



Allen National School Newsletter

2024/2025 Issue 8

October 29th 2024

Thank You so Much from All of Us

Down through the years we have always enjoyed a fantastic culture of parental support for all our fundraising activities, however, the October Bank Holiday weekend, surpassed all our expectations.

It began on Friday the 25th with our first ever sponsored 'Witches and Wizards Pupil Walk'. Dressed in amazing costumes – many made by the children themselves - the pupils' walk wound its way into every corner of the local community bringing a colourful, carnival atmosphere to family members, neighbours and friends. Stopping along the route to share a song, the children all enjoyed meeting parents and cheering up onlookers. When they returned, they had an opportunity to admire each other's costumes before attending Halloween parties in their classrooms. Parents, family members, friends and neighbours had all sponsored the children and an amazing €2,500 was raised by Friday at 2:30pm!. This money will go towards the purchase of a new set of ipads for the school. The Board and staff would like to thank all who sponsored the children for their very generous support.



ABC Run

On Monday, October 28th parents and members of the local community turned out again in large numbers to participate in the ABC Run organised by Ballyteague GFC and Allen NS and sponsored by a range of local businesses

The event consisted of a 10K run, a 5K run and a 3K Family Fun Run, with all proceeds going to support participation in sport in Alan National School and The Little Larks in Ballyteague GFC. Sean O'Rourke helped warm up the runners and Fr Willie Byrne got them off to a flying start down the Barrow Blueway.



Fastest times were achieved by:
Grace Reilly and Rob McCabe - 10K Run
Ellen Moran and Philip Quinn - 5 K Run
Eimear Byrne and Oisín Reilly - U16 5K Run
Katie Moran and Charlie McCabe - U12 5K Run
Grace Mooney and Robbie McCabe - U7 3K Run
Fastest Teacher: Mr Dickinson



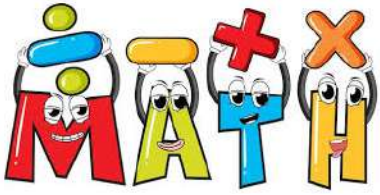
Some pupils from Allen NS ensured the runners had a spooky Halloween experience. Along the route they were joined by the Headless Horseman (Heidi Freeman) and four spell bearing witches (Mila Mooney, Aine Byrne, Angela Marsella and Ella Mai Heaney) who tried to entice them off the route for Halloween pranks!!

Prizes were presented by Marie Jacob, Chairperson Ballyteague GFC and Perpetua McDonagh, Principal, Allen NS. Both thanked everyone for their participation and support on the day and paid tribute to all involved for a very well organised event. Jason Mooney who had co-ordinated the organisation of the event; the many local volunteers who had helped in marking the route, ensuring the registration process had run efficiently and, who served refreshments; all who donated 'tasty treats' to re-energise the athletes after the run; the members of an Garda Síochána who were present and to the team at Just Runs Events for their guidance and support.

Ryan and Max Webb were on hand to proudly present trophies to the winners of the U16 Run which was held in memory of their late sister, Hannah Webb (RIP).

A lovely morning was had by all.





News from the Classrooms

Numeracy - New Primary Mathematics Curriculum

On Monday October 7th, all teaching staff attended Continuing Professional Development in relation to the New Primary Mathematics Curriculum. The training was held in Kildare Education Centre.

The overarching aim of the new curriculum is the development of children's mathematical proficiency. There is not a lot of change to 'what' children will be learning but, greater emphasis is being placed on 'how' children learn. There is greater recognition that each child moves at their own pace. The new curriculum provides teachers with the flexibility to teach to the level and ability of the child as opposed to a predetermined class level. Teachers are asked to select playful and engaging learning experiences which harness the motivation, strengths needs and interests of their pupils. Greater emphasis is being placed on the use of concrete materials, on discussion during maths lessons and, investigations to explore number and logic.

Assessment tools will include feedback, portfolios, tasks, summative and formative assessments, observations, questioning and conferencing.

The training was provided by Oide and our teaching team found it very informative and helpful.

Mr McNally is coordinating the introduction of the new approaches across the school and we will provide more information on the New Mathematics Curriculum in our classrooms over the coming weeks.

Maths Week 2024



Maths Week is an international event which promotes positive attitudes towards maths and highlights, the importance and use of maths in our everyday lives. It is one of four national STEM festivals and is the largest maths festival in the world! Pupils from Allen National School took part in Maths Week with their teachers from the 12th to the 20th of October. All our pupils qualified for Maths Certificates of Achievement! Well done everyone!!!



School Self Evaluation – Numeracy

This year staff are placing a specific focus on numeracy as part of our School Self Evaluation (SSE) process. A sample of parents, pupils and staff were surveyed at the end of the last school year to establish their thoughts and opinions relating to the teaching and learning of mathematics in our school. The results have been analysed in the context of the rollout of the New Primary Mathematics Curriculum. Mr McNally has co-ordinated the development of our Numeracy School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2024-26. A key focus is the improvement of the understanding of maths language across our school community. A key objective is the standardisation of the language of maths used in all classes. Staff have been working since September to revise our Whole School Maths Plan and to integrate specific mathematics language to be used incrementally at each class level. Going forward, this will be combined with the introduction of new approaches to teaching mathematics, including the use of digital resources and devices. Our Numeracy SIP 2024-26 will be available shortly on our website and class teachers will keep parents informed of the language being used in the classes.

