



# CETNS NEWSLETTER

February 2023 | Issue 52

## SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

This year we are looking at the Spellings For Me programme and its effectiveness. As ever we value your input and would like to hear your thoughts. We will email a survey early next week so we can have some data on your opinions. We intend to hold a focus group with children to hear their thoughts also.

## TRY OUT SOME TENNIS

Our lucky pupils are visiting Castlebar Tennis Club today to try their hand at some Tennis. Some of our pupils attend tennis lessons after schools so it's time for them to show off their talents to their friends. All pupils in the school will walk to the tennis club and there they will enjoy an hour-long session with a tennis coach. It will be fun and enjoyable and a great learning opportunity. Thanks to Jennifer and Olwyn in the Tennis Club for organising this for us.

## SCHOOL CLOSURES

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> & Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February** – Midterm Break  
**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> & Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March** – School reopens Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March

## START SAVING FOR YOUR SCHOOL TOUR

As you are aware bus prices/diesel costs/insurance for activity providers are huge. This has the knock-on effect that school tours will be more than €20 per child at least. The tour in the older classes may even be more costly. Having thought about the amount of Easter Eggs children receive I was wondering if you could ask grandparents/relatives etc for a fiver for their tour instead...and children save!

## NEW SITE/ BUILDING WORKS

Our Board of Management have submitted a number of sites for consideration to the DES. This is following consultation with private estate agents and local agencies. We will be submitting an additional accommodation application in the next month to allow us to expand and accommodate more classrooms, recreational space and multi-purpose room. As ever this will only become clearer towards the end of this school year. Thank you all as ever for your understanding. We appreciate it is frustrating for all involved-there is progress it's just very slow.

## CREDIT UNION QUIZ

On Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup> Castlebar ETNS took part in its very first Credit Union Quiz. There was lots of interest in representing the school. Mini quizzes were held in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> class to select the teams so well done to everyone who put their names forward. On the night two teams took part, one in the Under 11 category and one for Under 13, answering lots of questions ranging from Geography and Politics to Science and Sport. The children did an amazing job, showing amazing general knowledge, cooperation and respectful listening as the night went on. We are so proud of the example set by these teams and are already looking forward to many more nights like this in future!

## OPEN EVENING FOR NEW PARENTS

We will be holding an open evening for new parents on Thursday March 9<sup>th</sup> 5-7pm in our Junior Campus. This open house style event will give a flavour of what is on offer in our school and how we might be the right choice for their family. Families can drop in with their children and have a look around and chat to staff and parents. The outside of our Junior Campus isn't as inviting as what is inside so we'd like people to come and have a look beyond the metal shutter.

Our junior campus building has recently changed hands so a make-over might be coming down the tracks or might not-either way it's what's inside that counts!

## ENROLMENT

Enrolment for all classes for 2023/2024 is open. Please share on social media as this is where people get their information about what's happening in Castlebar. The staffing schedule from the DES has been issued and our school community can appoint a new class teacher when we have 141 pupils on roll. At 169 pupils the Principal becomes administrative and no longer teaches a class-probably for the school year 2024/2025. The class groupings for next year are unclear until enrolment closes in May and we can try and plan. Although over the summer months last year we had more than 20 enrolments. We will hopefully have at least 6 class teachers for 8 classes so some multi-grade classes next year too. We have an overall staff of 13 this year and this will remain/increase for next year. All depends on enrolments so spread the word/scaip an scéal.

## EDUCATE TOGETHER PRINCIPALS CONFERENCE

As you all know Educate Together is our Patron Body. They are a charity, a membership organisation and management body. They provide support with any legal and management challenges that the school faces. They have opened 50 new schools in the last 10 years and support the Principal in building a school community-this may be with recruitment, building works, managing an organisation and leading teaching and learning. There are 35,000 students attending 117 Educate Together Primary and Post-Primary Schools nationally and once a year Educate Together hold a national conference. This conference will take place in Galway on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sarah as Principal will be attending.

