



# SS. MICHAEL & PETER JS CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2018

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

### Dear Parents/Guardians,

As Christmas draws near, a season of joy and thanksgiving, the children and staff of SS Michael and Peter Junior School look forward to the arrival of Santa Claus and the Christmas Holidays.

We have been very busy preparing for and performing our Carol Service and Christmas performances. For the month of December carols and jingles rang out from the classrooms and the children's excitement for the man in red has been contagious.

Since returning to school in November, staff and pupils have been busy participating in Science Week, Samba Drumming, GAA, numeracy and literacy initiatives. A big thank you to all our staff for their time, energy and commitment in making school such an enjoyable and exciting place. They are dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for all our pupils.

Alongside this, our Green Schools Committee, Active Schools Committee, Choir and After School Music Group have all been busy working towards their respective goals. We are just about to apply for our First Green Flag. Our Second Class choir enjoyed a trip to the Gaiety to see 'The Snow Queen' and all choir members enjoyed a trip to the cinema following a busy morning carol singing in Bridgewater Shopping Centre.

Our Second Classes have embarked on their First Holy Communion preparations which will take place on Sunday 26th May at 10 a.m. This is a very important time for these children as they

take the next step in their faith formation as members of the Catholic Church. We ask you to keep them in your prayers.

Each month our whole school community has been coming together for Assembly to display and celebrate the successes of our pupils and classes for that month. This is a very positive experience for all. It has been a joy to watch each class sing, dance and act for their peers at assembly as achievements for each class group are celebrated.

We are indebted to the parents of our school for their invaluable support, encouragement and cooperation. Our appreciation extends to the grandparents, wider family circle and community of Arklow. "Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine," is an Irish saying meaning we rely on each other, we need each other, we work together.

This Christmas the school has continued to engage in projects which reach out into our local community to help others. We are currently organising a 'Christmas Bauble' project, the proceeds of which will be donated to Springboard; a vital family service in the town.

We sincerely thank all those who have helped our school in any way to provide the best possible education for our pupils, it is gratefully appreciated.

Merry Christmas to all.

*Lisa Dempsey, Principal*



## CLASS NEWS

### JUNIOR INFANTS

As our first term in Junior Infants comes to a close, we have all continued to settle into school life very well. We are working hard on our third group of Jolly phonics sounds and are enjoying reading our first book Look out Teddy! We also have been working well in maths learning about data, measures, shapes and the numbers 1 & 2.

Science week was a big hit in Junior Infants. We loved watching science clips and investigating different experiments during the week.

As part of the Green Schools Flag we are learning about recycling and reducing our waste.

Lots of Junior Infants are continuing to bring in fruit and vegetables as part of their healthy lunches. The Food dudes are delighted with us helping to keep the life force strong! We are also learning about keeping active and doing active homework and activities throughout the school day.

We have made lots of friends throughout this term. We are so kind and helpful and great at inviting everyone to play.

We all have learned some special songs for Christmas and can't wait to show our parents. The teachers are super proud.

We are very busy elves in the classroom preparing for the Christmas Carol Service. We are all on our BEST behaviour on the countdown for the arrival of a certain man in red.

Merry Christmas Everyone from Junior Infants.



### SENIOR INFANTS

It has been a very busy few weeks in Senior Infants. We have been preparing for our Christmas shows and making lots of Christmas art and crafts. We have been learning about the post office, the artic, Santa's workshop and the restaurant during our Aistear time.

Ms. Coates class were learning all about people who help us and last week the Gardaí came to visit all the classes. It was really exciting and we got to ask lots of questions which will help us all during our role play.

All classes had great fun during science week experimenting with static electricity and waterproof materials while also making musical instruments and dissolving sugar. We also participated in a drumming workshop which taught us how to compose and practise different musical techniques.

Ms. Prendergast class have been working very hard on learning the Green School Code and keeping their classroom green. They are delighted to have been visited by Froggy the green school's mascot this month and hope to keep up their good work all year.

We are really looking forward to the carol service next week and cannot wait for Santa's arrival and to celebrate Christmas with our families.

## CLASS NEWS

### FIRST CLASS

First Class have been super busy in November and December in the lead up to our Christmas break.

We've loved reading lots of different reading books in our reading groups. We are always busy making predictions and connections to each and every story and enjoy talking and discussing our stories with our classmates. We may even get a chance over our holidays to 'curl up with a good book'.

Science week in November was so much fun! We carried out a lot of different experiments based around topics such as our Senses, Teeth and Heat. Science is definitely a favourite in First class!

We also loved a Drumming session in the PE Hall at the end of November. We learned all about rhythms and

patterns using so many different kinds of drums. We even worked on some polyrhythms - where two groups played different rhythms at the SAME time!