Delightfully Spooky Art

Have a look at a sample of our seasonal art from 3rd, 4th and 6th class pupils.



Pupil Art used in Code of Behaviour Poster

In the 2023/24 school year a lot of work was undertaken to revise our Code of Behaviour, to refocus on encouraging and supporting a better understanding of how positive behaviour supports teaching and learning, wellbeing and positive experiences. Our Code contains 8 Steps for Success. To develop an accessible and pupil-friendly version of the 8 Steps we held a Pupil Art Competition. The work of the winners (seen here in the photo) was used to create a poster for each classroom. Just look how professional it is!!

Well done to all involved.



The school is alive with the sound of music

Great feedback from pupils, parents, neighbours and friends to our pilot Morning Listening and Responding activity. A decision has been taken to continue the activity as we are hearing it is 'putting everyone in good form for the day!' Feel free to sing and/or dance along!!

Music Generation Kildare – instrumental instruction continues with all classes and to assist our pupils with the reading of Music, Ms Brennan has engaged with a graphic designer to assist us in developing some child friendly posters, recommended by Catherine Dumphy during our staff CPD recently. The result is amazing!! The work is with the printers at the moment. All will be revealed!



Library News – Are you our next Word Millionaire? The search is on!

At this time of year, we activate the Accelerated Reading App on the ipads for all the children. Reading for pleasure is a gift for life. Beginning next week, teachers will be taking their classes to the library to borrow books to read during their leisure time in school and at home. Pupils will take quizzes on the books they read and will earn points. Words read will be tracked and the hunt is on for our next Word Millionaire and for the class who will have read the most words.



Ty is back in school!!

We are delighted to inform you that Ty, our therapy dog and his owner Dolly, have returned to school! He did extend his summer break and told us he thought school started back at Halloween – we didn't really believe that!! He called this week to see all the boys and girls and to let us know he is very excited to be coming back on Wednesdays. This year he really wants to focus on his reading and has asked if he could work closely with one class each term. We can't wait to see what the children will teach him!!



Wellbeing Promotion and Policy Development

In line with the Department of Education Guidelines, the Board together with management and staff have been working for the last number of years, to improve our policies, practices and procedures to better support and promote the health and wellbeing of our pupils.



During October, surveys were conducted with staff, pupils and parents to gather information relating to current practice in the key areas of wellbeing promotion and physical activity. Many thanks to all who participated in the surveys. The information is now being analysed and is informing judgements in relation to practices that are already effective and is helping to identify areas that need to be improved. From the analysis we will be identifying an area of wellbeing promotion to focus attention on. We will then engage the School Self Evaluation (SSE) process to develop our Wellbeing School Improvement Plan, to include the development of a Whole School Wellbeing Promotion Policy, during this school year. We will keep you informed of our progress.

Assembly Programme

Ms Ni Chaoimh, Ms Brett and Mr Dickinson are coordinating our Assembly Programme for the current school year. During the present term, classes are attending in groups of two. Key skills being developed include listening skills, concentration and attention skills, presentation skills, turn taking, recognising and celebrating achievement, acknowledgement of effort, understanding the importance of respect, diversity, empathy and kindness. This, together with a healthy injection of fun, laughter and song, makes Friday Morning Assembly an event not to be missed!



Class Assembly



Student Council

Our Student Council is up and running again and is coordinated by Ms Conway. The term of the present Council continues until the February mid-term break. The pupils have one year to be members of the Council. Two pupils from each class from Junior Infants to 6th form the Council. The Council works to represent the pupil voice; to identify improvements that can be made in the school; contributes to policy formation; identifies and undertakes projects and promotes volunteerism, friendship, inclusion and fund raising activities.



Board of Management

The Board of Management met a number of times since the end of the last school year. The Board is working on a number of substantial projects. A Board Report will issue shortly.



News from the PTA



The PTA held its AGM on Wednesday 23rd October and the following were elected as Officers for 2024/2025:

Chairperson: Sinead Thorpe
Assistant Chairperson: Siobhán Doyle
Secretary: Sharon Heaney
Assistant Secretary: Noel Mc Kenna
Treasurer: David Boyce
Assistant Treasurer: Emma Grogan
Teacher Reps: Perpetua Mc Donagh, Michael Mc Nally

PTA Halloween Disco

The PTA would like to sincerely thank everyone who attended and/or bought raffle tickets at the annual PTA Halloween Disco. In particular, they wish to thank the very generous members of our school community who donated spooktacular prizes for the raffle. Your generosity knows no bounds. Also, thanks to DJ Owen Fagan who had the roof rocking and a great night was had by all.



FUN FACTS

Fun Facts

TOPIC: HUMAN BODY



There are a billion bacteria in your mouth at anytime!	Fingernails can grow four times faster than toenails.	You fart on average 14 times a day, & each fart travels from your body at 7 mph.	Did you know it is impossible to lick your own elbow?!
Human eyes are made of nearly 2 million working parts.	Human blood is as salty as the ocean. Weird but true...	Most people fall asleep in seven minutes.	Every minute, your entire blood passes through your heart!
Your heart is about the same size as your fist.	Humans are the only animals with chins.	You can't smell anything while asleep!	The human body is made up of about 724 trillion cells!

Allen National School

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