

# St. Kevin's G.N.S.

## Spring Newsletter 2019



### **St. Kevin's Girls Sing on RTE Radio 1**

In December, some of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class girls were invited to sing Christmas Carols on the Christmas edition of 'The Business Show' on RTE Radio One. The girls sang three Christmas Carols on air and some were even interviewed live on air about toys they would like to see invented in the future. As usual, they were an absolute credit to themselves and the school. Well done girls!

### **Fundraising for the Capuchin Day Centre**

Well done to all the girls and their families who donated to our shoebox appeal in December, in aid of the Capuchin Day Centre for the homeless run by Brother Kevin in Dublin City Centre. A whopping 119 shoeboxes, filled with day-to-day supplies for those who are homeless, along with donations of food were collected during the appeal! They were collected by Fr. Bryan Shorthall this afternoon on behalf of the Capuchin Day Centre. Thank you to all who generously contributed and supported us during this appeal.

### **Dublin Bus Art Competition**

Huge congratulations to Fifth Class pupils Elizabete and Leah, whose beautiful art work is on the January and March Pages of the Dublin Bus calendar for 2019. They attended a lovely presentation ceremony in November with their mummies and teacher Ms. Kelly. Well done girls.

### **Engineers' Week**

In March, St. Kevin's G.N.S. celebrated Engineers Week in Ireland, which was a nationwide event that sought to promote engineering activities and careers to young people in Ireland. To celebrate the week the Second and Third classes were given the option of completing a small engineering project in place of some of their normal homework. On Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> March, those students presented their projects as part of an Engineering Fair. We were blown away by the standard of projects and the knowledge of the girls who took part. There was such a variety of wonderful engineering projects. Have a look at the pictures below to see some of them and our winners from each class. We definitely have future engineers in our midst!

### **Sixth Class at the BTYSTE Primary Science Fair**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of January, eight girls from Sixth Class, along with some of their classmates, travelled to the RDS to present their project 'Can a BBC Microbit improve student engagement in Mathematics?' at the Primary Science Fair in the BT Young Scientists' and Technology Exhibition. After many hours of planning, preparing, experimenting, debugging and analysing, they confidently presented their computer science project to the

many interested spectators and classes who had travelled to the BTYSTE. The girls even had a special visitor, the in form of Katherine Zappone, our local TD and the minister for Children and Youth Affairs, who especially came to the Primary Science Fair to visit the girls' stand.

### **ESB Science Blast**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> March, eight Sixth Class girls had the amazing opportunity to once again present a science project at the ESB Science Blast in the RDS, Dublin. The ESB Science Blast was an exciting non-competitive event where primary school students showcase a variety of STEM projects. The girls received many visitors to their stand and explained their project 'Can a Microbit Improve Student Engagement in Mathematics' so well. The girls received a lovely trophy for display in our trophy cabinet as well! The Science Blast was an amazing opportunity to see science in action and expose our students to science. We're looking forward to next year's event already!

### **Girls in ICT Day in Microsoft DreamSpace**

On Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, a number of Fifth and Sixth Class students travelled to Microsoft's DreamSpace in Leopardstown to take part a 'Girls in ICT' day. The 'Girls in ICT' day was focused on encouraging girls to pursue a career/ further education in STEM, and to excite and educate future female leaders in the endless possibilities in the tech industry. During the day, the girls took part in many fun educational activities in technology, received a tour of the Microsoft campus, listened to female leaders in technology and more. The day was in sync with the international #MakeWhatsNext campaign, where Microsoft inspire girls worldwide to pursue science, technology, engineering and Math to change the world for the better. Well done to the girls who represented the school so well during the day.

### **Sacramental Classes**

#### **Confirmation**

Congratulations to Ms. Collins' Sixth Class who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April. Ms. Collins, Ms. Dignam along with Father Michael, Natalie and staff throughout the school worked hard to ensure it was a meaningful experience for all the girls.

A special thanks to the teachers and pupils from Fourth to Sixth Class, who worked hard to provide music for the Second Class' First Confession, Service of Light and Confirmation ceremonies. We are very grateful that our pupils gave up their own time to participate in these ceremonies and made them even more special. Thank you to Ms. Collins, Ms. McCarthy, Ms. Garvey and Ms. Dignam for preparing the choir so well for the ceremonies.

#### **Communion/First Confession**

Well done to Ms. Garvey's Second Class who celebrated First Confession on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. A special thanks to Ms. Garvey, Ms. Dignam, Fr. Michael and Natalie who prepared them so well for the sacrament.

First Communion for Second Class will take place on Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> May and preparations are already underway with the girls.

### **Friendship Week**

This week was Friendship week in St. Kevin's G.N.S.

