



# CETNS NEWSLETTER

March 2020 | Issue 31

## ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

This year's St Patrick's Day Parade will take place from 2.15pm-4pm starting at the Library. Jojo has worked with parents to create flags and these are currently drying and nearly ready to put together. There will be a planning meeting in Cuppa Joe's on Monday at 9am for anyone who can attend the parade and if you can't make the parade but would like join just let the HSA know.

As ever the St Patrick's Day parade is on a public holiday. So it is completely optional for parents or staff to attend. I did ask Staff to attend our Winter Show in the Linenhall last December and I thank them for this as it was a spectacular event but as ever I will not be asking staff to attend the parade. Like parents each year those you can attend do. It is optional. Some issues have arisen whereby some parents feel that staff should attend as part of their job. The culture of our school has been that staff give their time outside of work to arrange guest speakers, prepare exciting lessons for children, purchase equipment for the children, research lessons, set up classrooms and the list goes on. This is working really well in our school as every day I work with staff who go above and beyond the call of duty. Expecting staff or insisting that staff attend work on their day off would kill this goodwill. Some of our staff are on leave and apart from it being illegal asking them to attend is not something I will be doing. Substitute teachers are not paid for days when the school is closed. I am just clearing this up as there seems to be some chat among parents that if teachers aren't attending neither are they. Again it is completely optional for parents or teachers to attend. Historically the Castlebar ETNS group has been made up of children attending our school, parents, staff, siblings and friends of the school who are free on the day and want to participate. We are not the same as other local schools where they have a school band and children 3rd-6th must attend and march along. We are not the same as other schools in lots of ways. Originally a group of people came together to say let's take part in the parade and of course the children love it. It's good to be involved in community activities in the same way I comment and like/share local businesses/groups on our Facebook page or the way I try to forge links with The Linenhall, GMIT and local businesses when organising events for the children. Our presence in the parade is good for our school profile of course but more importantly it is enjoyable for the children. So if you think your child would enjoy the festival atmosphere, the community spirit and the chats along the way come to Cuppa Joe's or email to say you'll be joining.

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ACCOMMODATION UPDATE

Jennifer Buttner our school development officer with Educate Together met with Fidelma Lyons in the Department of Education and Skills to discuss our accommodation needs for September 2021 on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. The planning permission for Marsh House runs out on November 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 so the DES need to act to increase our capacity at Marsh House or source alternative accommodation for us. I again checked with Jennifer Buttner would it be possible that we wouldn't be able to intake any students for 2021 and she said definitely not. That is not a possibility at all. We have 8 junior infant places for September 2020 and Jennifer our secretary is currently offering those places. Again this small intake is only so we adhere to planning and is a temporary curtailment placed on our school. Our BOM are doing all we can to work for the future of our school. We are managing enrolments till 2021 as advised by the DES. There are schools with 300+ pupils with no accommodation for September 2020 so of course they are a priority for Educate Together and the DES. Our BOM has tried every avenue possible to secure additional or alternative accommodation for our school but since our school opened we've been tied into this 5 year plan of managing enrolments. We've know this all along and have tried to change it and failed each and every time. We are meeting again on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March to formulate a parliamentary question for elected representatives to gain some insight into what DES plans are for us for Sept 2021. As you'll remember the letter we received in 2018 states that they are awaiting amalgamations in our area. As you know there are talks of amalgamations between local schools but we have received no more information than that. We wrote to the DES in December 2019 and have received no response so our next route in the parliamentary question. Our case is for September 2021 and not September 2020 so as you'll understand this is as much as we can do for the moment. If anyone wants to speak to me about this or has recently joined our school and doesn't fully understand the battle wounds and scars we've received on our journey so far I'm happy to meet with you to share our story since 2015. We are fine for September 2020 it is September 2021 we are planning for.

## A NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to our teacher Miriam and her husband Colm who welcomed a baby boy on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Mother and baby are doing great. Best wishes from all in Castlebar ETNS to Miriam, Colm and baby Oisín.

## LÁ GLAS

As part of fundraising for our school tour in May we are asking children to wear green on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March and to bring in €2. This money will go into our class money boxes and our student council will decide what our next fund raising event will be-maybe a crazy hair day, pyjama day etc.

### 1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS SWIMMING

The children in Declan's first class will be going swimming starting on Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup>. Sarah and Declan will take the children to the pool each Thursday for 6 weeks so they can develop their swimming ability. We will be gone from school from 12 - 2:15. I will email parents more details.

