

ST. JOSEPH'S NEWSLETTER

March/April 2024

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Welcome to our March/April Newsletter

Digital Schools Award



St Joseph's Primary Meigh

In recognition of the school's excellence in integrating digital technology into learning and teaching

2024



www.digitalschoolsawards.com

We are absolutely delighted to be awarded Digital Schools status. Digital Schools Awards is a national awards scheme to promote, recognise and encourage a whole school approach to the use of digital technology in schools. Following a rigorous internal self-evaluation process measured against set criteria lasting over an eighteen month period, Mr Shields submitted a detailed portfolio of evidence for scrutiny. An external validator reviewed this documentation and then followed up with a meeting to discuss and ask a series of questions to teachers, pupils and senior leadership. We had to wait a few more weeks for official confirmation but it was jubilation all around on receiving the welcome news. Needless to say, this is testament to all the hard work, commitment and dedication of all our school staff over many years to continually develop and evolve digital teaching and learning opportunities for all our pupils so that they may acquire the necessary skills and building blocks to live and succeed in these fast paced and ever changing technological age. Below is a summary from the full report which can be viewed on the school website.

“The evidence from the validation discussion confirms that St Joseph's Primary School have created an engaging and highly effective digital

technology deployment into their school's Teaching and Learning delivery across the breadth of their curriculum. They have ensured that their provision is well resourced, targeted to specific needs and that their staff are competent in order to maximise the benefit they can secure for their pupils from using digital technology. Therefore, I am pleased to recommend them for a Digital Schools Award.”



Confirmation


On Saturday 27th April our Primary 7 class received the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Joseph's Church Meigh, officiated by Rev. Canon Clyne. It was a lovely personal occasion and one that they will fondly remember in years to come. Thank you to Mrs Garvey and the P4-6 choir for the beautiful music throughout the ceremony and to Miss Niamh Dowdall for preparing the tin whistle ensemble.



On return to School on Monday, children were treated to a Confirmation party provided by and hosted by Mary Connolly. Children who sang in the choir were also treated by Mrs Garvey.



Summer Uniform

No, this is not a joke. We live in eternal optimism that it will stop raining, temperatures will rise and the sun (*we think this is what it looks like*) will eventually come out and stay for a while. 

Our uniform policy allows for the following flexibility during Term 3 if one wishes;

For girls, a light blue gingham summer dress or plain navy shorts & socks with white polo. Boys may wear plain navy shorts & socks with white polo.

P5 Cookery Demonstration

A cookery demonstrator from The Livestock and Meat Commission for Northern Ireland delivered a live cookery demonstration to our Primary 5 class recently. Curriculum areas such as Health and Wellbeing and Care for the Environment were discussed. Pupils were also educated on the farm to fork journey of Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured Beef and Lamb and how farmers are working hard every day to produce beef and lamb to the world leading standards that the NIFQAS demands. The tantalising aromas wafting from the

P5 room were too much for Mr Trainor who followed his nose like the Bisto Kid to the door. Unfortunately, he was too late as the children had ate every tasty morsal of Tikka Beef on offer. No doubt many went home to ask the cook in the house to put this on the meal planner.



Sponsored Walk

We aim to hold our annual sponsored walk fund raiser on Thursday 30th May. Parents and family members are welcome to join us on this dander.

Music/Singing & Poetry Feis

Great success at Newry Music Feis. Primary Four and Five both came first in their class recorder performances. Primary Six came a very respectable third in their recorder class and our Primary Seven finished today with a highly regarded second placing in class band/orchestra.

A number of children also entered for solo Feis and were equally successful with second and third placings.

We are extremely proud that every child from P4-P7 learn to play an instrument and get the opportunity to showcase their musical skills development to a wider audience.

We also had children from all classes enter for Poetry Feis. They had to learn a poem and recite it on stage in front of an adjudicator and large audience. We think this is a phenomenal achievement just getting on a stage on one's own but even more so for those from P2 at the young age of 5/6. 🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌



Sports Day 24

Sports Day for our children will be on Tuesday 11th June (weather permitting). Children are asked to wear an item of sportswear/t-shirt/shorts/ depicting their 'School House Colours' as they will be competing both individually and as a 'House Team' as per previous years. (*More details will follow but there is absolutely no reason to buy anything new*) Parents and family members are most welcome to attend. As usual there will be burgers, refreshments and cake stall. More information will follow closer to the time.