Winter and everything cold has kept us very busy in December as we are noticing the seasonal changes all around us. We have made some beautiful winter artwork. We are learning about Advent in preparation for Christmas. Everyone is very busy rehearsing for some Christmas surprises and of course our Christmas Carol Service.

We continue to work hard and spread lots of festive cheer in anticipation for a visit from a certain jolly red fellow in the weeks ahead! Wishing everyone a safe and happy Christmas from First class!



### SECOND CLASS

Second class have had a fun-filled and busy two months during November and December.

We have enjoyed learning all about Homes, where we have discussed different features and functions of Homes. We examined homes from long ago and how they are different from homes today. We really enjoyed channeling our inner 'Architects' as we drew Bird's Eye views of our own bedrooms and houses. We had great fun exploring the homes of animals, in particular Badgers and Foxes. We created our own imaginary Houses in art which were super fun and learning about foxes inspired us to create some FOX-tastic art too! Now that we are in the season of Winter some of us also made Artic Dioramas for Polar Bears, Penguins and Snowy Owls in construction for Art.

We are working very hard at continuing to bring in fruit and vegetables as part of our healthy lunches. We also have been extra active as we have been participating

in GAA and have learnt so much from our coach.

With the winter holidays fast approaching we have been learning about the changes in the seasons, weather and how it affects animals. We are learning about Penguins and really putting our imaginations to great use as we create wonderful winter stories and poems. Some of us have been learning about the History of the Late Late Toy show and have enjoyed sharing our favourite memories.

Well done to the Second Class Choir, directed by Ms. Griffiths who sang their hearts out Carol Singing in Bridgewater recently, you're all fantastic. Being the Panto critics we are, we highly recommend you all to go see the 'Snow Queen' Panto in The Gaiety Theatre. Your day will be full of laughter, singing and giggling!

We are very busy preparing for our Christmas plays and Carol Service.

We hope to see you all there! Merry Christmas

## CLASS NEWS

### ASD CLASSES

#### **Ms. O'Loughlin**

What a first term we have had in Ms. O Loughlin's room. The boys have been busy visiting the other classrooms and are working extremely well. The teachers are delighted with their work and progress.

In early December we were proud and delighted to join with Ms Redmond's class in performing the Christmas play "The Night Before Christmas". We were fantastic reindeer and everyone was delighted with our performance.

The boys have been preparing for Christmas in our church and have learned all about Advent. We are looking forward to the Christmas celebrations both in school and at home and wish everybody a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

#### **Ms. Crowley**

Ms. Crowley's class have been very busy this term. We are now really good at lining up on our colour spots before we go places in our school. We are great at making puzzles, doing our writing and listening to stories. We love sensory play, especially with foam. We have lots of energy and love running around on yard with all the boys and girls. We are very artistic, and have enjoyed painting cars, owls and winter hats.

#### **Ms. Ireson**

Wow what a busy first term we've had in room 7! We have learned lots of new letters and numbers. We know lots of new songs and actions as well. Some of our highlights have been trips to the library, singing workshops, birthday celebrations and the drumming workshop.

We are now eagerly awaiting the arrival of the man in red and some well-earned holidays!

Happy Christmas to all.



### SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS TEAM

The SEN Team have been busy putting a variety of learning initiatives together over the past term. It is with great delight that we are in the classrooms working with the children throughout the week.

All classes have received in class support with regard to maths. Ready, Set, Go Maths is taking place in both Junior and Senior Infants. All children are using concrete materials, games and a variety of approaches in their learning of maths. The opportunity to work in small groups is amazing and their increased learning is very evident.

The team has also enjoyed working with all classes with regard to Literacy. Senior Infants are benefitting from Literacy Lift Off, while 1st and 2nd class are being facilitated with Guided Reading. It is great to see pupils enjoying reading in small groups. This allows for extra support in developing your child's reading skills i.e. their fluency, clarity, expression, comprehension etc..

The SEN Team would like to wish everyone a lovely and relaxing Christmas and we are looking forward to 2019.

## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### GREEN SCHOOLS

The Green Schools Committee just put in their final application last month and have already received some really positive feedback from An Taisce who said they are very impressed with our application and feel that we are in a strong position to receive the Green-Flag award. They also made some recommendations which the committee will look forward to discussing and reviewing in the New Year.



In the application the committee shared some of our schools amazing waste results which you can check out below.

In the initial stages of starting the programme we recorded the average weekly waste from our school in black bin bags, and then we reviewed this again last month.

**November 2017**



**November 2018**



***We have reduced our waste from 23 bags per week, to 5 bags of waste per week.***

What fantastic results so far, which are down to all the children, parents, staff and the whole school community along with the Green schools committee past and present.

Well done everyone. Keep up the great work and remember our Green School Code!

