



### St Annin's Parents Association Desk:

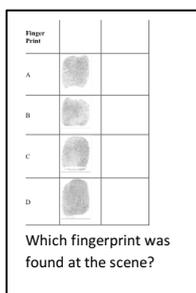
Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2017/2018 school year. We are now nearly into the Christmas holidays and we hope you are all excited about the Christmas festivities and Christmas concert.

The PA committee and parents of St Annin's students have had a busy time since the start of the term. We are very fortunate to be part of a receptive school community whereby parents give their time and help effortlessly for the best possible education of our children. Below we have outlined some wonderful events that parents have been involved in during the last few months.

### Science Week

During science week parents organized and facilitated a Forensic Science workshop to Senior Infants, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> classes. The workshop was geared towards introducing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) to children using fun, engaging and hands-on activities. A crime scene was set up and children used observational skills to find clues to help them work out "Who stole Farmer Joes horse?" They went on to learn and practice a variety of skills, identifying and looking at their own fingerprints using hand lens, identifying and measuring shoe prints left at the scene, using microscopes to identify fibres found at the scene, carrying out chemical reactions to identify a powder found at the scene, and trying to identify which pen was used to write the ransom note. It was a fantastic day! Students used these skills and clues to investigate, problem-solve and identify the culprit. The children were completely enthused, motivated and engaged with the workshop, they loved being practically involved and coming out with results.

We also visited Junior Infants and thanks to "Under the Microscope," students gained skills on how to use a microscope and had a blast looking up-close at creatures they found in the undergrowth. Under The Microscope is a microscopy outreach programme based at NUI, Galway designed to promote and explore core STEM skills for children in primary school in a fun and educational environment (<https://www.nuigalway.ie/medicine-nursing-and-health-sciences/medicine/disciplines/anatomy/outreach/>). We would like to thank the teachers and principal for letting us



come into the school and being so accommodating and thank you to Lorna for helping us. Hopefully we have inspired the next generation of Irish scientists. Laura, Helen, Jessica and Steve.

### Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal

This year the school community participated in the Christmas Shoebox appeal. All the classes contributed by bringing into school completed shoeboxes. The children really enjoyed this and experienced how they can give back to the community. The generosity of everyone involved was outstanding.

### Porridge Week

At the beginning of term we had porridge week. This was an initiative that was run by the Parents Association and initiated by the school to promote breakfast and healthy eating. It was a complete success and involved the whole school. Each class was given the opportunity to try some porridge with honey and fruit of their choice. They also got to try yummy fruit smoothies. From the feedback from parents we were told that we had converted some non-porridge eaters!!

### National Parents Council

The National Parents Council NPC website - [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie) is a valuable resource for all parents. (Rita Woodings rep) We hope to run some courses for parents at the school during the next term and will advise in due course.

As always if you would like to contact the PA you can reach us by email [stanninpa@gmail.com](mailto:stanninpa@gmail.com). Alternatively you can contact your class reps for information or to share any ideas you may have for the school in person or via the Whatsapp groups.

**And Finally** – We would like to sincerely thank the teachers, class-room assistants, principal and administrative staff of St Annins for their remarkable dedication to our childrens education.

This is also the last newsletter before Mr Sheehan departure, the PA would like to thank Mr Sheehan for his hard work, care of our children, engagement with the PA and progress made with the school. We wish him and Catriona all the best in their move to his native Cork.

### Dates for the Diary

**Christmas holidays:** School closes December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12 noon and re-opens Monday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2018.

**Confirmation:** Tuesday April 24<sup>th</sup> 2018

**NPC course (as above):** To be advised

**Safer Cycling Initiative:** To be advised



**Ó Pheann an Mháistir:**

From the Master's Pen.



**Ó Pheann an Mháistir**

Nollaig 2017

**An sneachta ag titim**

**Is an oíche fuar,**

**Is Máthair Dé**

**Gan foithin ón bhfuacht.**

**Isteach i stábla**

**Ón sneachta chuaigh,**

**Is chuir sí íosa**

**Sa mhainséar crua.**

**Bó agus asal**

**Sa stábla bhí,**

**Ag faire an Linbh**

**Ar feadh na hoíche.**

**Chan na haingil**

**Thuas sa spéir,**

**“Moladh le híosa,**

**Ard-mhac Dé”.**

The Christmas season and spirit is upon us once again as we move closer to December 25<sup>th</sup> and the end of the school term – the old Irish poem carefully sets the scene for the times ahead.

The school year to date has been filled with great excitement, energy and happiness.

