

Scoil Niamh Community National School

# Parents Association NEWSLETTER

March 2016



## Including:

Dates for your diary!

Interview with Allison Carter

Coppers!

Shamrock and St Patrick's

The Big Quiz Night

Plus more ...

## A NOTE FROM PRINCIPAL

I hope you all enjoy reading this fantastic publication. Thanks to everyone who puts so much work into getting it together for the parents. It really helps to keep the whole school community informed.

We had a super Human Rights Month in February. The children really enjoyed discussing local and global issues around injustice and inequality. I think it is just amazing that our children are growing up with this language and a great

sense of social justice. This will truly stand to them many years after leaving our school.

I would like to acknowledge the terrible loss our school community had this year with the passing of David Wade. Thank you to everyone who signed the book of condolences and who have been helping Ciara, Tia and David at this truly difficult time. We look forward to putting on a very special event at the beginning of the next school

year to honour David's passing and to support the family. I have no doubt that everyone will come together and help to make this event a great success.

Have a wonderful Easter/Spring holiday and I look forward to seeing you all for our last term of 2016!



## WELCOME FROM PA COMMITTEE



Welcome to our 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of our Newsletter. We hope the children enjoyed the Valentines Disco and are looking forward to St Patricks Day and the Easter Holidays. Thanks so much for all the support so far. Please keep an eye on the upcoming events section for details on the Big Quiz and don't forget to "like" us on Facebook. Happy Reading!



Alison, Secretary

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY!

- ♣ **THE BIG QUIZ** is being held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April from 7:30pm
- ♣ Next **RECYCLING EVENT** taking place in April, collection date 22<sup>nd</sup> April
- ♣ The annual school **SPONSORED WALK** in May/June.
- ♣ **FAMILY FUN DAY:** after last year's great success we are holding another family fun day on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June. We will have a barbeque with a lot of fun events and activities for the whole family!

## COPPERS!



As you know  &  coins will be phased out of our currency in the coming year.

Each class is presently holding a copper coin collection whereby all the children can bring in any spare coins to add to the collection. This will be held until the end of the school year (June 2016). The purpose of this collec-

tion is to raise much needed funds to provide educational supplies for our school.

There is a collection jar in every classroom and the class who raises the most money at the end of the year will be awarded a small prize.

Please donate as much as possible - every coin counts. Thank you.



# ST PATRICK'S DAY & SHAMROCK FUNDRAISER



Once again we invited the pupils to sell lapels or skilllets of Shamrock for St Patrick's Day on **March 17** in aid of our

school.

**Shamrock** is a small plant which is the National Flower of Ireland. We traditionally wear it attached to our clothing on St Patrick's Day.

St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. He is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. St Patrick was born in Britain in the fourth century and at the age of 14 was captured and taken to Ireland where he spent 6 years as a slave. He returned to Ireland in his 30's as a missionary among the Celtic pagans. The Celts attached great signifi-

cance to the number 3. The Celtic society was organised around the sacred number 3 - three classes, three colours and three principal gods. St Patrick would have been aware of the Celts preference for the no.3 and according to legend he used the plant to illustrate the Christian concept of the Trinity - to show how one God divided into three - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

It is said that the true plant can be grown only in Ireland or in an Irish soil. In the custom known as "drowning the shamrock" the shamrock that has been worn on a lapel or hat is put in the last drink of the evening.

St Patrick is said to have driven the snakes from Ireland. It is true that there are no snakes in Ireland. Probably there have never been

snakes as Ireland has been an island since the end of the last Ice Age! It is more likely that it is a symbolic end to the pagan practice of worshipping serpent symbols.

St Patrick is buried in Downpatrick Cathedral in Co. Down.

**Saint Patrick's Day:** it has come to be associated with everything Irish, anything green, gold, shamrocks and luck. However its intended meaning is a traditional day for spiritual renewal and offering prayers for missionaries worldwide. It is celebrated on March 17<sup>th</sup> as this is the day St Patrick died. With the exception of restaurants and pubs almost all businesses close on St Patrick's Day and many Irish attend Mass before the celebration begins.

## GRANDPARENTS DAY!

We were delighted to celebrate Grandparent's Day on Wednesday 3rd February 2016.

All the grandparents were invited to visit the school to have a tour of their grandchildren's classroom and to meet their friends and teachers. It was a lovely opportunity for everyone to welcome



these very special people. We had a fantastic turnout and the children were treated to some great stories and an insight into what life was like when their grandpar-

ents were young, comparing the past to the present.

We would like to thank all the grandparents who were able to make it on the day. We hope you enjoyed visiting the school as much as we enjoyed having you!