### ETHICAL EDUCATION

We are learning about Humanism and Jehovah's Witnesses beliefs at the moment. In the next few days we will have guest speakers who will talk and answer questions from the children. I have discussed content and met with these speakers to ensure that information and not instruction in a particular belief system is given. I'm trying to arrange a guest speaker on Judiasm and think I have one. I am also looking for someone who would be happy to speak about being Atheist. So if you can recommend someone please do.

### STAY SAFE

All classes are currently covering the stay safe topics at the moment. You can see more on [www.staysafe.ie](http://www.staysafe.ie). This is a good opportunity to discuss the stay safe rules with your child-Say No, Get Away, Tell, Keep Telling. We have spoken at assembly about our school being a "Bully Free Zone" and how we keep it this way.

### LINENHALL ART EXPO

Ellen has booked the second class children into a visit to the Linenhall Art space. Here children will use Visual Thinking Strategies and look at the art on display with a critical eye. We look forward to hearing all about it. This is part of our creative schools work.

### EDUCATE TOGETHER CONFERENCE

I will be attending the Educate Together Conference next Thursday and Friday in Galway. This is an excellent event which gives the opportunity to meet more established Educate Together school principals. I look forward to discussing how they deal with issues such as respecting religious beliefs yet delivering the Irish Primary Curriculum, accommodation needs, balancing life as a teaching principal and other organisational issues that crop up day to day. Liam will be acting up for these two days and Emma (student teacher) will be teaching my class.

## SHINING STARS WINNERS

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

### HANDWRITER OF THE WEEK

| Date       | Room                           | Name                       |
|------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 07/02/2020 | Sarah's<br>Declan's<br>Ellen's | Kenzie<br>Luke<br>Joshua   |
| 14/02/2020 | Sarah's<br>Declan's<br>Ellen's | Ryan<br>Tiarnan<br>Spencer |
| 28/02/2020 | Sarah's<br>Declan's<br>Ellen's | Cleona<br>Eoin<br>Yakoub   |

### INTERCULTURAL WEEK 1

| Date       | Room   | Name   |
|------------|--|--|
| 07/02/2020 | Sarah's<br>Sarah's<br>Declan's<br>Declan's<br>Ellen's<br>Ellen's | Seth<br>Claudia<br>Caitlin<br>Alex<br>Sarah D<br>James |

### INTERCULTURAL WEEK 2

| Date       | Room   | Name   |
|------------|--|--|
| 14/02/2020 | Sarah's<br>Sarah's<br>Declan's<br>Declan's<br>Ellen's<br>Ellen's | Poppy<br>Arya<br>Mia<br>Niamh<br>Leja<br>Saoirse |

### HUMANISM WEEK

| Date       | Room   | Name  |
|------------|--|---|
| 28/02/2020 | Sarah's<br>Sarah's<br>Declan's<br>Declan's<br>Ellen's<br>Ellen's | Orin<br>Grace<br>Noah S<br>Iarlaith<br>David<br>Sarah D |

### SLÁN TO YAKOUB

Next week we say goodbye to Yakoub in 2<sup>nd</sup> Class. Yakoub and his family are moving to Scotland and we wish them all the very best for the future. We are sorry to see him go and he will be missed. We hope he stays in contact though and tells us what school in Scotland is like.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**School Closed:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March

School Closes **April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 12pm** for Spring Break ( Staff will complete Primary Language Curriculum training on this date instead of closing early midweek or on another more inconvenient day for parents)

## SHARED SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Liam Scanlon our shared special education teacher is currently going to Tuam ETNS every Wednesday. As part of his post he is supposed to spend 20 mins per week in Tuam. We have grouped these 20 mins together and have made a more practical arrangement with Tuam ETNS. Thank you Liam for your flexibility and adaptability to this arrangement.

## FOOD DUDES

We are signed up for the next round of the Food Dudes Programme, with the first delivery of fruit and vegetables on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April.

### What is the Food Dudes Programme?

In Ireland, the EU School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme is delivered through the Food Dudes Healthy Eating Programme. It works by changing children's attitudes towards healthy eating, allowing them to cultivate a liking for fresh fruit and vegetables. Built and developed on three pillars of scientific merit, (1) repeated tastings, (2) rewards and (3) role modelling, Food Dudes has proven itself as an effective evidence-based school-based healthy eating programme.

Before Food Dudes week begins you will be provided with a parental consent letter for involvement in the programme. Any parent who does not wish his or her child to participate can opt out. Please have a look at the Food Dudes website for more information [www.fooddudes.ie](http://www.fooddudes.ie)

## SEACHTAIN NA GAELIGE

We are celebrating seachtain na gaeilge from March 9<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. We have a lovely new crepe maker donated by some wonderful parents so if anyone feels like making boxty let me know. We will all be using a cúpla focail.

## ATTENDANCE

Our record of attendance for February is 93.6%

