**St. Patrick’s School, Dalkey**

**PTA NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2015**

Welcome back everyone. We hope you had a good Christmas break and wish everyone a Happy New Year. We hope too, that you are re-energised for Term 2 after a long but excitement filled Term 1. Yes, you have probably forgotten the many activities that happened in the school between September and December.

Well, what’s worth mentioning first is the tremendous pooling of efforts between the PTA, Class Representatives and Parents in general that has not been seen for a while in the school in organising and getting things done. So a BIG THANK YOU to the parents for stepping up to the plate and may that great ‘volunteer’ spirit continue.

Thank you also to our teachers, who marshall the children into making all the activities and events flow in seamless fashion.

So let’s just remind ourselves of what was achieved last term…

**Halloween Disco** - Our first fundraiser for the year was quite successful. The event was well enjoyed by the children, from our Infants who, in case you didn’t know, can absolutely spin to the rhythm on their backs and heads to the more sophisticated 1st and 2nd class from amongst whom may emerge a possible Michael Jackson dance-alike…and I mean really good!; to the real revellers from 3rd – 6th classes who knew every song by word and were in complete harmony with the DJ, Graham Costello, as he spun off one hit after another. After all that dance, the cup cakes, brownies, sweets and other delights sold well. So the PTA raised €430 from the event. Thanks to the parents for their support and special thanks to the mums that baked, those that supervised and cleaned up on the day.

**Annual Book Fair –** This week long event was, according to the long standing organiser, Zuilmah Wallis, the most successful on record, yielding *circa* €1,535 which has translated into *circa* €900 in commission coming to the school for use in replenishing our library. So thank you to Zuilmah and Julia Kelly, her right-hand person in putting it all together, including the wonderful treats of special guest children’s writers Gordon Snell (read with Infants-2nd class) and Sarah Webb who spent a captivating hour long session with 3rd-4th class, telling her story of how she became a writer to giving them tips on reading and writing. Thanks too to the record number of helpers (24 in all!) who manned the fair. And of course appreciation too, to all the parents and their extended families for their purchase-spree.

Then there was the ‘**DESIGN A POSTER’** competition that all the children participated in which brought out stunning works of art as was seen on display at the time. And the class winners were: Elora Gregg (Junior Infants), Sebastian Gargan (Senior Infants), Eilbhe Duggan-Reid (1st), Patrick McCormack and Hannah Boylan (2nd), Jemima Killane and Evie Ni Oisin (3rd), Eve Mangan (4th), James Carthy and Mathew Johnson (5th) and Maeve Byrne (6th). Congratulations winners and well done to all who took part.

**Wassa Wassa Drumming Workshop** – Words such as fun, amusement, exciting and more come to mind because this workshop was 3 hours of pure joyful and learning for the children who ultimately produced a magnificent piece of drumming and singing music. Each child had an opportunity to play a well crafted African drum that they were each given, filling the hall with loud joyful African sounds on the day. The finale of 5th & 6th class pounding on those drums with others singing along was a joy to behold. Well done children. Niall, the instructor remarked that he had not worked with a group that got it so well together in such a short time!

**Aprons Fund Raiser Project** – This is one of the PTA’s main fund raiser for the year and was launched prior to the Christmas break to promote them as great presents for extended family and friends. We did very well then but there’s a few more aprons left. So to the parents that did not buy one yet, we still need your support. After all, the children’s beautiful artwork makes these aprons both lovely and practical mementos for your and your Aunt’s kitchen. We hope the final profit figure will be around €900.

**Variety Show -** The standard and variety of talent surpassed anything we’ve seen in recent years. So congratulations to the children for their fine performance. Thanks to Naomi Clarkson, the Music Teacher who put it all together; to our new (perhaps permanent?) and amazing compere, Grant Ford, who carried out a sterling job; to Marie Mangan, Szilvia Horvath and team who decorated the hall and assisted with the children toing and froing on stage; to 5th and 6th class children for their stunning artwork in designing and making the variety show banner; to the parents who cleaned up or conducted other chores and to those who could make it to the show to not only support our young ones but got themselves a real treat !

**Parents’ Christmas Night out** **–** Good food, drink and fine company. The evening was enjoyed by those who made this relaxing evening out to the Tropica Restaurant in Dalkey. A wonderful success with 22 parents attending – thank you. I’m told some of the hardier ones later repaired to a local hostelry! We hope more can come in future.

**Christmas Outreach** – To the whole school for giving so generously to the Bray Women’s Refuge collection of pyjamas, towels and toiletries, a BIG THANK YOU. The donation was greatly appreciated by this organisation which helps look after vulnerable mothers and children. Though brief but sensitively handled, the children were given an idea about the Centre by one of its representatives, Ms Dee Gergharty, who came to the school in November. Sadly, this will be the last year that our school will assist the Bray Women’s Refuge as we have to keep moving on and help other organisations at this time of year.

**The School Nativity** - Our thanks to Samantha Hayes, Deirdre Gergharty, Catherine Watson and team of volunteers for hosting the teas/coffees with warm mince pies and children’s snacks at the end of a lovely performance of the Nativity play on our last day of school before the Christmas break. Congratulations too, to the children for their presentation and Naomi for co-ordinating it all. And well done to Marie Mangan and a team of Dads who helped prepare and decorate the stage in the Church. Could I also make ‘quiet’ mention (just so I’m not heard) of this year’s Santa, Paddy McCormack, who visited with the Infants class and left them in contented wonderment at having a live ‘Santa’ to themselves. Thank you Paddy, that was a splendid job!

