



SCOIL BARRA NAOFA

Newsletter #5 January 2022

A Cháirde,

Happy New Year to you all! We hope you enjoyed a happy and peaceful Christmas with your families. It is great to see so many smiling faces back in school ready to take on 2022 with renewed energy and excitement! January will be a challenging month for our children, families and staff. We will endeavour to do all we can to overcome the challenges with a smile on our faces and with your support and understanding.

An exciting term lies ahead with school events including Internet Safety Month, Healthy Eating Week and Seachtain na Gaeilge. Our plans are tentative and cautious, but it is important to remain optimistic and have something to look forward to. We hope everyone enjoys and benefits from these events!

Mise le meas,

Ger O' Brien agus Foireann na Scoile



Upcoming Dates

Mon Jan 24th Early Closure for Staff Meeting.

Infants finish at 1pm, 1st and 2nd at 1.10pm, 3rd to 6th finish at 1.20pm.

Thurs Feb 24th and Fri Feb 25th. School Closed for Mid Term Break.

Wed Mar 16th Early Closure for Primary Language.

Infants finish 11.50am, 1st and 2nd 12pm and 3rd to 6th 12.10pm.

Thurs Mar 17th and Fri 18th St Patrick's Day Closure.

Fri Apr 8th; School closes at 12pm for Easter Holidays. Reopening 8.35am on Apr 25th.

Sat May 14th First Holy Communion. Time to follow.

UNIFORM/TRACKSUIT ARRANGEMENTS

As you are aware, trying to balance adequate ventilation in classrooms with keeping children warm. To this end, all children may wear their school tracksuit daily if they wish. It is hoped that this measure will allow children to layer up and keep warm and comfortable during the day. This measure was originally introduced from November to January, however, this will be extended until February Mid-Term and will be reviewed again at that stage.

The uniform policy will be reviewed in the coming months and your feedback will form part of this review. Parents were invited to share their thoughts via email during term 1. Thank you to all parents that contributed. A general survey will be sent to all parents in the coming weeks and your input is very much appreciated. Surveys will be sent via Aladdin and each family is asked to contribute their response. Please note that current arrangements in relation to tracksuits are temporary. This survey relates to the general uniform policy in place at SBN.

SACRAMENTS



dreamstime May 14th has been set as the provisional date for Second Class Children receiving the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. At this stage a time has not been agreed. Public Health Guidelines closer to the time will dictate whether we are required to hold one or two ceremonies. Once these arrangements are known to us a time/times will be shared. Further information on mass/ceremony arrangements, preparation of the church and tea/coffee reception will be shared at a later date when we can plan with greater accuracy.

A date for the sacrament of First Confession has not yet been agreed.

Many thanks to Fr Seán who has compiled a suite of online presentations and videos for the children making their First Communion. These resources, including video and narration by Fr Seán, will be shared with teachers and children weekly and over a period of 5 weeks. The children will learn about the different parts of the mass. Upon completion of this segment Fr Seán will organise fortnightly online meetings with the children guiding them as they progress through their journey of faith. An introductory virtual meeting with Fr Seán will take place next week. Fr Seán will explain the process to the children and the children will have an opportunity to chat with him. In the future, when it is safer and easier to gather in large groups, we will gather in the church again.

Many thanks to Fr Seán for preparing such a comprehensive and inclusive resource for not only SBN but all schools in the Lower Harbour Parish. We wish him well in his own busy role during 2022.

PARENT'S ASSOCIATION

Many thanks to all parents that attended our PA AGM in November. Sincere thanks to our outgoing and long serving members of the PA; Paula Granby (Chair), Beckie Coole (Secretary) and Joanne O Connor (Treasurer). A new PA has been established and have been working hard throughout November and December. A very warm welcome and míle buíochas to our new PA; Georgina McHugh (Chair), Jill Ryan (Secretary), Claire Stafford (Treasurer), Susan O' Keefe, Mairéad O Sullivan, Lorna O' Connor, Amy Murphy, Deirdre Stuart, Jessica Bird, Sarah Hyda and Amanda Holley.

The PA organised Toy Show Treat Bags, Santa Visit, Selection Boxes and a Christmas Raffle this December. This great work along with your support has raised 2,500 Euro in funding, put a smile on the kids' faces and the faces of the many prize winners. What a fantastic achievement by all involved. A list of businesses that supported the raffle can be found at the end of the newsletter. Many thanks to all for their generosity.

This year the PA's fundraising efforts will be focussed on the creation of multi purpose space for all children at SBN. As we have invested in a laptop trolley and full set of laptops we plan to redecorate our computer room and create a multi functional space, full of colour, cool furniture, beanbags and activities that can be enjoyed by all. A space where classes can go for chill out time, play board games, have a disco or watch a movie on the large interactive screen (like their own mini cinema). Smaller groups or individuals may visit the room and use the sensory activities and functions. It is hoped that this room will provide a unique space to stimulate creativity, discussion and innovation or offer a quiet space to relax and unwind. We will keep you posted on this

development. We will post pictures to our website and Facebook page as the project evolves.