The annual **Valentines Disco** was held on Friday 12th February and it was a huge success! The children had a great time and it was lovely to see them all dressed up and having fun.

Rachel from **All Party DJ's** kept them entertained with dancing, games and karaoke! The children certainly know how to party and I'd say they all slept well that night! A

huge thank you to our parent volunteers who supervised the children to and from their classrooms, provided drinks, sold tickets throughout the week and were there to help during the event. Your help is very much appreciated, it makes it possible to run these events for our children.

The Parents Association Committee would like, as always, to thank Teresa Laiseca for her poster design of the Valentines Day Minion and to John Hyland for printing the

## VALENTINES DISCO!

tickets and posters for us.

If anyone is thinking of having a disco party for their child, we would highly recommend Rachel from **All Party DJ's**. Anyone who attended last years Family Fun Day would have seen her in action! Please contact her on 087 6569911.

We are delighted to say that we raised €680 for our school! Looking forward to next year already!



# BE INVOLVED!

One sunny February morning we had the opportunity to interview the Parents Association Committee chairperson Mrs Allison Carter. The interview took place in the newly opened school library on 2<sup>nd</sup> level.

**Can you briefly tell your readers about yourself?**

I live with my husband Jeff and our three daughters in Citywest. My mum also lives with us. I have one brother. Both of my parents are from Dublin. My father passed away when I was 19yrs old. Our eldest daughter is in 1<sup>st</sup> class in Scoil Niamh and our youngest will start in September 2018.

In college I studied Commerce, specializing in Business. After the course I worked in a number of sales, advertising and marketing positions. I had volunteered for the Order of Malta from the age of 10years. I had a big interest in First Aid so I eventually left the business sector and I took up full time training to be an Emer-

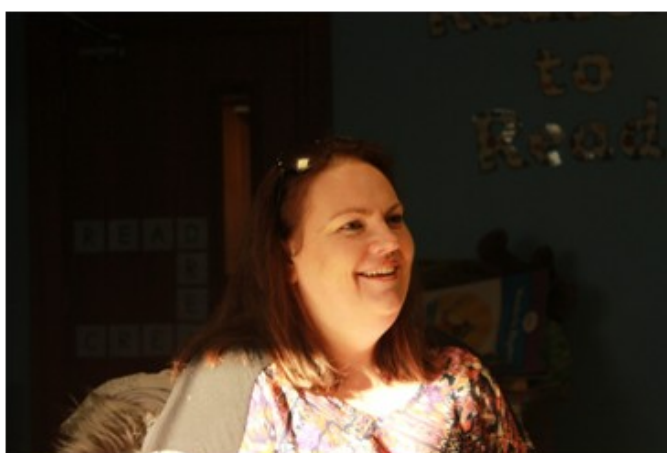
gency Medical Technician

(paramedic). I worked in the private ambulance service for seven years. I then moved careers again and although I am currently on leave from work, I am employed in home based care for the elderly as a Care Manager and Trainer.

**How did you feel when you were selected as the chairperson of the Parents Association Committee?**

I had no idea when I left home to attend a meeting at school to tell us about a

Parents Association that before the end of the meeting I would have been nominated to be chairperson! I went along, just like eve-



ryone else to find out more about Parents Associations. At the meeting the decision was made that a Committee would be selected for the Association. Present at the meeting were a number of parents who obviously felt that I might be

good for the role and so I found myself elected as the chairperson of the Parents Association Committee.

Although a little daunted by the role, I suppose I felt honoured to have been chosen and decided I would give it my best shot.

**What was your vision at the start of your tenure as a chairperson?**

**"I felt honoured to have been chosen and decided I would give it my best shot"**

In the beginning my thoughts were that it would be good to build a community among the parents. I already knew a number of the par-

ents as friends and would have liked to broaden this circle

to include other parents. I believe that over time when the children make friends amongst themselves that their parents will also develop friendships, thus eventually a community will develop. My initial understanding of the role that the Association plays is in fundraising. I had a lot of ideas of events we could run and there had been some suggestions at the first meeting too.

**So far do you see some of that vision coming through?**

To be honest, I have to say the answer is No. There is a lot of work still to be done to encourage all the parents to play an active role in the Parents Association. The Parents Association Committee works very hard in organizing functions and events but the attendance is generally a very small percentage of the number of parents we have in the school. The last Annual General Meeting was a classic example of the poor turnout of parents to the Association's events.

A lot of work goes into organizing these events and it is through the unwavering efforts of the Committee members and helpers. We invited a guest speaker for the evening and a lot of work went into organizing this annual event.



