chess tournament. In the first week there will be time given to further practice and lunchbreaks where the children can evade the unpredictable weather and play chess in the hall. Then the competition will begin with every child from 3rd to 6th class taking part. It is great to see all, from the experienced players to those just learning the game, enjoy the challenge that a game of chess offers. Over the duration of the competition every child will play at least 8 games of chess before the next winner of the Eamonn Barrett Chess plaque is crowned. Will we have our very first female winner of this coveted trophy? As well as the overall winners there are also gold, silver and bronze medal winners in every class and the places on our chess ficeall teams are up for grabs, where the chosen people will represent our school against other schools. So dust off the chessboards and get practicing, remember "Every chess master was once a beginner"

Discovery Drama places available for this term – Interested in Drama Classes?

Discovery Drama as run by Olga Conway in Piercestown National School and in Knockingall Community Centre on Wednesdays, ***has places available for the 4th-6th class slot at 4pm weekly.*** For further information and/or to book a place, please contact Olga on 087-6858457.

Big Birthday Shout Outs - November!

We would like to wish the following children a big happy birthday: Ella from senior infants; Scarlett, Dylan, Reuben and Kate from 1st class; Cara, Leo, Donnacha and Nora from 2nd class; Karyna, Beau and Eve from 3rd class; Francis, Eoin and Myah from 4th class; CJ and Katie from 5th class; Kiara and Dylan from 6th class; We hope you all enjoy your special day!!!



*"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday dear Ella, Scarlett, Dylan, Reuben, Kate, Cara, Leo,
Donnacha, Nora, Karyna, Beau, Eve, Francis, Eoin, Myah,
CJ, Katie, Kiara and Dylan,
Happy birthday to you."*

Halloween Fun! Costumes at the Ready for Friday 25th October

October brought with it so much fun with the penultimate day for the children being the much loved 'Freaky Friday'. Word has it Ms Walsh was most afraid of the weather as opposed to any of the ghost, ghouls and strange creatures that showed up having fallen foul to it last year. So, heads were put together early in the week and a plan B was put in place. And plan B was fully executed as once again the weather was not on our side. Thankfully, the right call was made, and no costumes were harmed this year. Despite the bad weather, the atmosphere was not to be dampened. Maleficent had the tunes blaring as the children arrived and having rehearsed the day previously the children were excited to perform their dance as taught by Becky. When the window of opportunity arrived, the school got to see each other's costumes and the junior end performed their dance routine 'Ghostbusters' for the senior end and vice versa with the 'Time Warp'. And on the back of an amazing win the night before and at the start of the week, the Rising Stars and Rackard league champions were centre stage as the ghosts, ghouls and witches serenaded them deservedly with 'We are the Champions'. The DJ in the PE hall brought all of the spirits to life and great fun was had on the day. Thanks to all of the parents who go above and beyond to help the children fulfil their costume dreams and to the brilliant staff who never miss an opportunity to embrace the fun with the children. As always, the standard of costumes was amazing and for fun, each class either randomly selected or democratically voted for their favourite on the day. Well done to Eli, Emer, Doireann, Lexi and Caolan, Elodie and Tyler, Callum and Amara, Heath and Eve and Roan for their awards. Many thanks to Mrs Larkin who worked hard to get all the footage of the day together to share in time for Halloween itself. For those of you yet to see it, why not check out the blog www.piercestownns.com

Online book club

Our new Scholastic Book Club will be **up and running this Wednesday November 6th**! The brochure for the Setanta online book club will be available online. 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 15th.

Folens Christmas Annuals

You will have received a noticeboard about our Folens Christmas Annuals today. We are planning on ordering Christmas Annuals from Folens this year. Attached please find the flyer for your perusal. The cost per annual is €3.00 and comes with a pencil/pen whichever is class appropriate. I would be grateful if you could reply to this noticeboard if you are interested in purchasing one with your child's name and class to determine which annual is required by Thursday 7th November.

Garda vetting appeal – We would love to hear from you!

As a school community, we love to involve our parents when opportunities arise. To do so, we are legally required to have any parents who wish to be involved Garda vetted. Following on from the global pandemic, the number of garda vetted parents reduced significantly. We are appealing for parents to come forward to be garda vetted so that we can revitalise many of our much-enjoyed experiences such as Maths activities, shared reading, school tours and in-class events. With your support we can do so much more. To be garda vetted, please ring the office on 0539158854 or drop us an email on piercestownns@gmail.com to access a form. It really is a simple process and we would greatly appreciate it.

Condolences

The Board of Management and school community wish to offer their condolences to Mrs Larkin and her family on the loss of her beloved mother-in-law. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dílis.

A lovely surprise

As flagged in our last newsletter, we were eagerly awaiting the arrival of our safety/pencil bollards. And they did not disappoint. There was great excitement among the pupils today when our pencils were observed. Many thanks once again to Peadar Dempsey and Lisa McDonald for organising and funding these pencil bollards, that both contribute to increased safety as well as being aesthetically pleasing outside of our school grounds. This is further testament to the wonderful community that our school is privileged to be part of.

A Word from the Principal

The first half term flew by and yet so much has happened. The school was awash with teaching, learning, friendship and fun. As management, however we were also acutely aware of the challenges that many of our staff members faced. Your support and condolences towards them are commendable and so appreciated. Many thanks for your continued support. The success of a school is only as good as its team, our team being us as a staff, the children as our pupils and you the families as our school community. Our teamwork over the years shows, and continues to show, the great progress that Piercestown National School as a school community continues to make. I know, I speak on behalf of the board of management and staff when I say how excited we are about our new project. And yet on the day-to-day level, we remain as excited about the small wins too, the hard-fought successes that some of our children achieve, the football wins, the art competition wins, the Maths week winners, the increase in our spoken Gaeilge to name but a few. School is such a wonderful hub of successes and teamwork. I look forward to what the next half term has to offer.

“Small wins are still won, and the journey is more important than the overnight success” – Bill Watterson

Dates for your diaries so far this year:

- Mindful Monday November 4th, 2024
- Tuesday 5th November ‘Celebrating with the County Champions’ St. Martin’s Abú!
- Board of Management meeting Tues 5th Nov 2024
- Hearing and vision screening Wed 6th and Fri 8th 2024 for Junior infants
- Gymnastics starts November 7th 2024 (all classes except 3rd class)
- Nasal Flu Vaccine Jun infants (and mop up from last day) Monday 11th Nov.
- Parent Association AGM Tues 12th Nov 2024
- Diabetes Day Thurs 14th Nov 2024
- Sing out Loud Fri 15th Nov 2024
- Deadline for Scholastic orders Fri 15th Nov 2024
- Image Masters 20th and 21st November 2024
- Science Week – 10th- 17th November 2024
- School closure Primary Maths Curriculum April 3rd 2025
- Confirmation – Friday 11th April 2025
- First Confession – Thursday 13th Feb 2025
- First Communion – Saturday 10th May 2025