

Citywest & Saggart Community National School

Parents Association NEWSLETTER

June 2016 (5)



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- Holy Communion Celebration
- Parents involvement matters!
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A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL MR. CONBOY

It's hard to believe that this is our last newsletter of the 2015/2016 academic year.

I think the entire school community is finishing the school year on a total high after our recent celebrations. For me, the event on June 2nd brought together all of the hard work that has gone into our school over the past 4 years. The children performed beautifully and were thrilled to be entertain-

ing such a big crowd!

I was also delighted with the reaction of the parents and invited guests to the video about the school. I think it completely captures who we are and what we are about in the school.

I hope the last few weeks of the school year are happy ones for the entire school community. Many thanks for all of your support throughout the year. It is truly appreciated.



WELCOME FROM THE PA COMMITTEE



Dear Parents, welcome to our final edition of the newsletter for the 2015/2016 academic year! Who can believe that we are only a few weeks away from the summer holidays?

We are looking forward to the summer break and we hope to see everyone at our annual **Family Fun Day** in St Marys GAA Club on **25th June**.

It will be a great afternoon for all the children and a lovely way for parents

to get together too. We have a lot planned for next year too so keep your eyes on our Facebook page and your emails.

I hope you will enjoy this edition of our PA Newsletter which is full of interesting articles for you.

Happy reading and enjoy the summer break. See you in September!

Allison Carter

PA Committee Chairperson

FUNDRISING by Allison Carter



We held a few events this year and we are delighted to announce that all of them were very successful.

Since January we have run **3 fundraising events** and the amounts raised are as follows:

- SHAMROCK LAPELS and CROCKPOTS €385
- THE BIG QUIZ €1600
- SPRING RECYCLE EVENT €315

We are absolutely delighted with these results and would like to thank all of you sincerely for your continued support. All the funds raised this year will go towards the purchase of **edu-**

ational iPads which will be a fantastic resource for our children. We also hope to purchase a **defibrillator** for the school. We will have more updates for you in our next newsletter on funds raised in this year's Sponsored Walk and also our Coin Collection - it may take some time to get all those coins counted!!

HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATION

by Eliza-Jane Branning

A number of children from the 2nd Class made their First Holy Communion on **Sunday 22nd May** in St Mary's Parish, Saggart at the 11:30am mass! It turned out to be a lovely day and the children were fantastic on the day. The children from Citywest&Saggart Community National School and our neighboring school Educate Together participated in the church service. Some brought readings and others brought some symbols from the school: the crest, a picture of the

belief space, pictures of families and a soccer ball. They also participated in the offertory procession for the service. After the communion, the children and their families came back to the school for a little party. It was also lovely to see that some of the other children from 2nd class came with their families to help celebrate in their classmates' special day. This goes to show that we have great diversity and openness in our school. **We want to congratulate all the children on their special day!**



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

Thank you so much to **Martina Conroy** for the medals to the winners of the Coin Collection.

10 things you probably did not know about Summer Solstice

by Māra Prah



The name comes from the fact that the sun appears to stand still. The term solstice is derived

from two Latin words *sol* (sun) and *sister* (to stand still), because the sun's relative position in the sky at noon does not appear to change much during the solstice and its surrounding days.

Earth is not the only planet to have a summer solstice. Mars' solstice occurs a few days after earth's June solstice. Venus barely experience solstice due to the position of it's poles. On Uranus, each summer solstice lasts for 42 years.

The earth is actually at its farthest from the sun during the solstice. The Earth is actually closest to the sun when the Northern Hemisphere experiences winter and is farthest away during the summer solstice. The warmth of summer comes exclusively from the tilt of the Earth's axis, and not from how close it is to the sun at any given time.

The hot weather follows the sun by a few weeks. It's because water, which makes up most of the Earth's

surface, has a high specific heat, meaning it takes a while to both heat up and cool down. Because of this, the Earth's temperature takes about six weeks to catch up to the sun.

The Arctic Circle has 24 hours of daylight. The June Solstice is the only day of the year when all locations inside the Arctic Circle experience a continuous period of daylight for 24 hours.

Ironically, the solstice marks a dark time in science history. Legend has it that it was on the summer solstice in 1633 that Galileo recanted his declaration that the Earth revolves around the sun, and not the other way around.

It's Celebrated Around the World. The June Solstice holds a special place of celebration in many cultures. People around the world celebrate the day with feasts, picnics, dance, and music to increase the sun's energy for a good harvest and prosperity.