Trocaire Game Changers

Fantastic achievement for these four game designers (Cuillinn, Caoimhe, Anna & Miley). One of only 14 primary schools on the whole island of Ireland to reach the Trocaire Game Changer finals at The Helix Theatre, Dublin. The competition was to design 'a game' focussing on a global issue of their choice. They came away with a Special Recognition award for being the only school to design a digital game using Minecraft for Education. We are very proud of their vision, creativity, collaboration and presentation. Thank you also to Mr Shields for his inspiration, assistance and guidance. Brilliant ambassadors for our school community.



Community Spirit

When a teacher has an idea on a Tuesday, you speak to a man on a Wednesday, he begins work on a Friday and completes the job on a Monday.

No finer man than Declan Cromie. He has transformed an area of our school that can now be used for P1-P3 outdoor structured play. This is community spirit at it's best. Thank you, Declan. This will add great value to our children's learning experiences for many years to come.



Bread Man Visit

Primary 3 welcomed a very special visitor to their class to tell them all about bread and how many people relied on the Bread Man in days gone by to get their bread and other items. Many of you (or your parents/grandparents) will remember Oliver Haughey doing the rounds in his bread van. He enthralled the children with his stories, memories and artefacts that he brought with him. Many thanks Oliver for making the children's WAU topic come alive.



Volleyball Winners

In collaboration with Volleyball Ireland and Volleyball NI Five schools from the Newry and Dundalk area participated in a competition at Newry Sports Centre during March. With a total of 21 teams battling it out we were delighted to come away with First 🏆 and Third place 🏆 podium rankings. Well done to all our P7 pupils and Mr Shield's their teacher and coach. 🙌🙌🙌



Eyesight Assembly

At a special assembly we had Will and Fionn in from Specsavers who shared loads of facts about how our eyes function and the importance of good eye health and for everyone to get their eyes checked. Did you know that the Dragonfly has the most eyes in the animal kingdom and an earthworm has no eyes? Well, you do now. As the old saying goes, "If you're not learning, you're earning."



Primary 7 Transition Programme

As part of our P.D.M.U. curriculum (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) linking with the statutory requirement to teach RSE, our primary seven pupils are participating in a bespoke program called '**Preparing for Change**' designed and delivered by Joanne Callan, Founder of Changing Cycles Community Interest Company.

The '**Preparing for Change Program**' focuses on 3 main elements that will educate, empower and support primary seven pupils and their parents/carers for the changes that they will face in the years ahead.

1. Changing Schools: Building Resilience and Growth Mind-set at times of Change.

2. Changing Bodies: Understanding the changes that take place physically and emotionally.

3. Changing Friendships: Building Healthy Relationships, Healthy Communications, and understanding the power of our words and actions.

Before launch, Mrs Garvey organised a very successful P7 parent information evening with extremely positive feedback.



Primary 3 – 7 GL Assessments

We will be carrying out our end of year digital assessments, Progress Tests in English (PTE) & Progress Tests in Maths (PTM) over two weeks beginning 13th May. It is very important that all children are in attendance as these assessments are primarily used for;

- Highlight strengths and gaps in core subjects of Literacy & Numeracy
 - Reveal barriers to learning
- Identify and support children with additional educational needs
 - Provide evidence of progress
 - Deliver evidence of whole school improvement
- Directly inform teaching strategies
 - Benchmarking and target setting

Child Safeguarding Team

Please be familiar with our Child Safeguarding Team.

Mrs Brennan – Designated Teacher for SG

Ms Moley – Deputy Designated Teacher for SG

Mr Trainor – Principal SG

Fr. Clyne – Chairperson Board of Governors

Mr D. Carbery – Designated Governor for SG

(Full Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy available on school website.)



Orange Day

To celebrate Ard Mhaca getting to an Ulster Final for the second year in a row, Friday 10th May will be all garments 'Non-Uniform Orange Day.' Pupils are asked to come to school wearing their Armagh jerseys have one - DO NOT AND BUY) orange will Flags,



(only if they PLEASE GO OUT Anything do - Hats, Scarves,

Headbands. T-shirts etc. As a matter of fact, any GAA county clobber will do but not Down or Tyrone. (only joking)

Dates for Your Diary

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| 6 th May | Bank Holiday – SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 21 st May | P1 Trip Fort Evergreen |
| 27 th & 28 th May | Bank Holiday & SDD – SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 30 th May | Sponsored Walk Fundraiser |
| 3 rd - 5 th June | P7 Carlingford Residential |
| 5 th June | P2 Trip Armagh Planetarium |
| 11 th June | Sports Day |
| 13 th June | P7 Leavers' Show @ 7pm |
| 21 st June | P7 Leavers' Mass |
| 25 th June | Last Day for Breakfast & Afterschool Wraparound Care |
| 28 th June | School finishes for Summer Holidays at 11.00am |
| 1 st July | Summer Scheme x 2 weeks |