Sadly, the turnout of the parents for the night was abysmal.

Another good example was the ceremony for the unveiling of the Science plaque. This was also very poorly attended by parents. It is frustrating for me and my fellow

committee members and also very sad; it seems some

parents are not interested in events organized by the school or by the Parents Association. This really is a shame as there is no doubt that children benefit from parental involvement in their school.

### What are the current challenges that you are facing?

We need to reach out a bit more to the non-Irish communities. It is unfortunate that at most of the events that the Parents Association organizes the representation of these non-Irish communities is small. We need to find a way of integrating more of these communities into our events. One of the solutions to this challenge is to have

a representative of each of these communities on the Parents Association Committee. Another solution is to have a good number of representatives of the non-Irish communities on the helpers list. Integration is very important if all the communities represented in the school are to find a common ground to work together as an effective Parents Association where everyone's contribution is equally

important.

Another challenge that the Parents Association faces is in fundraising. The government supplies the school with basic educational equipment. But with the fundrais-

ing that is organized by the Parents Association Committee we are able to provide a lot of extra educational equipment for our children.

For example, for a subject like maths the basic equipment will maybe be a text book, pencils and rulers. With the pro-

ceeds from the fundraising that the Parents Association Committee organizes the school is able to supply extra equipment like sticker blocks and 3D shapes. These items make it more fun for the children to learn and more hands-on.

What are the achievements of the Parents Association Committee so far and which areas need improvements?

The Parents Association appointed members of the Parents Association Committee in 2013. At this inaugural Parents Association meeting the parents contributed ideas concerning fundraising. Over the last three

years we have managed to structure a calendar of fundraising and non-fundraising events. In the autumn term we have the Cake Sale Day, Design a Card project, Coffee Mornings, Winter Post Box, Recycling Event and our Annual General Meeting. In the spring term we have the Valentine's Disco, Shamrock and St Patrick's Day, The Big Quiz Night and the Spring Clean Recycling Event and in the summer term we have Annual School Sponsored Walk and Family Fun Day. These are our core events that will hopefully take place every year.

In the past three years proceeds from our fundraising events has enabled the school to purchase some fantastic extra equipment for the children. The number of parents attending these events has been slow in increasing and we hope that this growth will speed up.

When the school population grows bigger, we hope that we will be able to organize bigger events with the hope that more parents will be involved.

That is my vision for the Parents Association in the coming years!

### Where do you see the Parents Association in the next three years?

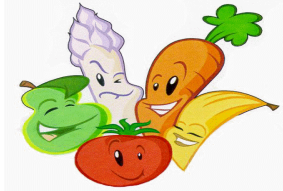
I would love to see new parents involved in the Parents Association and represented on the Parents Association Committee. The school has, on a couple of occasions, sought our ideas on some school policies; and since we are a small group of parents, our input has been limited. I would like to see a more diverse group of parents than we currently have.



# WHAT WE PARENTS NEED TO DO KEEP OUR KIDS HEALTHY THIS SPRING?

What can you do to keep your kids in tip top form during the season of coughs and colds?

## EAT HEALTHILY



Keep your children immune systems fighting fit by eating a balanced diet full of fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish and whole-grain carbohydrates. Avoid sugary foods as these deplete your immune system. Encourage your child to eat a "rainbow" of fruits and vegetables for example: red strawberries, blue blueberries, yellow peppers, green peas. Good sources of vitamin A include; dairy products, carrots, sweet potatoes, swede, mangoes and dark green vegetables like spinach, cabbage and broccoli. Fruits like oranges, kiwi's strawberries and vegetables such as peppers, tomatoes and broccoli are good sources of vitamin C.

Get around fussy eaters by smuggling super-foods, vegetables and fruit into meals. Use a blender to whizz up lentils and vegetables to add to soups, casseroles and sauces. Add flax seeds (a great source of Omega 3) to cereal and porridge, home-made flapjacks or even home-made bolognaise or stew. Make healthy juices with two thirds veg to one third fruit to cut sugar. Sweeten vegetable juice with blueberries, add avocado for a creamy consistency.

## VITAMIN D



The best way to get vitamin D is through exposing your skin to sunshine. While this might seem practically *impossible* in Ireland, it is important to try to get outside when the weather is fine!

You can get vitamin D3 through foods such as oily fish, eggs and fortified cereals but in nowhere near the quantities they need so it is a good idea to take a good quality supplement during the winter.

## SUPPLEMENTS

With the best will in the world some kids are fussy eaters so it can be a worry to know that they are getting everything they need from their diet. A good quality everyday multivitamin plus Omega 3 oil is a good year-round supplement and should cover all the bases. Parents often see a good quality multivitamin as an insurance policy to make sure there are no nutritional gaps between your child's diet and what they need.