The pagans celebrate the solstice with symbols of fire and water. In ancient Europe, the festival involved rolling giant wheels lit on fire into bodies of water to symbolize the balance between fire and water.

In Alaska, the solstice is celebrated with a midnight baseball game. Each

year on the summer solstice, the Alaska Goldpanners of Fairbanks celebrate their status as the most northerly baseball team on the planet with a game that starts at 10:30pm and stretches well into the following morning—without the need of artificial light—known as the Midnight Sun Game.

In ancient Egypt the solstice heralded the New Year. In Ancient Egypt the summer solstice preceded the appearance of the Sirius star, which the Egyptians believed was responsible for the annual flooding of the Nile that they relied upon for agriculture. Because of this, the Egyptian calendar was set so that the start of the year coincided with the appearance of Sirius, just after the solstice.



STUDENT AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

by Melissa Harman

The Parents Association Committee is delighted to recognize the following students who have had success in their chosen after school activities:

Rugby: **Tyler Branning** from Room 9 trains with Clondalkin Rugby Club and has won 3 medals for winning games with his team and participating in some blitzes!

Horse Riding: **Grace Kelly** from Room 7 and **Adam Kelly** from Room 4 both won their first horse riding rosettes for Horse Jumping. They cleared two rounds on X Poles with no faults!

Dance: **Robyn Hyland** from Room 8 performed at the Helix Theatre as part of Dance LA's show 'Outside the Box'. **Edelle Merillon** from Room 1 and

Katie Gavin from Room 2 both obtained a Class Award for 'Pre-Primary in Dance'.

Theatre: **Reece Harman** from Room 8 performed in his very first show at The Helix Theatre with Theatreworx Accademy in 'Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory'.

Art: Congratulations to **Toshia Dep-tula** from Room 9 who designed the beautiful invitation for the launch of the new school name.

'Blue Peter' Badge: in March, **Grace** and **Adam Kelly** were awarded a 'Green' Blue Peter badge. Blue Peter is a children's television programme on BBC 1 and the badge is awarded to children for a variety of special rea-

sons. The 'Green' badge is awarded to children who care about the environment and nature. Adam and Grace did a wonderful project on frogs.

Very well done everyone!!!

If your child has an award or achievement that you would like recognized, please email **Melissa Harman** at **melharman78@gmail.com**



PARENTS INVOLVEMENT MATTERS! by Māra and Manny Prah

The involvement of all the parents in our Association in their own small way is very important. Therefore we decided to conduct an interview that involved parents from diverse backgrounds. We designed five questions for the interview and these are the responses of the parents.

Could you describe why you made the decision to send your child to Scoil Niamh (now known as Citywest & Saggart Community National School)?

Teresa Laiseca

Graphic designer/Pilates instructor
Mum of one boy and one girl
Spanish
Catholic

My husband and I very much value the type of education our children get. We visited several schools in the area and we decided for Scoil Niamh (Citywest and Saggart CNS) because we felt it had a different approach to the method - more individualised to each child's needs.

We also liked the approach of "Goodness me Goodness you" where all backgrounds and beliefs are respected equally. I think it's extremely important to teach children to respect everybody no matter what their belief, race or colour are. I remember Mr. Conboy saying in the presentation that children are not born racist and that it's up to the parents to keep it that way. I suppose that applies to everything.

We loved (and still do) the enthusiasm. The openness to new ideas and the interest in education all the staff provides. So we haven't looked back. We still love the school and so does Peter. He even says that he is looking forward to going back to school after a Bank Holiday!

Sherif Salem

Revenue & Systems Manager
Dad of two
British and Egyptian
Muslim

We felt that Daniya our daughter

would settle in to a school that was close to our home residence. We also approved the ethos of the new school that it would accept and respect all backgrounds.

Monika Savicka

Manual worker
Mum of one
Polish

In 2012, when Dawid was four years old my husband wanted him to start education at St. Mary's, Saggart. However, the application was not successful in relation to Dawid's age. The only possibility was for him to start school the following year. In the meantime, it turned out that there was a new school is to be opened called Scoil Niamh. He decided that this school would be a good choice. This time Dawid's application turned out to be successful and is now in First Class.



How do you see the role of the Parents Association in your child's education?