Our PA will also work with the school on policy reviews such as Uniform, Anti-Bullying, Child Protection and After School Care Policies. We are currently exploring the possibility of after school care at SBN and will keep you informed of this exciting possibility.

Remember all parents are welcome as members of the PA. You can help out on a continuous or one off basis. If you are interested in joining the PA or wish to learn more about the PA please email pa@scoilbarranaofa.ie or see www.npc.ie Likewise, if you are interested in working with the Wellbeing Parents Group please email the school office on info@scoilbarranaofa.ie and we will be happy to connect parents.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Well done to the Student Council for organising our Advent Calendar and Advent Raffle as well as the Penny Dinners collection and Christmas Jumper Day. Indeed, well done to all children and adults involved. Special thanks to Mrs Donnelly for working with the Student Council on these projects.

During December children won prizes daily and the Student Council members read messages/tasks from the Advent Calendar daily. We had a lot of fun with these! This year's Christmas Jumper Day was run in aid of the Make a Wish Foundation. This chosen was chosen by the children themselves as it directly benefits other children less well off than our own.

The Student Council will hold two further fundraisers during this school year. If you wish to make a donation to the Make a Wish fundraiser you can log on to Aladdin and contribute. All monies raised will be divided in 3 and donated to our 3 chosen charities in June.

GREEN SCHOOLS, MURAL & PICKER PALS



Well done to the Green Schools Committee for their work during term 1. Thank you to Ms Flannery for organising our new pennants which are hanging proudly at the school gate. This year we are continuing towards our Global Citizenship Flag. We will also share news on our Spring Art Competition in February. Winning entries will be painted on canvas and a new permanent display created in the school.

Mant thanks to Aoife Fleury and the Garden Committee for securing funding and creation of a new school mural. Mural artist Juliette Viodé will paint a mural based on Irish female botanist Ellen Hutchins. If you would like to see some of Juliette's previous work see www.juliette-illustration.com We look forward to the new addition in the coming months and look forward to learning more about Ellen Hutchins.

During Term 1 Scoil Barra Naofa was chosen to be part of the Picker Pals Ireland Initiative. Picker Pals World is an environmental conservation organisation running child led litter picking adventures across Ireland. This initiative encourages children to become young environmentalists and inspire others (children and grown ups) to do the same through stories, activities and fun. Our 2nd Class children are now beginning their Picker Pals adventure. We will post updates and pictures on our Facebook page. If you would like to read/learn more about Picker Pals see their pickerpals page on instagram.

HEALTHY EATING WEEK

We are planning to run SBN Healthy Eating Week in the coming weeks. For now we have pencilled in either the last week of January or the first week of February. Staff absence/availability means we may run Healthy Eating Week over ten days/two weeks.

The PA and Wellbeing Committee will assist with the preparation and running of the activities, however, any volunteers or support is most welcome. If you, or someone you know, runs a business that may be able to provide fruit and veg or would be willing to sponsor the purchase of fruit and veg then we'd love your support. Likewise, parents are encouraged to contact local supermarkets, suppliers or similar on our behalf. Any feedback or support can be communicated via the school email info@scoilbarranaofa.ie or the PA email pa@scoilbarranaofa.ie

As well as treating the children to some tasty platters and smoothies we will be running lessons, art activities and competitions for the children. The PA and Wellbeing Committee will organise a Zoom cook along for parents and children. Nutritionist Aisling Kelly will be involved and as the cook along will take place virtually and after school all children can take part. We are looking forward to this exciting event.



CREATIVE CLUSTERS

Scoil Barra Naofa was chosen by the Cork Education Support Centre to host this year's Creative Cluster. The application, led by Sharon Mulrooney, involved SBN as the lead school and two partner schools, Berrings NS and St Catherine's NS. This year's project sees John Spillane return to SBN to work with the children of 3rd Class. Weekly song writing lessons have commenced and the children (and teachers) are enjoying the experience thoroughly. John works as Gaeilge as well as in English. The children are challenged to collaborate and create as well as compose and perform. What a wonderful opportunity this is for our children! We will be posting pictures to our Facebook page so please feel free to like and share.