*'Don't be skunk  
And recycle your junk.  
Let's go Green  
To keep our school clean.  
Reduce, Reuse & Recycle!*

### ACTIVE SCHOOL



The Active School Committee are continuing to work hard on raising awareness on being active in school and at home. We have taken up the Super

Troopers challenge with SuperValu to learn more about how to eat and be healthy too. Thanks to the Food Dudes programme we already have a head start on this. Over the past term we have been taking part in Movement Monday's and we encourage all the children to be active and to bring in any medals, trophies or participation medals that they receive outside of school so we can add them to our Active School Board. Well done to Olly in First Class who brought in his medal for his Jiu-jitsu competition.



### SCIENCE WEEK

This year for science week we wanted to do something a little different from last year. We collaborated as a whole school taking on the four strands of the science curriculum.. Living Things, Energy and Forces, Materials and Environmental Awareness and Care. We came together to communicate and share our new knowledge and of course there were plenty of exciting experiments too.



Junior Infants explored the wonderful world of animals (Living Things). They had lots of fun learning about different types of animals living in different habitats all over the world. They used fun games, art, music and drama to actively consolidate their learning.

Senior infants investigated different materials of all sorts and how they can change. e.g. Dissolving sugar in water, mixing oil and water, Volcanoes made using vinegar.

Some classes looked at the environment and how we can protect it .

First class examined the human body e.g The teeth, bones, skin, eyes and ears.

Examples of experiments were ..The effect coke can have on your teeth.

The most senior class of the school 2nd class explored the fascinating world of Energy and Forces. Each class took a topic like Light, Sound, Forces and Magnetism and Electricity. Examples of some experiments we did were Separating white light to see the colours of the rainbow, Investigating shadows and refraction. We investigated pulleys and designed our own using rolling pins. We listened to the sound/music made by striking different levels of water and watched raisins dancing because of CO2. Some Magnetism and Electricity experiments were The Static Can and what static electricity can do to your hair( Crazy Hair). Also some classes had a senses day as the The senses are an integral part of the science curriculum.



The science week was super fun and we are all budding scientists now!



## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### CHOIR

This term has been a very productive one for Ms. Kinsella's and Ms. Griffith's Choir. We practiced so hard, learning songs for 'The Big Sing' which took place in St. Mary's College. We were the youngest choir there but we made a huge sound for which we got great praise!

We have been learning lots of Christmas songs which we performed in Bridgewater Shopping Centre. We even earned over €300 for the school! On the same day, we got to go to the cinema to watch 'The Grinch' and had lunch in Eddie Rockets as our Christmas treat for singing so well.

We will sing at the Arklow Town Carol Service in Ss. Mary and Peter's Church on Sunday 16th December and we are so excited for this!

We look forward to a new term after the Christmas break and are always looking for new people to join in the fun! We have our sights set on Arklow Music Festival and are on the lookout for keen singers and dancers!



### *"TIME TO GIVE BACK"*

#### **From Ss. Michael & Peter Junior School**

As Christmas approaches our school community has decided to give back to those who give their time to those who care for and protect us. This year we organised a Festive Christmas Scratch Art Initiative. These Christmas Scratch Art Trees were sold at €1 each, the proceeds of this initiative were given to Springboard who provide services and support which helps to improve the quality of life for children and their families.

### **Toys for Aistear**

Thanks to all those who contributed to the Aistear toy collection drive. They will make a great difference to the implementation of our Aistear programme.



## SS MICHAEL & PETER JS PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

We hope that the children enjoyed the no uniform days which took place this term. We are very appreciative of the contributions received from these days.

In November, all of the classes participated in our first fun event – a drumming workshop hosted by Drum Nature. Drumming circles were used to encourage the children to listen, participate and have fun. It certainly looked (and sounded) like they were enjoying themselves.

December saw us getting into the festive spirit. Christmas annuals and Christmas cards were distributed - We definitely have a few budding Picasso's in our midst. We arranged a visit from a very special guest who took time out from his workshop at the North Pole to attend all of our classes.

The Christmas raffle was a great success and we'd like to thank all of our very generous sponsors for their donations.

*Adrian Dunne Pharmacy, All About Weddings, The Arklow Bay Hotel, Armstrong Life Pharmacy, Benita's Hair Salon, Black Amber Hair Salon, Bradley's Pharmacy, Brennan's Expert Electrical, The Bridge Hotel, Carrig Donn, Coral Leisure Centre, D'Arcy McGees, D-Fine Hair & MiMi Beauty, Dunnes Stores, Eddie Rockets, Esteem Hair Salon, Food Factory, Glitz and Bitz, Grants Pharmacy, Halpins, HireAll, Indoor Boot Camp/Ken Tancred, Jimmy K Family Butchers, Joanne's/Staffords Bakery, Joe's Bike Shop, John*



*Flood, Kenny's of the Harbour, Le Chef Deli Café, Love Beauty, McMullan's, Morgan Doyle, Next Door, Orla's Kitchen, Bolands Ltd, Paramount Jewellers, Pettit's Supervalu, Plain and Pearl, Power's Souvenir Shop, Pure Hair Design, Ralph O'Connell, Tesco, The Man's Shop, The Old Ship, TJ O'Mahony, Tommy Hyland Motor Factors, Townheads Barbers, TR TV, XpertDPO*

We're now busy organising our events for next term:

- School photos are being arranged for early 2019. More details will be available closer to the date.
- We'll be hosting a coffee morning in January. This will be a free event and our way of saying thank you for your continued support. Everybody is welcome to attend – Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. We hope to see you all there
- We'll be hosting more fun events and will provide details closer to the time.