Our Junior Infant pupils have settled very well and have again had a bright start with a County First Prize in the Someone Like Me Art Competition and a marvellous trip to Dublin also on December 4<sup>th</sup> last – Maith Sibh.

Our Christmas Show ‘A Home for Christmas’ encapsulates the Christmas spirit and I thank all those who made the Show possible for their efforts. The talent pool of our pupils and teachers is a great joy to see in action and brings together our community at this time every year.

The MindUp programme has been a significant addition to our classrooms since September last and we look forward

to the continued roll out and development of this programme, with special gratitude to Breda Kyne and Steve Lane for their input.

The school community has been greatly saddened at the passing of Donal McGuire of Killola and we extend our sympathy and support to Martha our colleague here in school and to Dean, Aaron, Adam & Lia on their loss – Suaimhneas Síoraí Dó.

Our Annual Christmas Mass takes place on Thursday morning at 9am in the Church and our Christmas Hamper Raffle takes place on Thursday at 1pm in the school. Please return your cards by Thursday morning at the latest.

I wish you all a pleasant and restful Christmas and remind you that the school closes on this Friday December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12 noon and reopens on Monday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2018.

Le gach deá – ghuí don Nollaig agus na hAthbliana.

Marc Ó Síocháin.

Príomhoide.

**From the Teachers' Desks:**

**Junior Infants: Ms. Rushe & Ms. Ryan**  
**Class Rep: Jackie Hart: 0872472394**

Our new infants have settled in brilliantly to life in St. Annin's. They have become accustomed to the routines of school and working really well in their classrooms with their teachers Miss Rushe and Miss Ryan. This year we continue with our aistear programme and the children have enjoyed learning through thematic-based play. We are currently working on the theme of 'Christmas' and have covered 'Autumn', 'At the Restaurant', 'The Farm' and 'At the Hospital' in previous weeks. The children are also busy blending their sounds each night to make words as part of the Jolly Phonics programme. Junior Infants love to get homework (long may it last) and are completing their work each night with great care. Most importantly, the children are mixing well with their peers and forming new friendships every day in school.

Junior Infants (for the second year in a row) received super news a few weeks ago from the Department of Justice. Our art project was judged to be the best in county Galway in the 'Someone Like Me' competition. We submitted a fabric and fabric entry in which each child made and decorated their own puppet. We also made a puppet with a hearing impairment and learned about hearing difficulties. The children came up with ideas as to how we could help a child with hearing difficulties in our school. On Monday 5th December the two Junior Infants teachers, Veronica, Patrick and their Mums travelled to Dublin on the train and attended the prize-giving ceremony in City Hall. There they collected a framed certificate and 300 euro worth of one-



for-all vouchers for the school. A great day was had by all. Well done boys and girls – what a wonderful achievement. Outside of all of the above our Junior Infants took part in a science workshop during science week where they searched for bugs and examined their findings under microscopes. The children really enjoyed this and many thanks to Laura and Helen from NUIG for this wonderful learning experience. We were also treated to a talk on native Irish mammals from Carol from Connemara National Park recently. The children were delighted to get the opportunity to see and pet real stuffed animals (badger, otter, pine martin, mink, stoat, hare, hedgehog, squirrel and fox).

Miss Rushes' Junior Infants were highly commended in a Halloween Art competition run by Aughnanure Castle. They entered a wanted poster which included witches, wizards and monsters and were thrilled with their prize of sweets to share among the class.

We are currently busy practising our songs and rhymes for our Christmas show. We take this opportunity to thank all the parents for their co-operation and support since September and wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas.

Mary Ryan & Aisling Rushe



### **Senior Infants: Ms Faherty**

**Class Rep: Nessa Phelan: 0873542923**

Senior Infants have settled in very well to school this term. We are really enjoying being in a bigger class in Room 2 and have made lots of new friends.

The day is very busy in Senior Infants; we love to dance and move in the mornings before settling down to work. Maximo from GoNoodle has become a superstar in Senior Infants and is very impressed with our groovy moves to the Chicken Dance, the Maxarena (Macarena) and Can't Stop the Feeling (Troll dance). We have maxed out 5 champions so far and we love following Coach Terry's ten minute workouts. We also like to relax and stretch our muscles after lots of energetic dancing. Our 'Brain Breaks' also help us to relax and be mindful of ourselves and our environment. We are completing two brain breaks daily and we really enjoy the calmness of the room during these breaks. We have been discussing various ways to relax while at the same time learning all about the parts of the brain and their functions-the PFC, the hippocampus and the amygdala and the affect they have on our learning and

emotions. We can't wait for further lessons in the New Year!

