

ST. MARK'S S.N.S.

CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER



“Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine”

Charity at Christmas

This year Ms. Fowler organised a collection of food for the local St. Vincent de Paul Conference. Once again the generosity of our pupils and staff is overwhelming. We hope that we have helped in some small way to make Christmas an easier time for people who are in need.

School Garden

Have you noticed our beautiful school garden and woodland walk. We would like to thank Vinnie Murphy our caretaker and Michael Kavanagh St. Mark's Junior School caretaker for their amazing work on our school garden. We are really looking forward to spring and our nature walks on our woodland pathways.

Art & Craft Classes

Ms. Cashin and Ms. Murphy held Art and Craft classes on Wednesdays during November and December for 6 weeks. Pupils experimented with various strands of art including clay, print (marbling), construction, paint and drawing. The children thoroughly enjoyed these classes. Art and Craft will recommence after Christmas in February/March. Lessons will take place on Wednesdays and pupils from 3rd to 6th are welcome to join. Contact Ms. Cashin or Ms. Murphy if any child is interested in attending after Christmas.

Happy Christmas

Dear Parents



As we celebrate Christmas and approach the end of 2014, I want to sincerely thank you for your support and co-operation through the year. Your presence with us, in and at the various events and fundraising activities held through the year, is very much appreciated by all of us here. It has been a wonderful year of celebration for our school.

Congratulations to everyone involved in this year's Christmas Concert. I am grateful to you, the parents and other family members of the children for your support and appreciation of the children's acting and musical talents on the night.

As you can see from the newsletter we have been very busy! I would like to thank the students and teachers for their dedication and hard work. I really think that the students are very lucky to have such talented and hard working teachers! Our students continue to amaze with their enthusiasm and commitment to all aspects of school life.

On behalf of the school community, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to all in the school community who have been bereaved in the last year.

Have a happy and peace filled Christmas!





Christmas Variety Concert 2014

St. Mark's Christmas Variety Concert took place on Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th of December. It included a huge range of fantastic acts, both from whole classes and individual children. The 3rd classes put on a wide variety of acts, including songs from "Frozen" and "Mary Poppins", a nativity play, a Christmas poem and a performance of "Silent Night" on the tin whistle. The 4th classes entertained their audience with brilliant performances from "Annie" and "Grease", a festive song and an energetic dance. The 5th classes performed some lovely songs, a Christmas poem and a hilarious play about the water charges, written by Ms. Lunny. 6th classes sang Band Aid 30's "Do They Know It's Christmas?" The 6th class children also put on a production of the well-known play "The Nutcracker". There were fantastic performances from Glee club, the Irish dancers and the gymnastics group. The concert also included a medley of individual dancers, ranging from modern dance and baton twirling, to a traditional Indian dance. In addition to this, there were some fantastic solo singers and musicians. The audience was amazed by a Tae-kwon-do and kickboxing display! An act including beat-boxing and a rap also proved very popular. The St. Mark's school choir finished off the concert beautifully with a few festive favourites. This year's Christmas concert was a great success and we are already looking forward to next year's production!

Arts Week 2015

We are having Arts Week in St. Mark's S.N.S. commencing Monday 2nd February until Friday 6th February 2015. As many of you know, this is an event which is held in the school every two years. What a week of learning, exploration, discovery, creativity and fun we had in 2013. The aim and essence of the week is to activate and foster the children's enthusiasm and passion in The Arts and to immerse children fully in the arts for the week. Arts Week gives the whole school community a chance to embrace their creative side through Art, Music, Drama, Dance and Literature. It is very important that children realise the importance of the Arts. It brings people of all cultures, backgrounds, languages and experiences together in a mutual understanding. During our Arts Week the children were exposed to different elements of the Arts both inside our school and outside our school, from a national and international perspective.

Staff

We bid farewell to Ms Elizabeth Daly who joined our staff September 2012. We wish Elizabeth every success in her teaching position in Fermoy County Cork. We welcome Lorraine Higgins to the staff.

Science Week

In 2014 a Science Week took place in St. Mark's in November (10th-14th). On Monday, 'The Mad Professor' came to speak to the children in the third and fourth classes about elementary science. He also did some very interesting experiments with the children. On Tuesday, a scientist called Christine Campbell came to speak to the children in the fifth and sixth classes about 'Energy Awareness'. On Wednesday, the children did their own scientific experiments in their classrooms. All of these experiments were photographed by Mr. Durkin. Two experiments from each class in the school were selected to be exhibited in the school hall on Friday. On Thursday, inter-class quizzes were held. Teams from all of the classes in the school competed against teams from the other classes in the same standard. Prizes were awarded to the winning teams. On Friday, a science exhibition was held in the school hall. In the morning many of the children's parents and relatives attended the exhibition and they viewed the experiments that were on display there. In the afternoon children from all of the classes in the school visited the exhibition.