## FIGHT COLDS



If your child does get a cold then think of it as a good thing as they will build their immune system *learns* to fight off bugs. Some mums swear by sweetening hot lemon with Manuka honey for its anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties to help

soothe sore throats or sinusitis. You can dose your kids up with vitamin C at the first sign of a snuffle to help stop colds or at least shorten the length of them. 2g/day (the equivalent of eating 40 oranges!) for children aged 5-12.

## PREVENT

Remember to get your child to wash their hands as most germs are spread from hand to mouth, nose and through the eyes. Remember alcohol-based hand washes won't kill the norovirus, aka the winter vomiting bug, which is only zapped by washing hands with old-fashioned soap and hot water.



## THANK YOU!

Thank you so much to the parents Catherina, Eva, Ewelina, Marta, Martina, Melissa, Rachel, Seja, Sylwia, John and Eddie for volunteering to the school's set-down service. Your commitment of time and energy to this service is greatly appreciated.

I know your time is valuable and your willingness to contribute some of that valuable time to the school shows your commitment to the well-being of all of our pupils.

Thank you again, and I look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

On behalf of the Parents Association Committee Māra Prah.

The Parents Association will like to extend our gratitude to Mr **John Hyland** who made it possible for the printed edition.





## THE BIG QUIZ NIGHT!

**THE BIG QUIZ** will be taking place for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running on **8<sup>th</sup> April at St Marys GAA Club**. This is a great event for all the parents, family and friends of Scoil Niamh children. It is a fundraising event for the school to benefit with additional supplies for our children that is not supplied from the standard school funding.

This has been a very successful night over the past 2 years and a great way of getting to know the parents from the school and developing good relationships with each other. This event is open to all the parents of the children in the school. It is a fun event with questions on a variety of topics ranging from film, music, pictures, languages, history and current affairs. There are also a number of fun activities and games. There will be a raffle with amazing prizes to be won on the night!! Tickets will be sold by the Parents Association leading up to the event at the price of €20 per table made up of a maximum of 4 people or €5 per person. Every parent has the opportunity to win prizes of our Raffle on the night. Tickets will go on sale from March 14.

## SPRING CLEAN!



Is it time for a spring clean? Is it time to clear out all those clothes that don't fit our ever-growing children anymore? Well, start packing up the stuff into bags and get it ready! We will be holding our next recycling event on **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**. You can bring in your bags and leave them in the school lobby for collection. We will commence collecting immediately after the spring break. This is a great way of raising funds for our school and getting your house cleared out at the same time...all in all it's a win win!!!

## FUNDRAISING...

This year we are again working hard to raise additional funds to help provide a better education for our children. Even though our school is funded by the state, this provides just the basic requirements for the children. All extra monies that we raise are used to purchase equipment that the school would not otherwise be in a position to buy. We are delighted to report that all funds raised this year will be used to purchase **iPads** for the school which we think will be a fantastic educational aid for the children.

Obviously, the more money we raise, the more the school will be able to buy. Please support any fundraising events as best you can!!

## STUDENT AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Parents Association Committee is delighted to recognise the following students who have been successful in their chosen afterschool activities.

**Irish Dancing:** Rebecca Curran, Charlotte Carter and Emma Cuffe competed in the Dublin Regional Irish Dancing competition at the Citywest Hotel. A huge achievement to compete at that level.

Charlotte Carter was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 'Cup Dance' at the Dublin Regional Feis.

Rebecca Curran and Emma Cuffe were placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 'Two Hand Reel' at the North Kildare Irish Dancing Championships.

**Theatre:** Reece Harman gained a Distinction with 95% for his Speech and Drama solo exam taken with the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA).

Adam Hardiman performed on stage in December at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, in Dancity's production of 'When stars come to life'.

**Kickboxing:** Students of Martin Bannon from Tallaght Martial Arts achieved the following Gradings in December:

**Yellow Tip:** Khai Wong, Senan Florea, Lena Plewinska, Ryszard Pawuk, Joshua Power, Luas Kisielius, Ethan Ridgeway, Scott McLaren, Oscar O'Keeffe, Oliver O'Keeffe, Daniel Connolly, Maja Protasewilz, Oliwia Wawrzenick, Jakub Zimnga, Leon Prah, Julien Bell Baho, Emilia Ziemba, Sophie Kopiczynska, Mia Crotasevicw.

**Yellow Belt:** Dzastins Vaitkus, Ralph Vaitkus, Reece Harman, Robbie Harman, Joshua Rolleston, Ethan Conroy, Tyler Branning, Cillian Hughes.