We have different leaders each day to help teacher with her jobs and we look forward to the days when we are helping. At the moment, we are busy learning our new tricky words, creating sentences and writing our news independently. Maths games we love to play are 'Battles' and '12s'; we love to see who the different winners are each day.

Autumn was lots of fun in Senior Infants. We collected leaves for our leaf rubbings. Lots of children went on nature walks at home and brought in many items for our class nature table; colourful leaves, conkers, helicopters, acorns, berries, apples and moss were some of the many items that were collected. We used all of these items to decorate our class tree and we painted bright, colourful autumn pictures. Our favourites were the trees we painted with cotton buds. We had so much fun. We celebrated Halloween in school and had fun dressing up in our scariest costumes. We played Halloween games and made Chocolate apples.

After our Midterm break, we were very busy. We celebrated Science week by completing some experiments in our classroom such as floating and sinking and movement experiments. Next, the computer room was transformed into a crime scene by scientists from NUIG. We had to become forensic scientists to investigate and research the crime scene where Brownie the horse went missing from. We had to investigate fingerprints, footprints, fibres and ink patterns that were left at the crime scene. With lots of research, team work and co-operation, we solved the mystery of Brownie the missing horse!

In November, Carol from Connemara National Park visited us and showed us some native stuffed animals. We saw a badger, a squirrel, a stoat, a hedgehog, a fox, a mink, a pine martin, an otter and a hare. We got to touch all the animals and learned about the job of a taxidermist. It was very interesting!

We also learned all about winter and the changes that occur during winter. We brought in lots of items for our theme table. We created lots of winter art and we also learned Christmas is celebrated during winter. We made Christmas trees and Christmas decorations with clay! We enjoyed learning about all of the





traditions associated with Christmas. On 6<sup>th</sup> December we visited Brigid's Garden for a Christmas Show. We met Santa and it was a brilliant and enjoyable experience for all involved. In our classroom, we decorated our Christmas tree and Christmas table. A helpful elf assisted us with our work during December! We were also busy practicing for our Christmas show in the Community Centre and our practice paid off—we were superstars on the stage singing all of our favourite Christmas songs. It was a wonderful night! There are some more treats in-store before the holidays and we can't wait to celebrate!

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and every blessing in 2018! Nollaig Shona dhaoibh go léir!!!

**Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year from all  
in Senior Infants!!!**

### **First Class: Ms Madden**

**Class Rep: Louise Gavin: 0879753001**

Rang 1 have had a very busy first term! We settled back to school and have gotten used to our longer school day! We were thrilled to welcome two new girls to our class, Aoife and Amber. Both of the girls have settled into Rang 1 and we are delighted they are now part of St. Annins National School. We all hope they will be really happy here.

We are busy continuing to work on our reading and showing great improvement! We now do a Spelling and Tables Tests on Fridays too. We love playing 'Beat the Teacher' in a weekly tables challenge!

This year all of St. Annin's are participating in the Mind-Up programme. This means that as well as learning about the different parts of the brain, we take regular brain breaks during the school day. We have all worked hard at getting used to the brain breaks and find it is helping to slow things down and they are helping with our concentration levels too!

Science Week marked a visit from four parents from NUIG. We took part in a workshop, as forensic scientists. This was lots of fun and Fingerprint and Footprint Analysis were just some of the areas we took part in.

Rang 6 also invited us to along to their classroom, where they had a huge amount of experiments on display. We loved listening about each experiment.

As part of our Social Environmental and Scientific Education, we enjoyed a visit from Carol Reynolds of the Connemara National Park. We learned about many Irish Mammals, some of which can be seen around the Rosscahill area. We have just completed projects on a

mammal of our choice and are enjoying presenting them to our peers.

We have had lots of fun decorating our classroom over the past few days in the lead up to Christmas and as well as fairy lights we have Elves, Snowman and Dancing Penguins on display.

Rang 1 are very busy practicing our songs for our Christmas Show where we have joined with Junior and Senior Infants.

Rang 1 have definitely earned a well-deserved rest over the Christmas Holidays.

Wishing everyone a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

From Rang 1

### **Second Class: Ms Conway and Ms Dalton**

**Class Rep: Rosalind Du Bois: 0872178357**

Rang a Dó welcomed two new children, Serena and Leon, in September.

The children have begun the "Do This in Memory" programme in preparation for their First Holy Communion next May 26th.

Thanks to Matt Henderson, Connacht Rugby coach, who taught rugby to the class from September to Halloween. We are currently enjoying weekly swimming lessons at Leisureland.