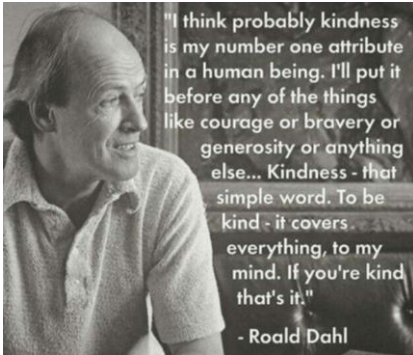
After Easter we plan to join with our Creative Cluster partners and perform a concert with John. Children will sing their own composition as well as other popular songs. We look forward to this event and thank Ms Mulrooney, Mr O Connell and all at the CESC for this opportunity.

SCHOOL DROP OFF AND COLLECTION

We are aware that school works taking place at SBN means that machinery may be parked directly outside the gates during the day. This area is our fire assembly point and the point at which children needing additional assistance are dropped off and collected. Please do not park or drop off in this area and please leave the spaces available to those that need them.

Dropping and turning around the school gates is an extremely hazardous practice and is something that parents/guardians are specifically asked not to do. Despite our requests a number of drivers continue to drop and turn in this area every morning. All of our children are important and special and all should be able to walk to school safely. Please be responsible and be mindful of all of our children and look after all of our children.

We encourage parents/guardians to park and stride where possible. If park and stride is not possible or on wet mornings, we encourage parents to follow the informal one-way system which exists whereby cars drive up Church Hill (next to school) and down Chapel Hill (at church). Parents may momentarily stop at the small pedestrian gate to *Kiss and Drop!* Thank you to Cork County Council for our new colourful pencil bollards. They are bright and cheery as well as keeping us safe.



"I think probably kindness is my number one attribute in a human being. I'll put it before any of the things like courage or bravery or generosity or anything else... Kindness - that simple word. To be kind - it covers everything, to my mind. If you're kind that's it."
- Roald Dahl

KINDNESS & UNDERSTANDING;

January and February will be challenging months for all of us. You will have read and heard about the pressure schools are under right now. Staff absences and lack of available substitutes are a very real challenge for us currently. We ask for your patience and understanding in the coming weeks. If you have an urgent need to speak to your child's teacher please ensure that you communicate this in your email. Likewise, if the matter is not urgent please mention this. Please try, in so far as possible, to communicate any non urgent information by email. All emails should be sent to the office email info@scoilbarranaofa.ie Emails will be directed to the relevant staff member or substitute as appropriate.

At SBN we have a significant number of children isolating right now. We will do our best to share work and activities via Sessaw. You may wish to organise collection of books and materials at school. All homework will be shared via Seesaw. Given that teachers are teaching in person full time it is not possible to organise full engagement via Sessaw as was the case during school closures. During term 1 our SETs assisted Class Teachers in catering for children that were isolating. Given the high number of children isolating as well as the challenge in organising supervision and cover in school it is not possible for SETs to continue to assist in this way. We will do our best to cater for our children but please be understanding of our situation and realistic in your expectations. If you would like work/activities for your child please let us know and we will do our best. Many parents or children will not be well enough to keep up with school work and we do not wish to place unfair expectations or pressure on any family. We will follow your lead and to this end we ask that you contact the school to keep up informed of your circumstances and your need for school work and activities.

We thank you all for informing us of positive cases within your families. We will automatically inform families when there has been a positive case in your child's pod. If the parent is happy to share this information with the whole class we will do so, however, names will never be shared. The parents of the children in the pod will receive a text informing them of the procedure to follow in accessing HSE antigen kits. Where there have been cases in a number of pods the full class will receive a text inviting them to follow this procedure. Parents are reminded that despite the recent changes to close

contact rules, the rules for Primary children remain unchanged. Children must present for a day 10 test and must continue to stay at home until this test result is returned as Covid not detected.

A reminder that children must be symptom free for 48 hours before they can return to school following any illness.

For parents of younger children please be aware that isolation time may be longer if the child cannot isolate from the positive case in the household. We ask that you follow HSE rules at all times and consult the HSE website or your GP if you have any queries.

Thank you.

A BIG THANK YOU

A big thank you to all businesses that contributed to our Christmas raffle. These people have directly supported your child (ren). Please share our appreciation by telling your friends and neighbours about our fantastic and generous partners and please shop and support these businesses whenever you can.

*Carrigaline Court Hotel, Rochestown Auto Centre,
Chocolate Hair, The Bosun,
Passage West Pharmacy, Kildare Village, Barry Collins
Supervalu, Maryborough Spa,
Hair by Gwynne, Rochestown Pharmacy, Stack's
Pharmacy, Ora Fitness, Monkstown Golf Club, Michelle
Jewellers, Tyre Seal, Ramen, Irish Examiner, Edel
Fitness, Pat McDonnell, Shirley Hair, Crown Hair, Bank's
Tyres, Napoli, Passage West Butcher, Sweet King,
Passage West Barbers, All About Skin.*

As well as these partners a number of parents and grandparents contributed and donated spot prizes. Thank you to the PA and all who helped in any way.