T.L.: The role of the Association as I see is to promote the students' interests working along the board, principal, teachers and students. It's a way of communication between the school and the parents. It's also a way of discussing and informing matters related to school i.e. name change, etc. It's a way of communicating opinions and concerns, identify issues and work towards a solution. And let's not forget about the fundraising role which is providing much needed funds to pur-

chase necessary material to help with the children's education.

S.S.: They provide great support to the parents and as a parent I wish I had more time to participate in the Parents Association activities. As all the activities such as the fund raising, Quiz night and kids disco bring our communities together.

M.S.: I personally think that the Parents Association is a significant and an important group supporting the work of the teachers as well as the children education. No one knows better the needs and behaviour of children as their parents. A new environment may be stressful or difficult for our young ones. The Association works in a numbers of ways as it gives the parents the idea of their child safety and well-being, but it is also important for the teachers because it fosters closer relations. The idea at helping and supporting the children's education gives enormous satisfaction and fulfilment for their parents.

Giving the opportunity, do you think you can make a sterling contribution to the Parents Association?

T.L.: As I am a Graphic Designer (and a part-time Pilates teacher), I try to help with the design of posters for the events and sometimes with the Newsletter. My husband and I are both working full-time, Monday to Friday, and we both leave our house around 7:30 every morning and come back at 6:15pm. We find it difficult to find time to get involved. When we have some "free" time, we like to spend it with our children. I say "free" as we also have to consider all the house work, cooking as healthy meals as possible, etc. Peter loves it when I say I have designed something for the school so I think the involvement in their environment is quite positive for them. It is extremely hard trying to juggle everything, and be the "perfect parent" - sometimes we don't have



enough energy! (is it our age?). Other parents may not have an interest in getting involved and we have to respect that too. I must say though that through involvement in the Parents Association, I have met quite a few people and some of them have become good friends.

S.S.: Yes, I would love to but due to my work situation, I'm not always available to participate.

M.S.: If I am given the opportunity to join the Parents Association Committee, I think I would do my best to put forward an environment design where the children will feel safe and an approach where more attention is paid to each individual. I would also want to continue and support all the after school activities as they are important for our children.

How do you feel that there are only a handful of non-Irish nationals on the Parents Association Committee?

T.L.: Sometimes I think it could be a language or a culture barrier that stops us "non-nationals" (I personally don't like this term) to do these things. Being from another religion or culture it's not easy when you are in a country that it's not your own, as most of us are very attached to our roots. Some people might feel "detached" from the Irish culture or may be here for a short period of time so they may not feel the need to get involved. Sometimes I think the whole Parent Association feels quite formal and some people could feel a bit intimidated too. Personally, I also think as a non-

national, it's quite important to make an effort in getting yourself involved with the Irish Community so you and your children may become a part of it. I have made great Irish friendships and I am amazed at how supportive and generous they are.

In addition the more diversity we have in the Committee the better, as we'll have different points of view to help cater for everyone's needs.

S.S.: Ideally we should see representatives from all backgrounds in the Parents Association Committee.

M.S.: I do not think it has a negative impact on the Parents Association. As an non-Irish person, I do not have any experience working with such well organised group. I strongly believe that for the each member of the Committee, the well-being of children is their priority regardless of their nationality or religion.

If you could change one thing about



the world today that would make it better for your children what would it be?

T.L.: So many things... But probably greed. I think it is the base of most of our problems - wars, jealousy, envy, not being able to access medical treatments, and so many more things! We all want more and more, be the best at everything, have the "perfect and best children" and sometimes we don't stop to see that it's the simple things in life that will make us happy - at the end of the day we all have a limited time here - we are all the same - so let's enjoy it. I know sometimes it's easier said than done.

S.S.: We need more people with courage to do the right thing, by standing up against slander and racial acts. To

speak up to people who litter our streets, parks, in fact, our environment in general.

M.S.: There is one thing that extremely bothers me and it is that children these days have a very rare opportunity to really enjoy their childhood. Today's world is filled with violence and lack of morals. Instead of promoting virtues and innocence, it promotes the value of money. Therefore, parents quite often try to re compensate their lack of time with their children by purchasing a new toy. Childhood is a time that cannot be bought or experienced again. We as parents should make sure that our children have the childhood they deserve.

PARENTS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Ben Griffin

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

If so, contact cscnspace@gmail.com

BENEFITS OF EXERCISE FOR CHILDREN

by Adele West-Curran

Our children are our future—understanding and supporting their natural yearning for physical activity will help lead them to a lifetime of happy and healthy living. If we joyfully teach them how to include a healthy exercise from the early stages of their development, we will be giving our children a gift that will endure throughout their lives.