As part of Science Week, we enjoyed learning about the job of a forensic scientist and we became crime scene investigators to solve a crime. Thanks to parents Helen, Laura, Jessica and Steve for organising a very enjoyable workshop.

Thanks to the organisers of the September Fest for donating lots of interesting books to the class library. The recent Scholastic Book Fair enabled us to add new books to our reading book scheme.

We decorated our Christmas tree last week and entered the Galway Advertiser Christmas Art Competition. We are looking forward to singing in the choir for the school's musical, Home for Christmas. We learned about homelessness, the theme of the musical this year.

### **Third Class: Ms. Costelloe**

**Class Rep: Cora O'Connor: 0868377195**

First term in 3<sup>rd</sup> class is flying by. We are so busy.



We returned to school on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> August and the following Thursday morning we were all running in Killannin Pitch. Some of us qualified to run in Dangan.

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September we had our annual induction talk on composting. 3<sup>rd</sup> Class have again risen to the challenge and are composting every week throughout the school. What a great example!

We had our beginning of the school year mass on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September. Darren, the GAA coach came and did some Gaelic skills with us.

We had a very enjoyable healthy breakfast morning on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. We enjoyed tasting porridge with lots of amazing toppings followed by yummy smoothies.

On Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October we went to Oughterard Library and had a very enjoyable hour with the cartoonist and author Aiden Courtney.

3<sup>rd</sup> Class are learning so much on the tin whistle from Muinteoir Anna.

As part of science week 3<sup>rd</sup> Class visited Brigid's Garden where we had a most informative day on learning about alternative forms of energy.

A very valuable lesson that hopefully 3<sup>rd</sup> class will carry with them.

Our swimming lessons commenced on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November. Everybody is learning so much.

For Halloween we entered the Poster Competition in Aughnanure Castle. They were amazing and we had one 1<sup>st</sup> Prize winner in our class.

On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November we had a number of scientists visit our class. We were forensic scientists for the afternoon. We all worked in teams to solve the crime. (pretend one).

Now we are in the throes of practicing for our Christmas Show. We are singing lots of songs. We are so looking forward to performing on the night.

We have had a very busy term and that is not even mentioning all the great work we are doing in all the curricular areas in class.

We would like to wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas.

### **Fourth Class: Mr O'Driscoll**

**Class Rep: Rachel Boyd : 0879692463**

We've had a very busy first term in Rang a Ceathair and can't believe that Christmas is almost upon us. We've been working hard and doing our best to improve since the start of the school year and are making great progress as a result.

**Mind Up** - The children have embraced the *Mind Up* programme that has been introduced throughout the school this term and have benefited greatly from our daily brain breaks. The programme teaches the children about the brain, how its different parts function and that we can train it to help us in a variety of situations. *Mind Up* educates the children on how to help improve their self-regulation skills, build resilience to stress and how to develop a positive mindset.

**Futsal** – A number of the children in 4<sup>th</sup> class represented the school at the Kingfisher Sports Hall of late as the school participated in the F.A.I Futsal blitz for the first time. They played very well, demonstrating a great attitude to the sport and to each other. They played against schools from all over the county and gave a very good account of themselves in all of their matches.

**Christmas Show** - We're flat out at the moment in our preparations for this year's show, *Home for Christmas* and are very much looking forward to performing it in the Community Sports Hall on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The children have been demonstrating their singing, acting and performing talents over the course of the last few weeks during rehearsals and will contribute handsomely to what should be an excellent show.

**Winter Wonderlands** - We're just over half way through our Christmas art project and if what the children have done so far is anything to go by, they will look fantastic. Working in groups of five or six, the children are planning, cooperating and helping each other in their efforts to construct winter wonderlands full of castles, reindeer, presents and whatever else their imaginations come up with! We look forward to displaying them for you their parents in the final week before the holidays.

The children have been diligent and enthusiastic about the work we've undertaken this year and are doing very well as a result. Long may it last! Nollaig Shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir!

### **Fifth Class: Ms Greene**

**Class Rep: Finola Ford : 0872907856**

Fifth Class children are enjoying being in the senior end of St Annin's as they are growing in maturity. They are now leading the way in good example for the younger classes.

We have been studying the Celts in history. The children worked in groups to produce some very interesting and colourful projects. They are on display outside our classroom. Linking up with the Celtic theme the children illustrated the story of the Children of Lir (Clann Lir) in Art class using the medium of oil pastels.



We painted some lovely autumn / winter pictures. We composed some nice Autumn poems and we have compiled them into a class book.

We enjoyed doing our individual projects on polar animals. Before mid-term we had a trip to Bridget's Garden where we learnt all about trees and how they grow. We also did a mini-beast hunt and identified many insects.