**Extra Curricular Activities–** There was good participation by children in extra curricular activity with the numbers of attendance in each activity remaining high. So well done to both the children, for their continued interest and enthusiasm and to the parents for facilitating. The boys and girls soccer and hockey teams played matches against other schools, bringing our sporting activities to a new level. Hockey girl and boy teams as well as the soccer players each played two friendly matches. So the Active Flag is truly flying at our school. Go boys and girls!!

**Extra Curricular Supervision** - We still have some issues with a few parents not making sufficient effort to participate in supervision (particularly those of older children that would walk themselves to school) and a few who simply forgot to attend their signed-up days of supervision. Remember that this is undertaken for the safety of our children so please find an alternate or inform the PTA if you can’t make it.

**Active Flag** – It was “*Aluta Continua*” last term as the children, under the leadership of Ms Galbraith and other teachers and parents, braved winter mornings to go on their Tuesday and Friday marathons as well as take part in other forms of sport…all part of the school curriculum. Well done kids!! And now the “Active Flag Committee” are calling on parents to join in and keep fit/get healthy in line with ***RTE’s Operation Transformation*** programme. Details on how to go about this are on the Active Flag Board in school but, put simply, parents are being asked to sign up for 3 sporty activities each week for 7 weeks. The programme started on 7th January and ends week commencing 18th February. So mums and dads get those tape measures out and let’s get on with our very own operation transformation and show those kids we can do it!!

**Class Reps –** They embraced their new role with both arms, making the work load lighter for all involved in seeing activities and events to fruition. So thank you Class Reps for a job well done in term 1. But don’t rest too much on these laurels as there’s more to be done…

**Farewell** – The school bade farewell to Kate Campbell and her family after 9 years in Dalkey and at the school. Kate played an unending and proactive role in the PTA and school in general, volunteering many hours of art displays for Nativity and end-of-year plays, writing up supervision lists for extra curricular, etc with artist husband Brendan assisting in the background. The children, Jakob (finished 6th class in 2014), Hannah (5th) and Rachel (Snr. Infant) were much loved by their friends and will be fondly missed. The family have moved to Carlow and we wish them every success.

**PTA Subscriptions –** Payments of the €40 PTA subscriptions were slow with 63 children of the *circa* 101 paid up at the date of this newsletter. Please remember that this helps to support your child’s school in many ways such as paying for workshops, part subsidised outings, graduation books, goodies needed to host various events such as sports day and umpteen other things. So please pay if you haven’t done so yet as that help is counted upon in the PTA budget. Remember it’s €40 1st child; €30 2nd child; and €20 3rd child. Thank you.

**School Website Revamp** – Work started on the rejuvenation of our school website to one that will be interactive (complete forms, make payments, hold opinion polls/surveys on issues arising, etc.) and a good source of information. This work is under the stewardship of Ms Galbraith (3rd&4th class teacher) who is being assisted by Dad, Bartley Doyle.

**PTA and AGM Minutes –** Minutes from the PTA meeting held last October are on the school notice board.

**Planning Term 2** – A workshop with **Junior Einsteins** is scheduled for **Friday, 23rd January** **at 10.30am** in the school where children will see and take part in amazing science experiments/demonstrations. Then we have our annual **‘Cake Sale ‘ fundraiser** set this year for **Friday, 13th February** (don’t be inhibited by the date) where the baking skills of all those that know how, will be called upon to support this fund raiser that will have a Valentine’s Day theme. There will be other activities organised for the term so keep an eye out on your texts and notice board.

**Parking -** For the safety of all the children please adhere to the traffic markings and do **NOT** park:

* *on the ZIG ZAG lines;*
* *on the double yellow lines;*
* *on the pavement;*
* *at school gate to drop off children; and*
* *Do not misuse the disabled parking slot*

Given the increased number of vehicles at drop-off and collection times between Loreto and our own school, it is particularly important that we do not contribute to the congestion on Harbour Road. Please remember you can park a bit further and walk the short distance to the school. Please REMIND ANYBODY who is responsible for collecting your child of the above

**Stay in the Loop-** If you are not receiving PTA texts or if you have any suggestions or ideas for PTA workshops/activities please let us know by texting 086 835 7989 or e-mail cholaboylan@gmail.com.

**Post it** - Events planned for this term are summarised on the following separate sheet. Tear off and stick on your fridge/notice board at home.

**THAT’S ALL FOLKS !**

**PTA Events Schedule – 2014/15**

**Term 2**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Purpose** | **Date** | **Venue** | **Time** |
| ***Junior Einsteins Science Demonstrations*** | A great educational workshop for children to see, take part and learn from science experiments carried out with them. | **Friday, 23rd January** | Hall | 10.30 – 11.15am |
| ***Cake Sale*** | PTA Fund Raiser for the term.Parents volunteer baking skills to make cakes, biscuits, buns, etc. sold to others in the school and outsiders on the day. The special theme this year is Valentine’s Day. | **Friday 13th February**School closing for Spring Mid-Term. | Hall | 8.20 am – 2.00pm |
| **‘And more to be announced…****For now do enjoy pictures from of some ‘Term 1 Moments’ on the Board.** |