**St. Kevin’s G.N.S. Summer Newsletter**

**School News**

**Sponsored Walk**

Our sponsored walk took place on Friday 1st of June and theme was ‘Mini Minions!’. All students walked from the schools to Tymon Park. There was even ice-cream and an obstacle race between the teachers from the Boys’ and Girls’ schools. The winner was debatable! A huge thank you to the Parents’ Association for all the hard work in organising a fantastic event and thank you to the Gardaí from Tallaght Garda Station for helping us cross the road safely throughout the event. The final amount raised was €6,000 between the two schools. Many thanks for all the support.

**Fighting Words.**

Over the past three weeks, ninety pupils from Fourth to Sixth Class participated in a ‘Fighting Words’, a creative writing workshop established by author Roddy Doyle. It took place in Glencree, Co. Wicklow. It was a really worthwhile opportunity. Each child worked together on the start of a collaborative storybook which they brought back to school to complete on their own. We are looking forward to seeing ninety different stories displayed at our next assembly.

***Jolly Phonics***

The Jolly Phonics programme was implemented for the first time this year in Junior and Senior Infants. It is an interactive and child focused programme that all three classes have thoroughly enjoyed using this year. The girls have learnt all their sounds through music, action and voice. They have also learnt a selection of ‘Tricky Words’ and will carry on with the programme in September.

This first year of Jolly Phonics has provided great learning for both teachers and students and we look forward to continuing it in September.

***Aistear***

Both Junior and Senior Infant classes partook in Aistear from October to June. It focuses on active learning, play and hands-on experiences and holistic learning and development. The girls work through 4 different stations each week. These include drama and role-play, construction, Art, Mathematical skills, phonics skills etc.

Each month focuses on a specific theme. A variety of themes were covered throughout the year. These include:

* At the hotel
* In the restaurant
* In the hair salon
* The doctor’s surgery

Aistear develops social skills, and confidence; it encourages the girls to share, take turns and listen to each other. The small group interactions allow for great learning experiences.

**1st Class Pen Pals**

Ms. Garvey’s class recently wrote and received Pen Pal letters from a class in Meath. It was fantastic for the girls to build relationships with their pen pals over the couple of weeks. Pictures available on the school website.

**Dublin Bus Art Competition**

Well done to all the girls who participated in the Dublin Bus Art Competition. We are pleased o say that three winners were chosen from 4th and 5th Class. They were Nela Kanclerz, Erin Rave, Leah Coughlan and Elizabete Krivenoka. The winners will travel to a special awards ceremony on Thursday the 21st of June to receive their prizes.

**Third Class News**

Third Class attended a stained glass workshop in St. Patrick’s Cathedral in March and really enjoyed their outing. While learning about the postal system, they wrote letters to family members and posted them on a trip to the local Post Office.

**Fire Engine Visit**

Last week we were very fortunate to have a fire engine visit us from Tallaght Fire Station. All the junior classes had a chance to jump on-board and see a working fire engine and ask questions. Thank you to all in Tallaght Fire Station who facilitated the visit especially Darren Donovan, father of Aoibhe and Ella.

**Abbott/Science Fest**

Ciara Hayes from Abbott visited Third and Fourth Classes in June. The pupils enjoyed the various STEM and problem-solving activities provided by Abbott. Perhaps future careers in Science and Engineering beckon!

**Student Council**

Well done to all the girls who took part in the student council during this school year. Student council is a great way for students to become involved in affairs of the school and has really benefitted the school this year, representing their classes, organising a booklet for the 40th anniversary of St. Kevin’s church and organising art competitions to name a few! Thank you to Ms. Crimmins and Ms. McEnroe who volunteered their time in facilitating the student council at lunchtimes.

**Our World Competition**

Fifth Class recently participated in the ‘Our World’ competition, which is based on ‘Global Goals’: A film based on achieving the worldwide goal for equality in education by 2020. The girls in Sixth Class wrote and recorded their own song ‘Time for Change’ as part of the competition. Well done Fifth Class!

**Debating**

For the second year in succession we entered the Concern Primary Schools’ Debating. This year we entered a Fifth and Sixth Class team. We debated against several schools in the Leinster area and our debaters advanced to the two semi-finals which unfortunately both teams narrowly lost. However we were extremely proud of our pupils. Take a bow Captain Bronagh McEvoy, Erin Sweeney and Sarah Louise Finn in Sixth and Captain Saoirse McLoughlin, Emma Gaffney Clarke and Caoimhe Curtis. Ms. Kenny and Ms. Norton ran debate club every Wednesday after school during the first two terms and will be on the look-out for next year’s debating stars in September.

As you can appreciate transport costs to and from various events are fairly substantial so even though children are asked for contributions, we will have to look at some fundraising to offset costs in new school year.