We had two fun days in Kilannin Community Centre, including a mini-basketball blitz with Tullykyne school and one with sixth class. Well done to our boys and girls who qualified for Galway finals of schools cross-country running in Renmore.

The healthy breakfast week was great fun when we got to taste delicious toppings on porridge and strawberry and orange smoothies. We had a reading week and at the end we did a book review. Michael Morpurgo was the class favourite.

We did amazing spells for Aughnanure Castle spell-book. Congratulations to Milly Roberts for winning third prize. We have begun our Christmas Art, creating Christmas trees from clay. We also entered an art competition in the Galway Advertiser.

It certainly has been a busy term!

Ita Greene

### **Sixth Class: Ms Stack**

**Class Rep: Rita Woodings: 0868609814**

6<sup>th</sup> class have had a busy first term...

We had the huge **September Fest** event to raise funds for our school. There was a barbeque, a book and toy sale and ambulances and fire trucks on display for us to explore. We could even try the microphones! We also celebrated Galways hurling win with the trophy. There were 2 bouncy houses and a crocodile bouncy castle for the kids and tea / coffee for the adults. It was so much fun.

Everyone got a chance to do the **Athletics** trials but only the top 7 from each group got through. From 6th class Ryan O' Neill, Justine Gadioux (who came 16<sup>th</sup> just missing out) and Hannah Clarke (who came 11<sup>th</sup> making it through).

During the first week of **October** in our school all the classes had a **Healthy Breakfast Week**. We watched a video about sugar and how much you should and shouldn't eat. Teacher (Losita) had an idea to get us to bring in cereal boxes of cereal to see how much sugar was in them - chocolate coco pops won as having the most sugar! We went down to the computer room to try porridge with various different toppings. We also got fruit smoothies

which were very yummy. We really enjoyed the week and thanks to the parents who made all the food.

Our **Commitment Service** was on the 15<sup>th</sup> of **October** 2017 at 12pm in Kilannin church. Our priest Fr. Martin talked about our Confirmation which will be on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2018. Ali Butler, Dasha Kelly, Abby Leonard and Amy Kelly did readings and prayers of the faithful.

In **October** Maya Joyce, Keanah Irons, Isabel Fahey, Molly Howley, Sinead Duffy, Justine Gadioux, Hannah Clarke, Sophie Fogerty, Blaithin Beatty and Leah Joyce (captain) and Coaches Mr. O Driscoll and Mr. Sheehan set out to LoughGeorge to partake in Cumann na Bunscoil mini 7s **Gaelic football** tournament. After 2 tough matches we qualified for the final, where we beat Glinsk bringing 2 trophies back for St. Annins, as well as individual medals. We were thrilled to find our picture in the Connaught tribune!

The 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class boys took part in a **Football tournament** at St. Micheals GAA pitch in Westside. They played against Moycullen, Oughterard N.S. & Thuarini, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> overall. The boys are being very well coached by Mr. O'Driscoll & Mr. Sheehan and had a great day out in Westside.

We enjoyed our trip up to **Brigits Garden**, where we were split into groups. We all played lots of games like making our own tree by having some of us being the leaves, the roots etc. We also made clay and walked into the woods blindfolded holding onto a rope. We played 'guess the leaf' and motored a water wheel, it was amazing!

During **November** Ms Greene organised a **basketball** match for boys in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class against Tuairini. Even though it was their 1<sup>st</sup> match, they played really well. We won the game! It was a great outing and something we would like to do again.

During **Science week** everyone in our class did a project, including making slime, volcanoes and lava lamps. We each loved planning our project and seeing everyone else's. We learnt a lot about different chemicals and their reactions. We would love to do it again!

Over seven Friday mornings of **November & December**, Audrey, Mary and the usual staff of Leisureland have been coaching us in **swimming**. There are 7 groups using 4 full lanes and 4 half lanes. On the last day we get to have a bit of fun on the slide and other things that they have there.

Our **School play 'Home for Christmas'** is about a homeless lady (played by Chloe Walsh), being found by 2 children (played by Tiernan Howe & Ali Butler). Losita has taught us the songs and all the actions. Mr. O'Driscoll did our auditions and is helping with our acting. Everything has



been going smoothly and everyone has been doing a great job. Everyone from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class have a part, whether they are in a harmony, the choir or a talking part. We are hoping to raise money and awareness to help the homeless on the night of the play. We have also been practicing our carols for the Christmas school mass. We hope you enjoy the show!

*Written by the students of 6<sup>th</sup> class*