

Principal's report 3rd March 2016

Pupils

There are **419** pupils in the school, 229 boys and 190 girls.

Big difficulty getting subs

Projected numbers

We will be taking in 28 in each of the Junior Infants. We need a minimum of 411 next year and we are very likely to have more than that. There are a higher number of children with special needs coming in this year. Extra resources have been applied for in all cases that we know of. All children from old enrolment list have been offered. On 1st March we ran the Common enrolment system round 1., Each of the four schools had some spaces. We had 14. So 14 new children have been offered places. Waiting for them to accept. Round 2 will go out later in the month just before EASter holidays

Curriculum Issues

School Self Evaluation: School Planning and the Introduction of Guided reading

At the moment we are implementing vocabulary development in literacy and problem solving strategies in Numeracy. These initiatives are continuing. All children from 2nd to 6th have been individually tested and graded at levels appropriate to their instructional level. Two days a week two teachers go into each class to do reading with small groups. Going well so far.

Music Generation

Sourced ready steady sing programme Once a week high quality singing lessons, heavily subsidised U2 actually. One euro per child per week. in 2 fourth classes. 18 weeks from now to June once a **week, 680 euro paid for by the PTA. Teachers speak very highly of the course so far. If its good we will do it for two fourth classes every year.**

Eoin Shanahan from The PDST did a whole day in-service for teachers on Vocabulary Development and Phonological awareness : Very good

Mary Poppins

Auditions for main parts and rehearsals have begun on a production of Mary Poppins for the end of the year. Children from 2nd to 6th choose into it Friday afternoon rehearsals in golden time

After school clubs

Football, drama, art, keyboard, tin whistle, Irish dancing, chess, basketball.

Catholic instruction underway. Islamic instruction not happening this year.

Homework club twice a week for selected children run by Leah and Liz.

1916 Centenary Programme

March 15th has been designated Proclamation Day for all schools in Ireland. On this day there will be a flag raising ceremony, children will sing the Irish National Anthem and the actual proclamation (or part of it) will be read out. We will also be reading from our own schools "Proclamation for a New Generation" which we are working on at the moment. ^th Class are presenting an assembly/drama about 1916 to all classes from 1st to 6th

On the same day we will have our Junior ceili and Ceolchoirm and our senior ceili and ceolchoirm .

Junior Parent teacher meetings took place 9th and 10th February. All PT meetings now completed

Mobile Library coming to 3rd class 4th class and 5th class one Thursday of every month from January to June. Very lucky to get them

Commemorated the 2nd Anniversary of Paul Kilgarriff on 17th February. We had a minute's silence in the school and I read out some of the children's memories. We also decorated his tree and put up some information and photos on our school website. I contacted Paul's mother on the day and sent a message to Leo.

Focus Ireland This term our PTA and student council decided to choose Focus Ireland as our school charity. A BIG thank you to all of our school community for donating lots of toiletries, canned foods, new hats and gloves and even money to the appeal.

Last week, members from our PTA with the children from the student's council met up to make boxes for the homeless. Included in each box was shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, tea or coffee and a little treat. We also made food bags for families. A representative from Focus Ireland will come to a school assembly this week to talk to the children and to accept the donations.

Pupils council also arranging another fundraiser for a cancer charity in the near future

Green School Flag

Monday 22nd February was a very important day for our Green School Committee in Esker ETNS. We had a visit from an inspector from An Taisce. For the past two years the committee have been working towards earning our second Green flag for Energy. To earn this flag we had to prove that we could reduce the amount of energy that we use in the school. To do this we had to carry out an environmental review in October 2014 on the amount of energy that we use in the school. We then monitored this for 3 months. We had to come up with an action plan of how we were going to raise awareness and to change the attitudes of our pupils and staff to reduce the amount of energy that we used or wasted in the school. We then carried out another environmental review in October 2015 and monitored this for November and December. We did a direct comparison on these three months and found that we had used significantly less gas and electricity in the school compared to 2014, despite having more electrical appliances and more children in the school.

The inspector was very impressed with the Green School committee. She interviewed them thoroughly along with our parent reps, Virginia and Farzana. The committee showed her all their work, our notice board and all the work that separate classes have done this year. She was very impressed and commented on their knowledge on the subject and their enthusiasm and motivation to make a difference to the environment. The inspector said that she will be writing her report this week and recommending that we receive our second green flag for energy. She also commented on how clean our school was and noticed that we are maintaining our first flag – litter and waste.

Congratulations again. A great big thank you to Gemma who organised and co-ordinated the very active and enthusiastic committee, to the children, parents and teachers who made that improvements to energy efficiency throughout the school.