## SHINING STARS WINNERS

We've had many shining stars in recent weeks. The children are:

### CHINESE NEW YEAR

Date	Room	Name
20/01/2023	Sarah's	Jace
	Deborah's	Dylan
	Patricia's	Claudia
	Declan's	Ellie
	Declan's	Lily
	Paul's	Joshua

### ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS WEEK

Date	Room	Name
27/01/2023	Sarah's	Solomiia
	Deborah's	Casey
	Patricia's	Nazar
	Declan's	Alannah
	Declan's	Packie
	Paul's	Oksana

### WILDLIFE AWARENESS WEEK

Date	Room	Name
03/02/2023	Sarah's	Maksym
	Deborah's	Oliver W.
	Patricia's	Sofia
	Declan's	Bobby
	Declan's	Abbie
	Paul's	Adam

## HOME/SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

On **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March**, the Home/School Association will hold a second AGM in Marsh House from 7:30pm to 8:30pm. Unfortunately, at the last meeting we were not able to create a complete new committee. We have a new treasurer and secretary; however, we need a parent/carer representative to put themselves forward to be the chairperson.

We can't stress enough how important parent/carer participation is. It's your opportunity to be involved in your child's life at school. If you think you'd be able to take on the role of chairperson, please come along to our next meeting.

For those who would like to attend the meeting remotely, we hope to have that set up for you. Keep a look out in your emails for a link nearer the time. Finally, thanks again for your patience while we get into the swing of things and we're looking forward to seeing you on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

A huge thanks to Margaret and Michael from Wild Nephin National Park for visiting every class. Every child in the school really enjoyed seeing the animals they brought in and are more wildlife aware. It was a super experience and we are so grateful for their time and expertise.

## TIME TO READ

Second class read aloud to volunteers who visit our school every Wednesday morning. We choose a book that came from Mayo County Library. The books are very interesting and fun. We really enjoy when the volunteers visit us as it gives us a chance to read to one person and it helps to improve our reading.

## GAELOLAISTE MEETING FOR ALL IRISH SECOND LEVEL SCHOOL

There will be a public meeting on Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, at The Linenhall Arts Center in Castlebar to share information about the campaign to establish an all Irish secondary school in Castlebar. If any parent is interested in attending, please email [gaelcholaiste.mhaigheo@gmail.com](mailto:gaelcholaiste.mhaigheo@gmail.com) by 15/02/2023.

## SACRAMENT PREPARATION

Any parents who are interested in their child making their First Holy Communion are asked to contact Niamh on 0879472914. Sacrament preparation classes are about to start so if it's something you want your child to do, please contact Niamh as soon as possible.

## FROM BALLYCROY NATIONAL PARK TO THE CLASSROOM

Last Friday, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, we had a visit from Margaret and Michael from Ballycroy National Park. A National Park is a protected area for wildlife. They told us about native wildlife and biodiversity. Biodiversity is the existence of a number of different kinds of plants and animals in an area and their interdependency on one and other. Did you know that tadpoles clean the water from algae, so that other animals can drink it, that's biodiversity.

Michael showed us a great slideshow which challenged our knowledge of native animals in Ballycroy and we impressed him with our environmental awareness. We were told of the importance of heather as a food source and protection for birds and animals like the grouse and hare. They brought in some taxidermy (stuffed animals) that had died naturally or been hit by a vehicle. There were loads of them and favourites included the badger, peregrine falcon, pine martin and red squirrel. Margaret and Michael also brought in magnification equipment to look at a pygmy shrew, bat and lizard.

Ballycroy National Park is a great place to visit and you can do lots of activities. Like seeing stunning panoramic views of the Nephin Beg mountains, hear special interest talks and attend workshops. Also, there are special events like guided walks and children's activities like 'pond dipping'. Would you believe that the National park in Ballycroy is the size of 15,000 McHale parks?!? Well it is!

We hope to go to the visitor's centre in Ballycroy soon. We really loved the visit and want to thank Margaret and Michael again.

By Alannah, Aoife, Liam, Lily, Sophia and Ula (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Class)

## WORLD BOOK DAY

We will be celebrating world book day with a trip to Castle Book Shop - now located on Main Street. Junior and Senior Infants will cash in their token for a book. Thanks to Aisce - Niko and Adam's Mum for organising