**School Calendar**

The school calendar for 2018/2019 is available to view on the school website.

**School Improvement**

The focus of the school’s self-evaluation and school improvement plan is to sustain and build

the high levels of teaching and learning in the school. The staff, in fulfilling the recommendations in the Whole School Evaluation report, prioritised Writing Genres as the first target in the School Improvement Plan. Teaching and Learning were the areas selected.

**Schools Excellent Project: Digital**

St. Kevin’s G.N.S. has been chosen to participate in a Department of Education and Skills Digital ‘School Excellence Project’ as part of a cluster of schools. Over 200 schools in 32 clusters have been chosen nationwide and each cluster of schools will receive funding over the course of the project. This project will also be integrated into our next School Self Evaluation chosen area in September.

Our project comprises of five primary schools and is entitled “Creative Problem Solving and Digital Education in 21st Century Teaching, Learning and Assessment”. It seeks to encourage creative problem solving through abstract, environmental and physical mathematics, through the use of technology, mathematics in the environment and robotics. We hope this project will be a positive and worthwhile way to develop problem-solving skills and other skills associated with Mathematics for the children in the school.

Staff are currently drafting a new P.E. plan to be implemented in the coming school of 2018/2019 in accordance with Department of Education and Skills guidelines. Don’t be surprised if P.E. features in your child’s homework next term.

**School Year 2017-2018**

Literacy: Our theme was teacher practice and we selected teaching approaches. Our evaluation criteria were learning outcomes in three writing genres (narrative, report and recount). These expected outcomes were achieved during lessons. There was a progression in pupils’ learning as they moved from class level to the next. Curriculum appropriate teaching and learning methodologies, with a focus on the seven-step approach were incorporated into lesson structure. These steps include familiarisation with the genre, analysing the genre framework, modelled writing, shared writing, guided writing, independent writing and presentation to an audience.

Each class teacher from Junior Infants to Sixth Class tracked three children, three times during the year using the developmental indicators for the different classes, using the framework for the various genres. Samples from each class were filed and progress was monitored. Writing samples were displayed on noticeboards and children presented their work at assemblies throughout the school year. The varying needs and abilities were catered for in the course of the lessons through the use of differentiation. Teachers enabled pupils to use relevant and necessary resources including ICT to support their learning. Learning outcomes were shared with the pupils regarding outcomes, criteria and feedback. These assessment outcomes were analysed and used to inform subsequent learning experiences for pupils. There was purposeful development achieved in the three writing genres selected for the year 2017-2018 as indicated in the samples of writing completed by the pupils and displayed on the Writing Noticeboard.

**Music**

St. Kevin’s Girls’ School has always had a strong tradition of involvement in musical events and this year has been no different. In fact there seems to have been more than ever going on in the music department.

**School Musical**

As you are aware our show this year was Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and all in attendance at the show agreed it was a roaring success and testament to the depth of talent among our pupils. The pupils in Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Class put in hours of rehearsals and battled through everything the weather could throw at them to put the show together. It had a special significance as it was Ms. Dignam’s first show as school principal. A special thanks to all the 1st class girls who gave up their time each night to act so brilliantly in the opening scene! Indeed it was a great team effort by everyone on the staff of St. Kevin’s. We are very lucky to have so many talented people on staff who are happy to give their time and expertise to the school. A special thanks to Ms. McCarthy and Ms. Collins, who led the production of Joseph.

DVDs of the Tuesday night and Thursday night’s performances of the show are still available to purchase for €10 each.

**Laudate**

Ms. Collins and her Fifth Class pupils loved preparing this liturgical programme. Their favourite songs included Shizohamba Naye and Shout for Joy. They took part in the festival in St. Colmcille’s Church, Knocklyon on Sunday 29th January. It was a beautiful performance by all involved. Well done Fifth Class.

**Peace Proms**

Fifth Class and Ms. Collins were not content to rest on their laurels and shortly after their Laudate performance they were busy preparing for the Peace Proms. Fifth loved the repertoire particularly Reach for the Stars and the Disney and ‘Hairspray’ Medleys. They were delighted to work with conductor Greg Bearshell and they performed with lots of other schools in the RDS in February.

**Liturgical Choirs**

All our our sacramental ceremonies were greatly enhanced by our school choir again this year. Teachers and pupils from Fourth to Sixth worked hard during the year to provide the music for the First Holy Communion, Service of Light and Confirmation ceremonies. We are very grateful that our pupils gave up their own time to participate in the First Communion and Service of Light choirs- a very special candlelit ceremony which takes place as part of the Sixth Class preparation for Confirmation.

Thank you to Ms. Collins, Ms. McCarthy and Ms. Dignam for preparing the choir so well for the ceremonies.