If you want to keep up with our activities, events and news, please drop a mail to [pa@ssmichaelandpeter.ie](mailto:pa@ssmichaelandpeter.ie) and ask to be added to our distribution list, or join our Facebook group Parents Association Ss. Michael and Peters JNS, Arklow

*We'd like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year*

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

As the curtain comes down on another year and as we prepare for the Christmas holidays I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to everyone for making St Michael & Peters Junior School the excellent school it is. We are all proud of our school and the high standard of education it provides. This is brought about by a very dedicated and professional staff that is totally committed. We appreciate your efforts and thank you for the professionalism you exhibit every day. To the many parents and grandparents and guardians who visit the school every day, we thank you for your support. We are indebted to the Parents Committee for their involvement in raising much need finance for the school. Your involvement that is very much appreciated, has allowed the school enhance its many curriculum facilities. To all the boys and girls who are so special in our school and who are eagerly looking forward to the Christmas Holidays along with the arrival of Father Christmas I hope you have very happy time and that Father Christmas will call to each one of you. To everyone who has supported our school in any way I wish you on behalf of SS Michael & Peter Junior School Board of Management a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

*Beannachtaí Na Nollaig agus Na hAthbliana.*

## REMINDERS

### **Access and Parking**

In the interests of health and safety there is no vehicular entry/parking or drop off facility available on the school grounds for either the St. Michael or St. Peter Building. Parking in the staff carparks is strictly prohibited. All pedestrians must use the pedestrian gate to access either school grounds, not the car park gates. The local traffic warden has been contacted in an effort to deter the repeat offenders. The school is not liable for any loss or injury that may occur as a result of people not following these guidelines. They are for you and your child's safety.

### **Contact Details**

Please inform the school immediately if there is any change of collection or emergency contact details etc.

### **Supervision**

The B.O.M. would like to draw your attention to the fact that the school is not responsible for pupils who are on the premises outside of the official opening and closing times. In St. Peter's campus the school is open to receive pupils from 9.15 a.m. Classes begin at 9.20 a.m. School finishes at 3 p.m. In St. Michael's campus the school is open to receive pupils from 9.25 a.m. Classes begin at 9.30 a.m. School finishes at 2.10 p.m. for Infants and 3.10 p.m. for 2nd class. There is no supervision outside of these times.

### **Nut and Sesame Seed Free School**

A reminder that SS Michael and Peter is a nut and sesame seed free school. This ban refers to all nut and sesame seed. The use of Nutella can be extremely dangerous for children with an anaphylaxis allergy, chocolate and chocolate products are not allowed in the school.

### **Attendance**

SS Michael and Peter Junior School encourage regular and punctual attendance. Parents/Guardians are asked to notify the school in writing if their children cannot attend for any reason. Under the law, every child must attend school up to sixteen year of age or complete at least three years post primary education whichever comes later. Your cooperation in this regard is welcomed.

### **Punctuality**

Punctuality is important for both dropping and collecting your child from school. Lateness will be recorded and dealt with seriously. If you are late to collect your child you will be asked to sign a notebook acknowledging this. If this is repeated you will be requested to meet with the principal to discuss it. In extreme cases a meeting with the principal will be required immediately. Repeated or gross lateness may result in a referral to the Education Welfare and/or Túsla.

### **Communications with the school**

Breda takes her lunch from 12-12.30 each day. Try not to call the school phone or leave messages at this time as the office is unmanned. Also if you need to collect your child around this time please try to do so outside of this window where possible.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



**Christmas Holidays:** School closes Friday 21st December 2018 at 12.10pm (St. Peter Building) and 12.20pm (St. Michael Building) and reopens Monday 7th January 2019.

**Junior Infants Vaccinations:** 24th and 25th January

**Annual Parent Teacher Meetings** for Junior and Senior Infants, Ms. O'Rourke's 1st Class and Ms. Byrne's 2nd Class: 11th – 15th February 2019 – parents will receive times prior to the meetings.

**Midterm Break:** Monday 18th to Friday 22nd February 2019 inclusive. School reopens Monday 25th February 2019

**First Confessions:** 12th and 13th March

**St. Patrick's Day:** School Closed Monday 18th March