Among the many benefits are physical fitness, confidence and stronger self-esteem, more energy, better memory, and simply a good feeling about themselves—and they are easy to achieve.

I'm sure many of you are concerned about the growing problem of childhood obesity and the lack of exercise in their lives. Whether this obesity and inactivity is caused by the popularity of video games or our need to ensure our children are kept within eyesight at all times, it is a wake-up call for everyone. Happily, there are ways of reversing this growing trend and helping our children to enjoy daily exercise and outdoor activities, which they love given the opportunity.

Outdoor games and playful workout routines can be the tools that instill a lasting joy for exercise.

Exercise Improves Your Physical Health. Long-term health benefits of exercise are:

- A stronger immune system! The body's ability to fight disease is improved. Children are less prone to colds, allergies, and diseases, including

SCHOOL AG SÚIL!

by Gillian Doyle

This is an initiative that has been introduced by the South Dublin County Sports Partnership.

The aim is to increase physical activity, health and well being in parents and carers.

We all know how important it is for our children to have a regular exercise so we thought we would lead by example!

cancer.

- A lower blood pressure and an improvement of the child's cholesterol profile.
- A strengthening of the entire cardiovascular system, including the heart and lungs. The heart develops a higher "pump-activity" while your child's heart and lungs are strengthened, supporting the prevention of heart disease.
- Children are less likely to become overweight and will have a better control of their body fat. Overweight children are able to reduce their body weight and body fat due to the physiological effect of burning fat while exercising.
- Children develop a stronger bone and muscle structure.

Active children enjoy additional health benefits, because:

- Exercise increases the blood flow to all body tissues, including the brain. Greater blood flow transports more oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells.
- Active children improve their body's ability to absorb oxygen through aerobic exercise. Due to the increased oxygen in their body's cells they feel more energized. More oxygen translates into more energy!
- Increased blood flow promotes the body's transportation of the toxins back from the cells for elimination. Children who exercise feel fitter and more energized because of

their body's ability to detoxify.

- Active children breathe better and sweat more. Breathing and sweating are great ways to detoxify the body and helps to keep itself "clean."
- Children increase their over-all fitness through exercise.

Exercise Improves Mental Health

- Exercise enhances the brain's metabolism. Studies have shown that active children improve their memory as a result of a better brain function.
- Moderate, fun-oriented exercise literally burns off excess harmful hormones and, at the same time, increases the release of beneficial ones. One of the beneficial hormones acts as neurotransmitter for establishing new memories.
- Active children have the ability to concentrate much better, even at the end of a long school day.
- Studies report that exercise decreases anxiety, reduces depression, and improves mood and outlook in children. In addition, their quality of sleep is improved.

Perhaps most importantly, physical activity develops children's self-esteem and confidence. Their ability to overcome challenging situations improves and they simply enjoy a better, sunnier outlook on life. In addition, our adolescent children can develop further social skills such as leadership and empathy.

A group of us go for a walk every Tuesday morning after dropping the children off.

The walk is no longer than 40 minutes and it's open to everyone of all walking abilities.

Babies and buggies are welcome!

We will be starting up again in September. We look forward to having more people joining us.

A great way to get some fresh air and exercise while meeting other parents!



Let the fun begin

FAMILY FUN DAY!

by Eliza-Jane Branning



After the great success of last year's first Family Fun day, we will hold our second **Family Fun Day** on **25th June** in **St Mary's GAA club** from 2pm-5pm. This is a great day out for the whole family and a good way to celebrate and say farewell to yet another school year! There will be a lot of fun activities on the day which will include: Pet

Farm, Pony rides, games, sporting events and to top it off some good food from the barbeque! Kids will be able to interact with the animals and join in the fun games. Don't worry there will be some activities for the parents too! **Hope to see as many families as possible on the day!**

SUMMER CAMPS

by Melissa Harman

It is that time of the year again...The **nine week** summer holiday is upon us and as the Irish weather is so unpredictable (hailstorms in April?!), we have put together information of tried and tested summer camps that won't break the bank, and may help entertain the children in case there is snow this summer!

The Jungle Den playcentre in Naas run a fantastic camp throughout July and August from 9.30am till 2pm Monday-Friday. Children from the age of 4 can attend and it is fully supervised. Activities include baking, art and craft, disco, treasure hunts, painting, clay modeling, pot planting, bouncy castle and of course playtime in the frame!