**Sacramental Classes**

Congratulations to all the girls in Second Class who made their First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 12th. They were a credit to their families and to their two teachers Ms. Crimmins and Ms. O’Flaherty. Both teachers along with Sr. Marion ensured their pupils were well prepared to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion this year. The girls in both Second Classes contributed a whopping €890 of their Communion money to the Laura Lynn Foundation. Jane from Laura Lynn came into school on Thursday June 14th to thank the girls for their generosity and to explain how the money will be spent.

Congratulations are also due to Ms. Forde’s Sixth Class who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on April 12th. Ms. Forde and Sr. Marion worked hard to ensure it was a meaningful experience for all the girls. We are very fortunate that Sr. Marion is so generous with her time and effort to work with our class teachers on the preparation of our pupils to receive these sacraments.

**Sporting Events**

**Soccer Blitz in Irishtown**

Two school teams competed in the F.A.I. Spar Soccer Blitz. Both teams played very well against stiff opposition but didn’t advance beyond group stages. Paul Murray and Damien Power from Kilnamanagh A.F.C. trained the soccer squad every Friday after school from January to March. Ms. Norton and Ms. Kenny provided supervision during training. We are very grateful to both coaches for their time and expertise and we were very fortunate to be allowed to use the club’s facilities to train the teams. Paul selected the two teams and the local club provided the jerseys. Paul has since donated a set of soccer jerseys to the school which he said were thanks to Kilnamanagh A.F.C. and Danny Fleet in particular.

**SDCC Cross Country Event**

Ten children from each class from Third to Sixth were given the opportunity to compete in a series of cross country races. There were three local events and one huge event for all south Dublin schools who had participated. Thanks to all the class teachers, Learning Support Teachers, S.N.A.s and Sharon O’Neill who lent their support. Well done to Caoimhe Curtis in Fifth Class who represented our school in the Dublin Champion’s Final and took sixth place in a hotly contested race.

**Basketball**

Congratulations to Ms. Forde’s Sixth Class basketball girls who combined with the boys to win the annual tournament organised by the Gardaí in Tallaght Garda Station. It was the first occasion in years that the schools recorded a win. The trophy is on display in our trophy cabinet at the moment.

**Olympic Handball**

Well done to Mrs. Monahan who trained and selected our handball teams. She organised Danish coach Mads to take coaching sessions during P.E. time and at break-time every Wednesday. Both the U11 and U13 teams competed in a blitz held in Gormanstown last February. They played in lots of games recording wins, losses and draws during a very entertaining day. The U11s narrowly lost out in the semi-finals. Trials for next year’s teams have already begun every Wednesday at lunchtime.

**G.A.A.**

Pat Devoy from St Kevin’s Killian’s GAA Club, Ms. McCormack and Ms. Kenny set up our first ever school football team and competed in a series of challenge match with local schools. We also have started camogie with Tony from Faugh’s GAA Club and the plan is to enter a Gaelic Football and a Camogie Team in the 2018/19 Cumann na mBunscoil competitions.

**Active Week 2018**

We marked the week with daily walks at 8:50 by junior classes and daily jogs at 10:40 by seniors. Lots of equipment was distributed during the 12 o’clock break. Whole school dancing took place at 12:30. Finally new P.E. equipment was ordered and arrived just in time for Sports’ Day in June. We were really fortunate that the weather was beautiful and everything ran so smoothly.

**Active Flag**

Discussions have opened with Carol Dunning (a past pupil of St. Kevin’s) about Active Flag activities for next year. She is a local coordinator and we are planning to work with Carol to achieve our Active School Flag.

**School Tours**

**Junior Infants & Senior Infants**

Junior and Senior Infants had a wonderful time on their school tour to Lullymore Farm on Friday the 15th June 2018. They played outside in the playground and inside in the indoor play zone. They went on a train all around the bog and went to the petting farm to see the horses, chickens, goats, rabbits and even a Bolivian alpaca. They even got to visit a fairy forest and make a wish at the wishing tree. The girls really enjoyed the day.

**1st Class & Second Class**

1st class & 2nd class went to Airfield Farm on their school tour. They learned about lots of different plants and animals and all about biodiversity. The girls got to plant their own seeds, drink fresh milk and they even caught some frogs!

**3rd Class & 4th Class**

3rd and 4th class will be travelling into Dublin city centre on their exciting school tour to see David Walliam’s play ‘Gangsta Granny’ in the Olympia Theatre. 3rd class then will then visit Dublinia and the 4th classes will go to St. Patrick’s Cathedral on what is expected to be a great day out!

**5th Class & 6th Class**

5th and 6th class travelled to Bay Sports in Athlone for their school tour on the 31st May 2018. It was such a fantastic day. The girls participated in team building activities, raft building, inflatable water courses and pedal-boating. There may have also been a trip to Applegreen on the way home!

Wishing everyone a very happy and safe summer.

Ms. Dignam & Staff