

JUNE 2022

Summer Newsletter



Newtownwhite Educate Together National School

Summer Break has arrived!

It has been another action packed term here at Newtownwhite ETNS and it brings us to the end of the 2021/2022 school year.

This year we have seen Covid take more of a back seat and we have welcomed new students and staff. We have been delighted to have resumed all normal school activities from school trips to swimming and tennis lessons. We have even successfully had our first overnight trip with our graduating Sixth Class! As always we want to thank our parents & guardians - your support does not go unnoticed and we really appreciate you. We hope you enjoy our final newsletter for the year.

New School Logo

Earlier in the year all children participated in designing a new logo for the school.

These designs were used to inspire the design of our new logo. We really feel that it reflects the ethos, culture and location of the school.



2022/2023 Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers will remain the same next year. Class allocations for 2022/2023 are as follows:

Junior Room

Ciara

Junior Infants &
1st Class

Middle Room

Catherine &
Tracey

2nd, 3rd, 4th
Classes

Senior Room

Caroline

5th & 6th Class



2022/2023

We will welcome all children back to school at 8:50am on Tuesday August 30th 2022. Junior Infants will go home at 11:30am that week.



After-school care will be available from 1:30pm - 4:30pm daily. The cost will be €5 per hour, per child. Contact the office to book a place.



We are still accepting enrolments for 2022/2023. You can contact the school for more information.



School Trips

School Tour - The whole school went on the 2022 school tour on May 24th to Let's Go! at the GAA Centre of Excellence.

The children had a fantastic day and participated in a really wide range of activities including KMX Karts, a disco dome, an assault course, relays, athletics, team challenges, bouncy castle, Zorbee ball and a climbing wall. Maria stood out as the star of the day with her exceptional climbing skills – she scaled the full height of the wall and made it look effortless – well done Maria!



Sports Day - We went to the Tom Ruane Park in Ballina for our 2022 Sports Day on Friday June 3rd.

There was a good balance between non-competitive and competitive events to ensure that all children were included. The emphasis on the day was on four of the Olympic Values – Friendship, Respect, Determination and Excellence. Teams were awarded points as they made their way around the different stations. The day finished with a series of 200m races that children could choose to participate in. We were really lucky with the weather, it was beautiful all day. Staff and children alike had a fantastic experience.

Sixth Class Overnight Trip - Caroline & Elaine organised the first ever Newtownwhite overnight excursion in June.

Sixth class were treated to this special trip to mark their graduation from the school as the first ever group of children to attend an Educate Together national school from Junior Infants all the way up to Sixth Class in Co. Mayo. The group went to Galway, cooked a BBQ, made themselves a fry for breakfast and finished the experience with a trip to Pure Skill in Galway. The children did themselves proud and truly had an experience they will always remember.





School Improvements

As well as our lovely new logo there have been a number of other school improvements this term.

There has been investment in technology this term which will benefit all classes.

The Middle Room have received a brand new MiTouch Interactive Flat Screen and all rooms have received new class laptops for use by classroom teachers. Added to the tablets and Chromebooks the children already use these new additions allow us to continue to offer children the most up to date technological resources we can.



We now have our new logo displayed over the front door on a brand new school sign.

Finally, we have installed a new CCTV system around the school grounds. We hope that this will add to the safety and security of the school grounds and equipment for children and for staff.

Wellbeing Updates

We have continued Wellbeing Wednesdays throughout the term as well as a number of other activities.

Tennis

We teamed up with Ballina Tennis Club in May to provide a course of four lessons for all children at a minimal cost to parents & guardians. The lessons were a huge success and gave children a chance to experience tennis in a beautiful environment with the fantastic coach Artur . All children really progressed over the four weeks.



Swimming

Swimming lessons finished just after Spring Break and they were a huge success with the children. We look forward to offering them again next year.

Stay Safe

The Stay Safe Programme was delivered in all rooms during the term. The Stay Safe programme is developmentally tailored and contains four sets of lessons suitable for Infants, First and Second classes, Third and Fourth classes, and Fifth and Sixth classes. The lessons plans are divided into the five Stay Safe Topics: Feeling Safe and Unsafe; Friendship and Bullying; Touches; Secrets and Telling; Strangers.



GAA

We have officially launched our Newtownwhite GAA team this term! Managed by Sarah and co-managed by Diarmuid the team consists of 13 of our students ranging from 2nd – 6th class. Michael Fitzmaurice (Captain of the 1985 winning Mayo minor team) visited the school for training sessions each week in May. Peter McDonnell and Killala FC have also kindly allowed us to use their astro pitch for training sessions during the term.

The team took part in the Cumann na mBunscol 'Small Schools Blitz' on May 31st at the GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. The players also sat a GAA exam in school on Friday 3rd June and the results were fantastic. They are now ready to participate in Division 4 of Cumann na mBunscol in 2022/2023 and we look forward to seeing them progress.



We would like to thank Willie B of William Barrett Buses who brought our GAA Team and Management to and from the Small Schools Blitz free of charge. We would also like to thank Martin Harrison of Harrisons Pharmacy Ballina who very generously sponsored a top of the range First Aid Kit for the school. Their kindness and support is very much appreciated.

Fire Safety

Ballina Fire Brigade visited the school in June and spoke to the senior classes about fire safety in the home. Visits like these help to keep staff and children conscious of fire safety issues and are really helpful in preventing accidents.

CyberSafeKids

Michael from CyberSafeKids led workshops in the Senior and Middle Rooms as well as an evening session with parents on June 14th. The sessions offer a general overview to raise awareness of the main factors to consider around social media, gaming and the online world.





