**Christmas Newsletter 2015**



Dear Parents

As we approach the end of another Calendar Year, we reflect in this Christmas Newsletter on all the activities we have been involved in from September to Christmas 2015. It has been a very busy time for everyone in school, as you will read below. Sincere thanks to the staff, pupils and parents for all their co-operation and support. It is much appreciated.

Le gach dea-ghuí i gcomhair na Nollag is na h-athbhliana

Mrs. Fitzpatrick

**New Junior Infants**

Our new junior infants have settled in really well and have had a busy term!

They have enjoyed an introduction to gymnastics, lots of art and crafts, science experiments and displays, whole school assemblies, a jumble sale, trips to Mass, singing, performing, dressing up, playing, learning and having fun.

The junior room have been visited by a cheeky ‘elf on the shelf’ for the month of December - we named her Belle and we have had great fun finding her in many different spots each morning; she even ate a chocolate coin and was watching us from inside a poly pocket one day!

We went to see ‘A hippo for Christmas’ the pantomime in Portlaoise, which we all really enjoyed, we even got to enjoy the dry day by stopping off in the playground in Stradbally on our way back to school; A huge thank you to Mrs. Fitzpatrick for organising the trip and the funding for it, very much appreciated by Mrs. O’Carroll and the whole junior room.

We were very excited when we got video messages from Santa Claus and even more excited to find out that we are all on the nice list this year - some of us had to work a little harder than others to make it onto the nice list and Mrs. O’Carroll was very proud when we all got there, well done junior room!

**New Resource Teacher**

Welcome to Mrs. Louise Ryan who has joined us this year as our Resource Teacher.

**New Website**

Our new school website is fantastic and the teachers are delighted to have the opportunity to put photos and notes up there to showcase some of the activities we get up to in the school. It is also great to keep parents informed of upcoming events, policies and achievements. So don’t forget to visit the website - [www.arlesnationalschool.ie](http://www.arlesnationalschool.ie)

**Cumann na mBunscol**

Well done to Arles Girls who reached the Semi-Final this year and to Arles Boys who reached the Final in O’Moore Park. Unfortunately, luck wasn’t on our side this year but the boys played very well and did their best. Thank you to Denise Fenlon and Eddie Mulhall for training the teams again this year.

**Peace Proms**

We have begun practicing this year's peace proms songs, We will be putting a link (to the actions that accompany some of the songs) on the school website so any pupils who wish to practice over the Christmas holidays are welcome to do so. It will be important that all pupils try to make it to all practices after the holidays so that we are prepared for our workshop in February!

**Visit from Irish Defence Forces**

On Tuesday 22nd September, we welcomed 2 Officers from the Irish Defence Forces. They both presented the National Flag and a copy of the 1916 Proclamation to the school. Throughout this school year, we will be involved in the 1916 Commemorations as outlined by the Department of Education & Skills. All schools will raise the National Flag on 15th March 2016.

**St. Abban’s Athletics Cross Country Event**

Congratulations to all the pupils who won medals at the Cross Country Event in St. Abban’s on Thursday 17th September. It was a very successful and most enjoyable event.

**Students Council**

Congratulations to our newly elected Students Council: Abby Waters, Darragh Kealy, Maeve Mahon, Gabriel O’Shea, Maya Brennan, Sophia Hislop, Luke Donohoe and Niall Kealy.

**Drumming Workshops**

We are delighted that Arles N.S. are taking part in the Music Generation Programme this year. Every week, for 20 weeks, Eddie O’Neill will do 2 Samba Drumming Workshops; one with the Middle Room and another with the Senior Room. This is a fantastic opportunity for the children, and will be very beneficial to them. The children thoroughly enjoyed the One Day Workshop by Eddie O’Neill two years ago, that was funded by the Parents Association. Although this programme is partially subsidised, the school will need to fundraise during the year to pay for it. The first Drumming Workshop started on Wednesday 16th September.