Friendship Week is Amnesty International Ireland's annual human rights education and fundraising event, developed specifically for primary schools. To celebrate the week, classes in St. Kevin's participated in a number of Friendship Week activities and games, including a whole school assembly, team games and tasks, making friendship Easter Eggs, fort building, trips to the playground, friendship artwork, songs and more. Members of the Student Council sold friendship bracelets to raise funds for Amnesty International. The motto of Friendship Week is "Have a friend, be a friend." All pupils were encouraged to put this motto into action. Well done to all the classes involved!

### **Aistear**

Junior and Senior Infants have continued their great work in Aistear this term. In January, we were 'At the Hairdressers'. The girls had such a great time doing each other's hair in the salon and had great fun trying on the different wigs! In February our theme was 'The Supermarket'. We set up the socio-dramatic play area with aisles and cash registers and the children were able to go around with a shopping trolley or basket and buy their items. March brought us to the clothes shop! I think this is always a firm favourite with the children as they get to try on different outfits including shoes and we had great fun looking at all the different 'fashion-statements' that they come up with. Lastly, this month we were 'At the Hotel'. There was lots of new vocabulary for the children with this theme as they got to pretend to be receptionists, concierges and guests in our make-believe hotel equipped with everything they might see including a paddling pool! Please remember to look at our website to view photos from our Aistear sessions.

Junior and Senior Infants also got the opportunity to work with the Beebots. They absolutely loved learning how the Beebots worked and needed to use many problem-solving skills to control them. They had such a fantastic time working in pairs and making their own mazes out of the Jago blocks where they had to use the controls to guide the Beebots through the maze. Well done Infants!

### **Third Class Pen-pals**

Ms. Crimmins' class recently wrote and received pen-pal letters from a class in Spain. It was fantastic for the girls to build relationships with their pen-pals over the couple of weeks.

### **eTwinning**

Miss Forde's Third Class and Ms. Kenny's Fourth Class are taking part in an eTwinning project with a school in France. eTwinning is an online community for schools in Europe and offers a platform for children and schools across many European countries to communicate, collaborate, develop projects, share and, in short, feel and be part of an exciting learning community in Europe.

This project involves sharing and comparing aspects of Irish and French culture including through music, video, dance, architecture and traditions. It is hoped then that the French students will then visit St. Kevin's G.N.S. in Spring 2019, as part of a school tour to Dublin.

## **Numeracy**

### **School Self Evaluation (SSE)**

As you may already know, one of St. Kevin's G.N.S.'s chosen School Self Evaluation areas is 'Improving Problem-Solving Skills in Mathematics Through the Use of Digital Technologies in Teaching and Learning'. Stage Four of the School Self Evaluation process (Write and Share Report and Improvement Plan) is now near completion. The next stage of the S.S.E. process is Stage Five (Put Improvement Plan into Action) will formally commence after the Easter holidays.

From Easter to the Summer Holidays, in addition to problem-solving strategies in place in the classes, all students will explore Maths in the Environment through using their 'Maths Eyes' in and outside of the classroom. We hope to organise Maths' Trails and activities to explore the importance to seeing the value of Maths outside of the classroom and in everyday life.

### **Digital School Excellence Project**

We have made great progress on our Digital Schools' Excellence Project this term. Our project is linked to our School Self Evaluation process and aims to improve creative problem-solving skills through digital technologies in teaching and learning practices in our school.

This term, Junior classes used programmable robots called Beebots in Maths, Aistear and other areas, while middle and senior classes used physical problem-solving equipment called Izak9 Cubes to develop Mathematical skills.

In conjunction with the School Self Evaluation Improvement Plan, staff in St. Kevin's have drafted a Digital Learning Framework for the area, to assist teachers and the school in purposefully integrating the problem-solving and digital equipment into the classroom and school.

### **Third Class Visit Microsoft DreamSpace**

As part of the Digital Schools' Excellence Project, six students from Third Class were invited to visit Microsoft Ireland's new educational experience 'DreamSpace' on the 1<sup>st</sup> April. This visit proved to be a very enjoyable day and it was fantastic to see our students once again voicing their opinions and showing their talents in STEM. The girls started off the day with a visit to Holy Trinity Primary School in The Gallops, to meet with students from other partner schools in the cluster. After a morning of problem-solving and technology activities, the girls travelled to Microsoft where they learned about the use of artificial intelligence, received a tour of the campus, participated in a number of fun activities and more. The girls were commended for their interest and enthusiasm for technology and were invited back for another visit soon. Check out the school's twitter account for lovely photographs of the occasion.