Killala Coast Guard Visit

Shaunna and Alex from the Killala Coast Guard Unit kindly visited our school on Monday June 20th. As the end of the school year is drawing closer and the weather is improving there is an increase in the amount of people getting involved in water based activities. The Coast Guard Unit is visiting schools in the local area to create a better awareness among young people of safety procedures in or around the water and also to educate on what to do if you see someone in danger.



The information session was really invaluable. The children were fascinated by all of the equipment and gear and were allowed to try things on and see how everything worked. They loved seeing the Coast Guard vehicle drive into the yard.

Play Therapy

We would like to thank Elsa O'Reilly for the wonderful work she has done with the school over the last few years. Elsa has recently qualified as a Play Therapist and has worked with a number of children individually and in groups.

Visual Arts

Teresa's Celebration Day

Following Teresa Coen's superb win in the Credit Union Art Competition we held a day of celebration to mark her achievement. The Western People as well as Credit Union officials came to the school for a photoshoot. Midwest Radio also called Teresa and Caroline for an interview live on air with Tommy Marren. Teresa did a fantastic job of representing herself and the school.



Candle of Grace

Candle of Grace is a Co. Mayo charity. Their main activity is hosting groups of Chernobyl children from Belarus in the summer for much needed rehabilitation and rest. Recently they have worked to send supplies to Ukraine to people in need there. As part of this effort they ran an art competition to raise funds. Newtownwhite participated and we had winners in the Middle and Senior Rooms. Well done to Isobel and Tom on their wins and thank you to all of the families who contributed to this good cause.



Learn Together

Europe Day



The Middle and Senior rooms participated in Europe Week on May 9th. The motto of the EU is 'United in Diversity'. Schools from all over Ireland as well as from Greece and Romania joined zoom quizzes on May 9th. Frances Fitzgerald MEP joined the zoom after the quiz to answer some of the many questions they had about Europe and the EU. The Middle Room came 3rd in the quiz out of over 40 participating schools!

Ethical Education

Many special occasions were celebrated during Term 3 including Bealtaine, International Day of Families, Wesak, International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, Europe Day, Ramadan, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Pride and much more. It's so important to us in Newtownwhite to honour and respect different cultures and beliefs so we try to mark as many of these occasions as we can.



Green-Schools

Bike Week was a great success this year!



Our bike shed was jam packed during Bike Week which was lovely to see - we have lots of keen cyclists in the school. The children also took part in a cycling obstacle course that was organised by Tracey and Caroline. Planting and growing continues in the school grounds and we hope to be able to harvest some potatoes this year.

Staff Development

Staff have undertaken training in a number of different areas during Term 3.

Caroline and Kate attended the PDST **Primary Wellbeing** seminar in May. This full day, face-to-face seminar explored the sensitive elements of RSE within the context and structure of a whole school approach to SPHE, from Junior Infants to 6th Class. Caroline attended **Misneach** leadership training in May also. Misneach provides newly appointed principals with support and guidance in their roles. Kate undertook the **Google Certified Trainer Programme** with Canopy Education which included six weeks training and exams covering all Google tools in order to demonstrate an array of skills in using Google in the Classroom.

Ciara completed Level 1 **Six Bricks** training with Miriam O'Donoghue which will be rolled out in the Junior Room in September. Six Bricks uses a set of six LEGO® DUPLO® bricks to create activities that are short, simple exercises designed to wake up the brain and get a child moving, thinking and remembering.

The whole staff participated in PDST training in June to support the implementation of the new **Primary Language Curriculum** which covers both English and Gaeilge. This training supports teachers in delivering the curriculum across all class levels.

Parents' Association & Board of Management

Parents' Association

The Parents' Association have continued to support the school during this term. The bake sale that took place over the Spring Break was a huge success and raised over €1,100 – thank you! The PA also kindly contributed refreshments for the new parents who attended the Open Morning, they treated the school to an ice cream van for the Sixth Class Graduation Day and made a contribution to the Sixth Class overnight trip. They have really spoiled us and have been a huge support to the school.

Board of Management

Thank you to the Board of Management who have continued to support the school during the 2021/2022 school year. This term they very generously funded a staff lunch from The Loft for one of our training days and they sponsored a meal for the children who attended the Sixth Class overnight trip.



Open Morning

Friday June 17th was a busy one as we welcomed new children and parents for a look around.



We were delighted to meet some of the new Junior Infants as well as some children who will be joining us in other classes in September. The children had great fun in the classrooms and in the yard and got to know the children and the staff. It was wonderful to meet our new parents and to see the children's' happy little faces as they explored their new school. Ciara gave a presentation about the school and what to expect in September and the PA provided refreshments. Hopefully the children will be less nervous now about starting Big School in a couple of months.



Graduation

We said goodbye to our wonderful Sixth Class on Tuesday June 21st.

Orla, Emily, Paul, Tom and Diarmuid will be moving on to secondary school in September. Harry joined us today to celebrate with his old classmates. This group were in Junior Infants in 2014 when Newtownwhite moved to the patronage of Educate Together. They are therefore the first children in Mayo to attend an Educate Together from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.



The day was really special - each child read out a motivational quote that inspires them and they received a personalised book full of photos of themselves and their classmates over the years. There was a short ceremony to hand out sports day medals and Caroline gave a moving speech. The day ended with an ice-cream van which the whole school enjoyed. It was a lovely way to end the year and we sincerely wish our graduates the very best of luck - we will miss them deeply.

Congratulations to Kate!

Well done to Kate on her recent appointment as Deputy Principal!

We are delighted to have Kate officially join the leadership team at Newtownwhite ETNS. Kate will continue in her SET role as well as working alongside Caroline as Deputy Principal.



School's Out for Summer!

Thank you to all of our wonderful families for the support and kindness you have shown during the year. We hope you have a wonderful summer and we will see you after the break!