St. Mark's SNS P.T.A.

St. Mark's S.N.S. Parent Teacher Association will be holding their AGM early in the new year. I would like to offer a special word of thanks to the members of the Parent Teacher Association who put tremendous work into organising fundraising for the school. Their work and support is invaluable to the school community.

Movie Club

St. Mark's P.T.A. Movie Club currently has a membership of 180 children. Movies are held on a fortnightly basis from 6.50 - 8.50 p.m. Only children in St. Mark's S.N.S. are eligible to become members. The movie club is restricted to members only. The next Movie Club is Friday 19th December, Christmas Fancy Dress.

Study Club

Mr.Daly and Mr.Murphy would like to wish those who took part in Homework Club this term a Happy Christmas. There are new sessions after the Christmas holidays, so if anyone wishes to join for the first time, or take part again, forms will be given out after Christmas.

Homework Club gives children the opportunity to carry out their homework in a quiet setting where the aid of a teacher is available. Children participate in sporting,

Athletics in St. Mark's

This year has been the most successful so far for athletics in St.Marks. In May the girls team won the South Dublin County Council X Country Championships which was awarded to our school by the Mayor. Then in June we won 16 medals in Cumann Na mBunscol Athletics Competition in Santry and the girls U12 relay team won gold and received a trophy which we are all very proud of, as it was a first for St. Marks. In September we started training again and myself and Ms Ryan have worked with the children to get them fit for competitions that will begin in February next year. Each training session is different and we try and mix up our 30 minutes on the field with sprinting, long distance running, hurdles and relays. Hopefully in January as long as it's weather permitting we will start training before school as well as at lunch time which will help our squad get fully prepared for races and competitions in the New Year.

St. Mark's Junior & Senior Gaelic Football Teams 2014-15

This year our Senior Boys Gaelic Football team competed in the 'Corn Chumann na nGael' which was organised by Cumann na mBunscol. The team performed extremely well, recording fine victories over Scoil Lorcáin and Scoil Áine to finish top of our group. The team overcame Scoil an Léinbh Íosa in the quarter-final before succumbing to a strong Terenure College Senior team in the semi-finals.

The Junior Boys Team competed in the Go Games South 3 Division of the Cumann na mBunscol competition. They recorded impressive home victories over Scoil Maelruáin and Bishop Galvin as well as hard-fought wins away to Holy Rosary and Scoil Treasa. The team narrowly lost to Terenure College's Junior team in their final match. Having won four of their five matches, the team finished joint top of their division which was an outstanding achievement. We are very proud of both the Senior and Junior teams this year and look forward to continued success with them in the future.



St. Mark's a Restorative School



School Choir

We are all very proud of the 5th & 6th Class children from our School Choir who performed Christmas Carols in Bank of Ireland Tallaght on Friday last 12th December. They were directed by Ms. Murray and accompanied Ms. Fowler and on guitar by Ms. O'Dwyer. Thanks to Eamonn Callery Bus Company, who kindly provided transport free of charge.

Sports Club 2014-15

This year Sports Club took place every Monday after school over a six-week period. The club was facilitated by Mr. O'Connor & Mr. Barker. Each week the children took part in different sports such as football, basketball, rounders and athletics with a view to developing their fitness and co-ordination in a fun, friendly environment. The children really enjoyed the club. Sports Club will take place again after Christmas.



On the 14th of October St. Mark's Senior and Junior Schools were delighted to be presented with the **Yellow flag for Restorative Practices**. This flag, which has been received previously by only a small number of schools, demonstrates that St. Mark's Schools are Restorative Communities that actively promote and practice the principles of fairness, respect and honesty, and is committed to building strong positive relationships among our students and staff. Through using Restorative Practices we are working daily to build our students' emotional literacy and empowering them to express their feelings and needs, to manage their behaviour, and to resolve conflicts.



The flag was presented to the schools by the Tallaght West Childhood Development Initiative (CDI) at a ceremony in the school hall. CDI have facilitated the training of the staff in the Restorative Practices. The ceremony was attended by the Mayor of South Dublin, Mr. Fintan Warfield, and by Claire Casey, Restorative Practices Programme Coordinator, from CDI. Representatives from our parents and local

Mathathon 2014

The Mathathon was set up for a number of reasons:

- 1: to reinforce the maths done in the classes.
- 2: to bring maths to life!
- 3: to show the children the fun side of maths
- 4: to help with the fundraising for the school.

A set of maths facts suitable to the children's needs were given to the children over a three week period. There was a great buzz on the day of the Mathathon, November 27th, when the answer sheets were given to the children to complete. They even enjoyed it! To celebrate the success of the Mathathon each class got a box of sweets. Over €6,000 was raised for the school.

Well done and a special thanks to all the children and parents who helped to make the Mathathon a great success.