### **Parents' Association**

Once again, our amazing Parents' Association organised a cake sale on Tuesday, 14th February in aid of the school. There was a cake/cupcake competition on the day. Many thanks to all the members for their continuous involvement and hard work. The Parents' Association were aided on the day by members of our Students' Council.

### **National Children's Choir**

After many practices and hard work, Fifth and Sixth Class performed in the National Children's Choir on Friday the 5th of April in the National Basketball Arena. The girls performed sixteen intricate songs in English, Irish, Latin, Swahili and even Medieval Latin! One of the girls' favourite pieces was 'Listen to the Rain' where the girls used body percussion to create the sound of a rainstorm.

The National Children's Choir was a fantastic experience. Our students learned so much about singing and gained a new appreciation for music. Well done to all the girls who worked incredibly hard since autumn, in preparation for the jaw-dropping performance this month.

### **Sport**

#### **Soccer**

We are very lucky to benefit from the expertise of two highly qualified soccer coaches Paul Murray and Damien Power. Pupils from Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes were invited by the two coaches to participate in training sessions each Thursday on K.A.F.C. astro facilities. Each Thursday after school, they turned up to train in every weather condition imaginable! Their dedication paid off as the senior team recently qualified to participate in the Dublin Finals on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Anyone who was in attendance knows what a major feat it was to emerge as the top team of more than twenty teams competing in Irishtown. The school entered two teams in the five -a -side blitz and both school teams were skillful and determined. They were a credit to their school, club and families. Thank you to K.A.F.C. for the use of their facilities, to Paul and Damien and to everyone who turned out to support them. Best of luck to the eight players who have advanced to the Dublin Finals.

The school are also involved in an 11 -a -side league and have kicked off their campaign with a draw and a win.

Paul Murray was also in school during the month of February to offer soccer coaching to classes from Junior Infants to Fourth Classes. The F.A.I ran an art competition in conjunction with the soccer sessions to highlight the K.A.F.C. soccer academy for young players on Saturday mornings. The girls won lots of great prizes including soccer balls and kits.

#### **G.A.A.**

We were fortunate to have Eamonn Gillen from our local G.A.A. club St. Kevin's Killian's coaching various classes in the skills of Gaelic football. We hope to build on the achievements of our 2018 team and Eamonn is going to help with the training and selection of our next team which will begin competitive Cumann na mBunscol matches in September 2019 .

#### **Camogie**

With Coach Eamonn's help, our first ever camogie team began their Cumann na mBunscol league campaign with a draw in March and a win in April. We were very proud of the girls'

performance and we are looking forward to their next game in May. Thank you to all who came out to support the fledgling team.

### **Rugby**

The girls in Third and Fourth Class enjoyed tag rugby taster sessions by Joey Redmond, a Rugby Ireland coach during each Wednesday in the month of March.

### **Debating**

For the third year in succession, our school participated in the Concern Primary Debate Competition. The motions debated with great passion were very challenging and thought-provoking. Issues such as climate change, recycling, food waste were researched by our super debate panel who regularly gave up their yard time or after school time to prepare for the inter-school debates. The team of Captain Emma Gaffney-Clarke, Caoimhe McGuire and Sorcha McLoughlin along with panelists Caoimhe Curtis, Erin Rave and Caitlin Fleet progressed all the way to the Dublin Finals which were held in The Dublin Civic Offices. In the end they were defeated by team from St. Francis Xavier on the motion Food Waste Should Be Made Illegal. Even if they had won, we could not have been prouder of the team. They will always be the first team from St. Kevin's G.N.S. to have become Dublin Debating Finalists.

### **Writing Genres**

Since Christmas all classes have engaged in writing tasks in both the procedural and persuasive genres. Samples of pupils' work are displayed on the noticeboard.

### **Sixth Class Education Passport**

An education passport for each pupil in Sixth Class will be sent to the relevant secondary school following confirmation of enrolment. Parents will fill in the parent passport form for their daughter in the coming weeks and the pupils will fill in the student passport form.

### **Testing Schedule**

It is important that pupils attend school during the weeks of 13<sup>th</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> May as our testing schedule is in place for this period.

### **School Inclusion Therapy Demonstration Project**

The school has participated in the demonstration project involving multi-disciplinary supports including speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. It has proved to be a very beneficial and positive experience. We hope to participate in this project for a further year.

### **Public Library**

The mobile library recently visited our school under a new collaborative approach. They provide information for primary schools and parents. The library also provides ongoing library programmes and initiatives i.e. The National Summer Stars Reading Programme and Family Time. The Summer Stars Reading Adventure runs throughout the summer and is a fun reading programme open to all children who register with their local library.