**Glór Ceatharlach Art Winners**

Congratulations to 2 of our pupils who came 2nd in the recent Glór Ceatharlach Féile an Fhómhair Art Competition! Well done to Harry Byrne and Sophie Kennedy.

**Halloween Walk**

Thank you to all the Parents who helped organise and supported the Halloween Walk on Sunday 1st November. It is very much appreciated. A great time was had by all.

**Comic Drawing Workshop**

3rd and 4th class went to a Comic Drawing Workshop by author Alan Nolan in Ballylinan Library on Friday 23rd October. Many thanks to Niamh Boyce in Ballylinan Library for inviting us over. The children thought it was fantastic and they learned alot.

**GOAL Jersey Day**

We raised €100 this year for GOAL. Thanks to all who supported it.

**School Mass**

We had our School Mass on Monday 19th October at 10am in Arles Church.

**Tag Rugby Blitz**

Thank you to Wesley, our Tag Rugby Coach, who came to our school on Wednesday 14th October to do a Tag Rugby Blitz with 2nd-6th Classes.

**Science Week**

The junior room conducted some experiments involving colours and mixing them in different ways; We put smarties in water and compared how the colour spread to water with drops of food colouring in it - food colouring mixes completely and the colour from the smarties didn’t mix because of the sugar content. We also caught a rainbow by adding primary colours of food colouring to milk in 3 separate spots and washing up liquid in the middle (stops the colours mixing completely and creates a rainbow effect on the top of the milk). 1st class did an amazing job of demonstrating and explaining our experiments to other classes, teachers and parents and we all very much enjoyed interacting with the other classes and discussing their experiments. We had a great time being scientists!

The Middle Room also exhibited their Volcano experiments and had great fun doing it. The Senior Room displayed their projects for the Mini Scientist Competition. Thank you to the parents who came to see all the displays. Science Week was great fun and everybody learned something new.

**Mini Scientist**

Well done to 4th 5th and 6th classes who took part in this year’s Mini Scientist Competition. The judge from Intel came to the school today and chose the following winners:

1st: Keelin Kelly, Clare Miller, Hannah Regan: “What are Chemicals?”

2nd: Sophie Kennedy, Darragh Kealy ; Does PH in Soil Matter?

3rd: Méabh Gallagher, Caoimhe Morrissey, Katie Graham : “What are Taste Buds?”

Keelin,Clare and Hannah went to the Regional Finals and represented Arles NS in this year’s Mini Scientist Competition. Well done girls!

**Gymnastics**

Thanks to Allison Miller for coming in for 8 weeks to teach the children gymnastics. The children really enjoy it.

**Active Schools Committee**

Congratulations to our newly elected Active Schools Committee: Sophie Kennedy, Jordan Donohoe, Aodhan Lowry, Katie Graham, Eoin Mulhall, Aoife O’Shea, Ella Conway and Jack Behan.

**Jumble Sale**

On Friday 27th November Arles school held a Jumble sale to raise funds for the Drumming Workshops for the Middle and Senior Rooms and for the Junior Room trip to the Theatre on Thursday 17th December. €1000 was raised which was great. Many thanks to all the parents who helped and supported us on the day.

**Welcome back to Ms. Mahon**

We welcomed back Ms. Mahon from her maternity leave on Monday 30th November.

**Laois Heritage Essay Competition**

Congratulations to Aodhán Lowry and Simon George who came 2nd in this year’s Laois Heritage Essay Competition. They wrote an essay on Ballyadams Castle.Well done boys!

**The Christmas Shoebox Appeal**

Thanks to everyone who supported the shoebox appeal. 56 boxes were collected. Well done to all.

**Christmas Carol Service**

We had our Christmas Carol Service on Tuesday 15th December at 1.30pm in Arles Church. Thank you to Fr. Padraig for leading it and to all the staff who helped with organising the children and the church. The stars of the Carol Service were the pupils who sang beautifully, played musical instruments, played the drums,read and dressed up for the Nativity. It was a great success and well done to all.