**Green Tip:** Aleksander Skorupski, Vanessa Steve, Charlie Dunne, Suleyman Gadaborshev, Naseem Ayilara, Adam Hardiman, Joshua Breslin.

**Very well done everyone!!!** If your child has an award or achievement that you would like recognised, please email Melissa Harman at [melharman78@gmail.com](mailto:melharman78@gmail.com).

# Q&A FOR THE NEW MEMBERS OF PA COMMITTEE

After the Annual General Meeting in November last year, four new members joined the Parents Association Committee. We want the other members of the Parents Association to get to know these new members of the Committee.

**What is your greatest strength?**

**Adele Curran:** I'm very patient!

**Clare Cuffe:** As a nurse I would say I am quite a compassionate person.

**Paula Moyles:** Multi-Tasking.

**What do you like to do in your**

**spare time?**

**A.C.:** I love music and I like mountain walking.

**C.C.:** Travelling, Pilates, walking the dog, socialising and reading.

**P.M.:** Reading and knitting.

**Tell us something that frightens you.**

**A.C.:** Earwigs

**C.C.:** Spiders!

**P.M.:** Dentists

**Which person living or dead do you most admire?**

**A.C.:** My mother (10 kids).

**C.C.:** My Dad. He saved my life when I was a baby. Most unselfish person I know, always willing to help others. At 74 he is still studying in college proving it's never too late to achieve your dreams.

**P.M.:** My Dad.

**What is the most horrible thing you have ever eaten?**

**A.C.:** Rabbit stew

**C.C.:** Liver/ kidneys

**P.M.:** Squid

## PARENTS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

### Cakezilla Cakes

Cakes and Cupcakes for all occasions

Cathy Delaney

Phone: 0873284984 or Facebook: Cakezilla

### All Party Dj's

Disco and entertainment hire company

Rachel

Phone: 087 6569911 or Facebook

### Core & Co Pilates

Mat group classes every Tuesday @7:45pm, Rathcoole Community Centre

For more info call Teresa on 0877938948

### Cooking with #Thermomix

Transform the way you cook with the world's most intelligent food processor

For more info or a Free demo call Teresa on 0877938948

### Electrician

Eddie Harman

Phone: 087 9367342

### Plastering contractors

Ben Griffin

[Bgplasterers@gmail.com](mailto:Bgplasterers@gmail.com)

### KB Painting and Decorating Services

Karl Breslin

Phone: 0868989179

[kbpaintingdecoratingservice@gmail.com](mailto:kbpaintingdecoratingservice@gmail.com) or Facebook

Do you have a business that you would like to include in the Parents Business Directory?

If so, contact [scoilniamhpa@gmail.com](mailto:scoilniamhpa@gmail.com).

## AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

### Monday

#### Ballet Classes:

Junior Infants 1.45-2.30pm

1st Class 2.45-3.30pm

Contact Melissa Harman 085-1552855

[www.citywestballetstudio.ie](http://www.citywestballetstudio.ie)

### Tuesday

#### Ballet Classes:

Senior Infants 1.45-2.30pm

Contact Melissa Harman 085-1552855

[www.citywestballetstudio.ie](http://www.citywestballetstudio.ie)

### Wednesday

#### Kickboxing Classes:

Junior and Senior Infants 1.45-2.30pm

1st and 2nd Class 2.45-3.30pm

Contact Martin Bannon 087-6836167

[www.tallaghtmartialarts.com](http://www.tallaghtmartialarts.com)

### Thursday

#### Science Classes:

Junior and Senior Infants 1.30-2.20pm

1st and 2nd Class 2.30-3.25pm

Contact Christine Campbell 087-6749608

[info@anyone4science.com](mailto:info@anyone4science.com)

### Friday

#### Polish classes for Polish children:

Junior and Senior Infants 1.45-2.30pm

1st and 2nd Class 2.45-3.30pm

Contact Marta Majchrzak 085-1397274

#### Irish Dancing Classes:

Junior and Senior Infants 1.45-2.30pm

1st and 2nd Class 2.45-3.30pm

Contact Catherine 087-9932791



We are very fortunate in Scoil Niamh to have an extensive After School Activities Programme. The classes start straight after the school day has finished at either 1.30pm or 2.30pm. The children are collected from their line in the school yard by the teacher and taken up to either the PE hall or one of the classrooms. They are given time to have a drink and a small snack before the activity starts as the children are usually very hungry after school! Please see below for the classes offered along with the contact details of each teacher. After school classes are a great way for children to make new friends, develop confidence and learn new skills!