

BALLINABRANNA NATIONAL SCHOOL

Milford

Co. Carlow

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3rd of November 2021

Primary Debating- Our 6th class are participating in the *Concern* and Kilkenny Education Centre, Primary School Debating Competition 2021-22. The debate takes place virtually with each team prerecording and submitting their speeches to the judges. The Motion for the First Round is; 'Social Media does more harm than good for young people's confidence'. Best wishes to Ms S. Amond and the 6th class team of Naomi, Seán, Cillian, Charlotte, Eva and Erin for the debate!

French Lessons - We are delighted to have been chosen to participate in the pilot programme for modern languages in primary school this year.

In our school, children from 3rd - 6th class will participate in French lessons for 6 weeks this November and December. There will be no cost to parents for these lessons as they will be funded by a Department of Education Grant. We welcome Audrey Howard-Bowles to our school as our French Teacher. Ms Howard-Bowles is a fully qualified Secondary School French teacher currently working with Tyndall College, Carlow.

The six-week programme, which is being supported by Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI), is designed to foster greater inclusion and appreciation of diversity in society, to encourage the uptake of languages at post-primary level and to support the government strategy on foreign languages in education, 'Languages Connect'.

Halloween Dress Up Day - We had great fun on the 22nd of October with children (of all ages) dressing up in their Halloween Costumes and making donations to Trick or Treat for Temple Street. €195 in total was donated to this worthy cause, thank you to all who contributed.

Climate Change Week We celebrated Climate Action Week in October. The children learnt about the importance of reducing food waste at home and how we can do our bit to help Climate Change. They took part in lots of fun activities including entering a poster competition in partnership with Ballinabranna, Milford, Raheendoran Development Group. We greatly appreciate their sponsorship of prizes for this competition.

Green Schools - As part of our Green Schools initiative we are focusing on litter and waste, in particular food waste at home. We are encouraging everyone to have a look at waste at home and ways we can reduce the amount of waste we produce. The children are learning about lots of ways to reduce, reuse and recycle in the classroom and together we can all do our bit to help Climate change.

Amber Flag -To promote positive mental health and well-being in our school , we have decided to take part in the Pieta Amber Flag Initiative. This involves the whole school community coming together to create a safe, positive and healthy attitude towards our general physical and mental health and well-being. We will be taking part in lots of wellbeing activities like our mindful miles and a future fundraiser for Pieta House. Children from 2nd to 6th class are working with the Weaving Wellbeing programme again this year too. We aim to receive our Amber flag at the end of the year.

Student Council A new Student Council was elected in October, with the members getting straight to work on important school issues. The Council members are Eve Foley, Aria Dunne, Harry Noctor, Niall Kinsella, Ruth Tunstead, Rhys O' Toole, Robert Byrne and Isabelle Farrell, a representative from each class from Junior Infants to 6th class. Already the Student Council have helped to provide each class with a basket of equipment to encourage creative and fun play at lunchtimes. The funding raised from Split the Pot in October helped them to achieve this goal. The Council hope to add more equipment to the baskets to add to the skipping ropes, hoola hoops and tennis balls as the year goes on.

Parent Teacher Meetings - Parent Teacher Meetings will take place this year in November. As all Covid-19 regulations are still in place for schools they will take place by phone. School will finish early at 2.45pm on Thursday the 18th of November to facilitate an evening of calls. In order to talk to all of the parents in the class, a second evening of calls may also take place.

Your child's teacher will contact you in November with a proposed date and time for your call. Please respond promptly to confirm availability. Ten minutes is allocated per phone call, if there are further matters to discuss after this time, a meeting can be arranged with the teacher for a later date. We look forward to having these important conversations with you.

Rosary Beads – Thank you to Fr. Hennessy and the parish for giving a set of rosary beads to the children in 2nd class during the month of October, the month of the Holy Rosary.

P.A. Clothes Collection - Our P.A. are running a clothing collection in conjunction with Bag2School. Bags of clothes can be accepted any day up to the 9th of November. It is a great opportunity to clear out a wardrobe and support the school and LauraLynn House at the same time. LauraLynn House receive a 10% donation from Bag2School. LauraLynn is the only Children's Hospice in Ireland.

