

# Winter Newsletter

Newtownwhite Educate Together National School



## Merry Everything and Happy Always!

We would like to begin our Winter Newsletter by wishing our wonderful school community a very happy holiday.

We hope that however you celebrate you enjoy it. We would also like to thank parents and guardians for your continued support in

another very challenging school term.

## Winter Performances



In line with Covid-19 guidelines we have recorded our winter performances again this year in lieu of an in-person show. The videos will be sent home this week. Children enjoyed learning about Kwanzaa, Hanukkah and Christmas while preparing their performances. We hope you enjoy them!

## Staffing Updates

### CAROLINE

We welcomed Caroline back from her maternity leave in November - she was greatly missed by staff and children alike.

### ELAINE

With Linda on career break this year Elaine has joined the SNA team and we are delighted to have her.

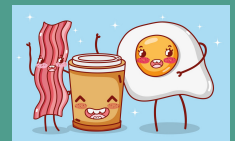
### GARETH

Gareth did a fantastic job covering Caroline's maternity leave and he is missed by all. We wish him the best of luck in the future.



### January 2022

We are due to welcome children back at 09:10am on Thursday January 6th 2022



### Breakfast Club

We will be offering a breakfast club when we return to school from 08:15am every morning. You can contact the school to book a place.



### Enrolments Now Open

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

## Board of Management

### Gerry McKeivitt (Educate Together) appointed as new Chairperson

Following the departure of Martha O'Shaughnessy as our Board of Management Chairperson we are pleased to let you know that Gerry McKeivitt from Educate Together has joined us as our new Chairperson. Gerry first became involved in Educate Together in the late 1990s, as a parent member of the campaign group which resulted in the opening of Swords ETNS. He became involved in the organisation as a volunteer, and later was the first New Schools Officer to be appointed to the national office in 2007. We are very lucky to have someone with such a wealth of Educate Together experience join our team.



## Junior Entrepreneur Programme

### The Senior Room are taking part in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme (JEP) for 2021/2022



JEP has given more than 80,000 primary school pupils around Ireland the opportunity to experience practical, real-life business learning. JEP runs over a 12 to 16 week period and nurtures creativity, independence and problem-solving among pupils of all abilities.

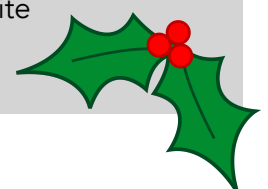
Children worked in groups to create a product and a business plan. Groups pitched to local business man Peter McDonnell as well as Tracey and Kate. The groups presented their ideas professionally and eloquently. The winning group was 'JR's AAA Birdhouses' and the win was well deserved. Congratulations to Jack, Ryan, Aaron, Adam and Alastair.



## Christmas Cards



The children took part once again in the Christmas Cards for Schools Programme. They designed their own Christmas cards and grown-ups at home had the opportunity to purchase packs of these cards. This is an important fundraising event for the school so we would like to thank all of the families who purchased packs of cards this year. The standard of design on some of the cards was so high that the staff ordered mixed packs for ourselves and are delighted to be able to share the talents of the children of Newtownwhite ETNS with our own friends and families.



## Arts Updates

### November trip to the Ballina Arts Centre

With restrictions lifting a little bit earlier in the term we were able to take the school to the Ballina Arts Centre to see the live production of 'The Ghost of Canterville' based on Oscar Wilde's short story for children. This was the first school trip the children had been on in a long time. It made for a suitably spooky return from the Halloween break and a great day was had by all!



### Drama

We have been so lucky to have had Martha O'Shaughnessy, our former Board of Management Chairperson, teaching drama in the Middle Room for the last few weeks. The children have loved it and Martha will be working with the Junior and Senior Rooms following the Winter Break.

### Dance

As part of our Creative Schools work the Middle Room took part in the Lift Off Dance workshop with dance artist Catherine Donnelly. Catherine is an independent dance artist with a wide variety of organisations, age groups and abilities. Based in the West of Ireland, since 2000, Catherine is interested in facilitating opportunities for participants, especially those new to dance, to explore movement and dance, engage with the art-form and in a creative process using the body as medium. Children really got a lot out of the sessions.



### Visual Arts

We have such creative children in the school. This is just a small sample of the art that has been completed since September - their winter pieces. Children have enjoyed a whole host of projects this term and we have loved watching their creativity blossom.

## Green Schools

### Newtownwhite's 10th Green Flag secured

We were delighted to have had our Green Schools Flag renewed for this year. This was our 10th Green Flag! Tracey and the Green Schools Committee worked really hard to make this happen. They are currently working towards the Global Citizenship Food and Biodiversity Flag, which is a 2 year programme. The Green Schools Committee had their first meeting on this during this term.



In addition to this we were granted a brand new bike shed from Green Schools which has proved equally popular for playing in as for parking bikes! Children are continuing to cycle to school where possible and enjoyed taking part in National Bike Week in September.

## Mind Me Mind You

### Mind Me Mind You programme rolling out in all rooms beginning in January



Mind Me Mind You

The programme is designed in line with the well-being curriculum to support teachers in building the foundations of good mental health education and well-being in children. It fosters the creation of healthy relationships, personal development and skills central to maintaining future health and well-being.

Now more than ever, children are dealing with complex challenges which significantly impact their well-being. This child-centred programme promotes resilience and social and emotional competence, equipping children with the knowledge and skills needed to address a multitude of life situations throughout their development.

## Covid-19 Update



As we enter the Winter Break we would like to acknowledge the uncertainty around Covid-19 and particularly the Omicron variant. We are planning for a normal reopening after the break on Thursday January 6th 2022. We are sending textbooks home with children as a precautionary measure so that in the event of a delayed reopening children will have their books at home. We will communicate to homes as soon as we have any new guidance from the HSE or the Department of Education.

## Student Achievements

### Credit Union Art Competition



We are so proud of the three children in the Senior Room who won prizes in this year's Credit Union Art Competition. The theme for this year was 'Imagine' and the winners produced some really impressive pieces of work. Teresa Coen won 1st prize and Lucy Murphy won 2nd prize in the 8-10 years category. Emily Murray won 3rd prize in the 11-13 year old category. Congratulations to all!

### Primary Planet

Each month children from 2nd class upwards receive a copy of the Newsflash and Primary Planet magazines. The magazines are packed full of interesting articles, facts and activities and the children really enjoy them. Our very own Ryan Murray from the Senior Room had his article published in the October issue! Well done Ryan!



### All-Ireland Final Art Competition



In the run up to the All-Ireland Final in September the children took part in an art competition run by Connolly's in Ballina. There was steep competition from many local schools however our very own Sophie and Orla Petrie were the lucky winners!

## That's a wrap!

We would once again like to thank our truly wonderful school community for the support and understanding you have shown this year. We really appreciate you. We wish you a safe and happy break and look forward to seeing everyone in the new year.



Please Support by texting 'EDUCATE' to 50300 to donate €6.



**Educate Together**

Text costs €6. Educate Together will receive a minimum of €5.40.  
Service Provider: LIKECHARITY.  
Helpline: 076 6805278.