### **NALA (National Adult Literacy Agency)**

NALA offers help and advice for parents who have difficulty with reading, spelling, mathematics and writing. They have a freephone number 1800 20 2065 or a website [www.takethefirststep.ie](http://www.takethefirststep.ie). People can learn with their local ETB adult education service online through NALA's distance learning service. All services are free. NALA also has a useful website for parents called [www.helpmychildrenlearn.ie](http://www.helpmychildrenlearn.ie). It provides suggestions for activities parents can use to help their children develop literacy and numeracy skills. The website has general information, fun activities and useful tips that parents can integrate into their day.

### **Catholic Schools' Week**

Catholic Schools Week 2019 took place in St. Kevin's G.N.S. from January 27th to February 3rd. This year's theme was 'Catholic Schools: Celebrating the Work of Our Local Catholic Schools'. During Catholic Schools' Week, classes in St. Kevin's participated in a week of celebration and reflection and took part in a whole school Prayer Service.

### **Healthy Lunch Policy**

In St. Kevin's, we like to encourage all our pupils to adhere to our healthy lunch policy. We recommend lots of fruit and vegetables and regularly remind our pupils to try wholegrain or "brown" options such as brown bread, rice or pasta. Our S.P.HE. lessons reinforce the message of healthy lifestyle choices, so we are delighted to roll out the new three-year cycle or the latest **Food Dudes' Healthy Eating Programme**. The programme is based on positive role models (Food Dudes characters), repeated tasting of fresh fruit and vegetables and rewards. It is designed to create a healthy eating culture within schools and homes. Members of our Active School Committee will help administer the programme and will distribute the fruit and vegetables to classes each day.

Phase 1 will begin on Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup> for Junior Infants, Senior Infants and First Class. It will continue for sixteen days until May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The rest of the classes will begin the programme on May 14<sup>th</sup>. During phase 1, the pupils sample one fruit and vegetable each day. Please encourage your child to try a cupped handful of the fruit or vegetable. They will be rewarded with stickers or prizes. They are also encouraged to keep a diary of the fruit and vegetables they eat at home. The programme will be explained in greater detail in a letter each child will bring home. Thank you in advance for all your cooperation implementing this programme.

### **School Tours**

**Junior and Senior Infants -Sealife Bray and Zoom Greystones on Friday June 14<sup>th</sup>**

**First and Second Classes –Pine Forest on Friday May 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Third and Fourth Classes –Explorium on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June**

**Fifth and Sixth Classes-Bay Sports on Friday June 6<sup>th</sup>**

### **Educational Trips**

#### **Fifth Class**

Both Fifth Classes enjoyed an excellent trip into town to visit St. Patrick's Cathedral where they participated in a medieval writing workshop using quills. They also enjoyed the opportunity to build an arch using sensory cushions. Afterwards they continued onto

Christchurch Cathedral for an insight into the history of this iconic building. They also were given a guided tour of the cathedral's crypts.

#### **Fourth Class**

Fourth Class have been studying the flora and fauna of the world's rainforests particularly the Amazon rainforests and so on Thursday April 11<sup>th</sup> they headed off to Dublin Zoo to enjoy the Rainforest Rangers' Tour. The girls threw themselves into the experience and the school received an email from the zoo complimenting the pupils on their enthusiasm and knowledge.

#### **Fundraising**

##### **Run for Rita**

Run for Rita is a well-established annual charity event run by the family and friends of Rita Savage. This year both the boys' and girls' school were the fortunate recipients of some of the funds raised during the event. The proceeds of a raffle were donated to the school and the money (€1,240) will be used to provide sport equipment including basketball hoops for the school. We also donated some of the money raised to Crumlin Children's Hospital.

##### **Bag-packing**

A great team effort by both parents and teachers during a bag-packing weekend in Dunnes Stores raised 2,340. We greatly appreciate parents donating their time to the school to help fund the many extra-curricular activities offered by the school.

##### **Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Day**

We highlighted awareness of cystic fibrosis during our assembly on Friday April 12<sup>th</sup>. The children in Second and Third Classes collaborated to create a beautiful poster of sixty-five roses to represent this condition.

##### **Active School Week**

Officially this fun-filled week is on the week of May 7-10<sup>th</sup> but in St. Kevin's we aim to build exercise into our school day every day! We will increase opportunities to get active in May and June. Our Active School Committee will be extremely busy organising lots of fun and activity in the months ahead.

##### **School Website and Twitter**

Keep up to date with school news, events and more through our school website [www.stkevinsgns.com](http://www.stkevinsgns.com) and our school Twitter page [www.twitter.com/stkevinsgns](https://www.twitter.com/stkevinsgns)