Bag2School accept adult and children's clothes, shoes (tied together please), hats, belts, handbags, scarves & belts, soft toys. Please NO Duvets, Pillows, Curtains, Blankets, Towels or items not fit for re-use.

Many thanks for helping with this unique fundraising opportunity.

Orchard- We are looking forward to participating in the Data Centres' for Bees Orchard Planting Project in association with Keppel Data Centres. An orchard, comprising of 5 heritage fruit trees – 1 plum, 1 pear and 3 different apple trees is due to arrive for planting in mid-November. The trees will be labelled with a "tree passport" and we will register them on www.orchards.ie to help with research by the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) to measure the impact of this project on the National Pollinator plan. We are very excited to be part of this great project and hope that it has a very positive environmental impact.

Craig Coffey would like to thank the students of Ballinabranna NS of 2019 who took part in physical fitness testing to be included as part of his research displaying the difference levels between children with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder. Craig recently completed the research and has achieved a PhD with the Institute of Technology Carlow. His Thesis is titled "The Effects of an Exercise Intervention on Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder". Congratulations Craig!

Split the Pot – Our Split the Pot Draw resumed on Friday 8th of October. To enter just return the Split the Pot envelope with €2 inside it and your contact details on the front. The draw is held live on Facebook, the winner takes home half of any money collected with the remainder going directly to support the school. Additional envelopes for other family members/neighbours who would like to take part are always available from the office. Many thanks for your support! Our October winners were Fionn McNally €145 Julia Keating €138 Mike and Mim €158 Tricia Lowry €158

Diabetes Awareness - November is Diabetes Awareness Month, with World Diabetes Awareness Day celebrated on the 14th. You can find lots of important information on <http://www.diabetesireland.ie/>

Team Hope – The children received an information leaflet about the "Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal" from school before the midterm with details of how to take part in this year's campaign. Participation is entirely voluntary. If you would like to take part, please leave your completed shoebox in to the school on or before this Friday, 5th of November. Thank you! Often these shoeboxes are the only gift that a child will receive at Christmas and the joy that they deliver is incredible.

Congratulations to past pupil Ódhrán Murphy, Ódhrán has been selected in Carlow & District's Juvenile League Academy Team to represent the league in next Summer's Kennedy Cup competition. Over 130 players born in 2008 originally trialled for the squad from soccer Clubs across the county and beyond who play in the CDJL. The final 22 will now train weekly and play a number of matches over the coming months in preparation for next year's national Finals. Best of luck Ódhrán!

Congratulations also to past pupil Jack Kehoe. Jack has made a shortlist of 51 basketball players for the second round of trials as Ireland U18 basketball head coach Paul Kelleher continues the process of picking his squad. Best wishes for the next round of selection on the weekend of 20 and 21 November Jack!

Ballinabranna NS Enrolment for 2022- Enrolment for Junior Infants September 2022 will take place in January 2022 for all Catholic Primary Schools in our Diocese. We will publish details of our school's Admissions Process in January and we are happy to answer any questions parents or guardians have regarding enrolment, you can contact us by email or by phone.

Christmas Cards The children have been busy working on designing their own Christmas Cards. Each family will receive a sample card in November, if you wish to, you can purchase packs of cards to send to your families and friends. This year you will also have the option of purchasing a mug created with your child's own design. Further details to follow shortly.

Christmas Annuals Folens Christmas Annuals will be available from the school later this month if you would like to buy one. The annuals cost €4 each and have lots of valuable educational material, puzzles, jokes and stories inside for children to enjoy.

Upcoming School Events

PA Clothes Collection – Drop in clothes before Tuesday 9th of November

Parent Teacher Meetings - School closes at 2.45 on Thursday 18th of November

Christmas Raffle Friday 17th of December 2021

Christmas Holidays School will close on Wednesday 22nd of December (Half Day) for Christmas