Contact: 045 834100

Cost: €80 per child, €145 for 2 siblings

Tallaght Leisure Centre runs two separate camps throughout July and August. The Little Adventurers Splash Camp is for children aged 3-5 years and starts from 9.30am until 12.30pm, and the Splash Camp for children aged 6-12 years from 9.30 until 2pm. Both camps offer a range of age appropriate sporting activities. The older children swim everyday and the younger children swim on the Friday of each week.

Contact: 01 452 3300

Cost: Splash Camp: €69, Little Adventurers €43. Sibling discounts available.

Includes a t-shirt and bag for every child

The GAA runs a great value camp at St Mary's Community centre in Saggart for girls and boys aged 5 to teenage. This year it is running the week of 11th-15th July from 10am to 2pm. The children are split into age

groups and learn the skills of Gaelic football through interactive games. No previous experience necessary!

Contact: Barbara - 085 7232000

Cost: €55 including kit, €45 for a second child

The Civic Theatre in Tallaght are running a musical theatre camp that comprises dance, drama, singing and art and craft with the chance to perform in 'High School Musical' on stage at The Civic! The Tots camp is suitable for children aged 3-5 years and runs from 10am-1pm. The Main camp is for children aged 6 - 18 years and runs from 10am-4pm. Older children are split into three different age groups.

Contact: 01 4627477

Cost: Main Camp €85, Tots Camp €45

Student Council

by Melissa Harman

The **general aim** of the student council is to make **Citywest & Saggart Community National School** a happier and safer place for everybody. The student councilors role is to bring the ideas of their class to the meetings. This year's student council representatives were elected by their classmates! The children were asked to vote for someone they felt would be both a good speaker and a good listener. Congratulations to the following students



who were chosen:

Junior Infants: Nathan, Robbie, Ralph

Senior Infants: Ava, Alannah, Lucy

1st Class: Adam, Leona, Pola, Amelia

2nd Class: Chris, Emilia

During their meetings with Ms Long the children brought up ideas such as a friendship bench in the yard (a place to go while waiting for friends). They also spoke about getting a defibrillator for the school, games for the yard such as bean bags, skipping ropes, balls and posters stating the rules about how to play nicely. **Very well done to the student council.**

KIDS CORNER

WORD SEARCH

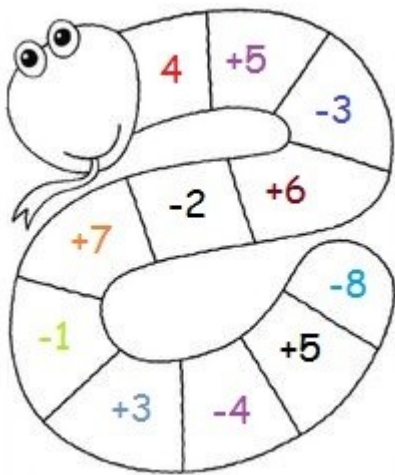
Can you find the following words?

1. DOROTHY
2. TOTO
3. EMERALD
4. SCARECROW
5. TINMAN
6. LION
7. WISER
8. OZ
9. CANDY
10. CHINA
11. MALLOW

L	I	O	N	M	A	L	L	O	W	T	E
Q	K	Z	M	G	P	R	S	Z	C	P	M
R	P	C	U	A	M	S	C	H	N	F	E
O	M	A	T	I	N	M	A	N	H	F	R
G	Q	N	E	V	X	B	R	U	Z	H	A
V	O	D	G	H	D	T	E	N	F	W	L
K	I	Y	R	K	B	O	C	Y	W	Z	D
F	J	A	W	I	S	E	R	L	P	I	F
Z	A	Z	U	Z	B	S	O	O	V	P	O
P	I	B	Z	X	T	I	W	E	T	T	Y
W	C	H	I	N	A	Q	W	F	O	H	W
B	F	F	Y	W	S	Z	G	T	O	C	Y

CALCULATE AND COLOUR!

How long is the snake?



COMPOSE YOURSELF!

Find the place for words in one of the four riddles!

3 letters:

- EEL
- SET
- TEA
- TEE

5 letters:

- ALLEY
- APPLE
- CITED
- CRATE
- CUBIC
- EARLY
- ELEGY
- GATOR

- LODGE
- PANEL
- PLATE
- REPLY
- RETRO
- SPEAK
- SUSHI
- WHEEL

