



O'BRENNAN NS NEWSLETTER

June 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the final newsletter of the 2023/2024 school year. It has been another exciting year here in O'Brennan with the final term seeing our pupils and staff achieve our first Amber Flag, achieving our 13th Curious Mind Award as well as earning Merit in our JEP Project. We began our hot meals programme in May and had a great time sampling some delicious hot lunches.

Thanks to Ms A O'Sullivan, Ms S O'Sullivan, Ms Horgan, Ms Foale, Ms Lane, Mr Mangan, Mr Breen, Mariola and Marian who are finishing up with us today. Wishing you all the best for the future. In September 2024 we will have 8 mainstream classes with 4 S.E.T. (Special Education Teacher) teachers, a special class teacher and 7 SNA's allocated for the academic year. These are as follows:

- Junior Infants – Mrs Jennifer O'Donnell
- Senior Infants – Ms Mary Slattery
- 1st Class – TBA
- 2nd Class – Ms Méabh Barry
- 3rd Class – Ms Kelly Carroll
- 4th Class – Ms. Andrea Brosnan/ Mrs Fiona Ryle
- 5th Class – Mr Pat O'Connor
- 6th Class – Ms Nora Buckley
- ASD class teacher - TBA
- S.E.T – Ms Michelle Broderick
- S.E.T – Ms Caoimhe Geraghty
- S.E.T. –Mrs Eileen Corridan
- S.E.T. –TBA

We will welcome back Mr Eamonn Sheehy in September.

- SNA – Regina
- SNA – Eileen
- SNA – Ann Marie
- SNA – Margaret
- SNA – Tracey
- SNA - Noel

- SNA - Anne
- SNA (part time) - TBA

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful secretary Caroline for doing such a fantastic job in the office. On behalf of the BOM of O'Brennan National School, I wish to extend thanks and gratitude to our fantastic teaching staff. Each teacher consistently shows dedication, commitment and great interest in all our pupils and their families. They go above and beyond at all times and I wish each of them a relaxing and enjoyable summer holiday. I would like to take this opportunity to wish pupils, parents, staff and wider school community a pleasant and restful summer break! Thank you all for your continued support during my time as acting principal. Welcome back to Michelle White!

We look forward to welcoming you all back on Thursday August 29th @ 9am.

Le gach dea-guí,
Mary Slattery

Arabella

It has been a wonderful last school term in the Arabella class, with lots of trips and time with our friends in Junior and Senior Infants.

All of the children loved taking part in Active Schools Week, joining Junior and Senior Infants for hurling, basketball, Taekwon Do, dance and circus skills workshops outdoors and in the halla. One of our favourite activities was joining all our friends on the yard for a dance party at lunch time!

We had a wonderful school tour at Kennedy's Pet Farm. We loved meeting all the animals, especially the lambs, goats, calves and donkeys. We had lots of fun riding the go carts, building sandcastles,

playing in the indoor and outdoor playgrounds and travelling on the bus. A special thank you to Ms. Lane, Anne and Tracey for joining us on our school tour.

This term we also enjoyed visiting Tralee Equestrian Centre for horse riding sessions. We had great fun riding, grooming and learning all about the horses. A big thank you to Orla and all the helpers at Tralee Equestrian Centre for making all our sessions such a great success and Community Garda Patricia for collecting us and taking us to our horse-riding sessions on the Community Bus.

We have also been busy in our classroom this term, learning new songs, baking up a storm, and decorating our classroom with our wonderful art based on the theme of Summer.

To finish the term, we had a Teddy Bears picnic with our friends from Junior and Senior Infants. It was lovely to sit out on the grass on such a sunny day with our friends and teddies and have a treat. We also had an ice cream treat this week to wrap up the school term.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to Anne, Tracey, Marian and Noel for all their help this year. Wishing all the children and their families, and the entire school community, a wonderful summer holiday after a successful school year!

Ms. Brennan

Junior Infants

What a fun-filled final term we have had in Junior Infants. We had lots of great outdoor activities this term. We really enjoyed going on a bus to Ballymacelligott GAA Club's pitch and learning lots of new ball skills. The ice cream at the end was a big highlight!

We have had lots of outdoor fun on the school yard too. We played with chalk and bubbles. We made obstacle courses in P.E. Our Teddy Bear's

picnic where the children brought in their own teddies and ate their lunch outside on picnic blankets, was a great event. Our class bears Barry and Rosy joined us on the picnic. It was a lovely day!

Our school tour to Kennedy' Pet farm was a highlight of the year. We learnt about so many different animals, pigs, donkeys, goats, sheep, cows, chickens, hens, ducks and geese! They even had some peacocks. The playgrounds on the farm were so much fun and the sand pit and go karts were a favourite for some of us.

In Aistear we learnt about the Fire Station and the Airport. We also had a lovely time playing with water and sand too. We played with magnets and explored how they are attracted to different materials.

In Art we made some cool Jelly fish and fish for our under the sea theme. We did drip painting and used oil pastels. We also made some lovely finger print art for our Father's Day cards.

This year our Junior Infants have begun their journey to become super readers and writers. I am so proud of how much they have learnt; I hope they are proud of themselves. They can read well and can write beautiful cursive letters. They even learnt to write their own sentences.

I have really enjoyed teaching all the children in Junior Infants this year. I wish you a lovely summer holidays and all the best for next year in Senior Infants.

Mrs. O'Donnell

Senior Infants

What a busy few months we have had here in Senior Infants. We have all been working very hard getting ready for 1st Class.

In Aistear we have learnt all about The Zoo and The Campsite. We even grew our own sunflower plants in the classroom as we celebrated the arrival of

summer.

We were very lucky to have Ms. Carey, a student teacher in our classroom for five weeks and we did some very exciting things with her. We learnt all about the zoo animals, and the Serengeti in Africa where lots of the safari animals live. We learnt about the Farm in English and Irish and we learnt the importance of safety on the farm. And as we got ready for visiting the beach during the summer we learnt about Under the Sea and ways to stay safe near the water. Ms. Carey even brought in her 2 goldfish Snap and Crackle for us to learn all about the parts of the fish.

We had dancing with Aileen every Wednesday in May and we even had a circus skills and drumming class.

In June we had Active Schools Week where we tried lots of different activities like Taekwondo, Football, Hurling, Yoga and Basketball alongside our friends Fionn, Oliver and Córa from the Arabella class. We went for a walk with the Junior Infants, had an obstacle course in the front yard and we were treated to a dance party at lunchtime on the yard. It was a fantastic week.

Our school tour to Kennedy's Pet Farm was also a brilliant day out and one of the highlights of Senior Infants. We met lots of farm animals and got to play in 3 different playgrounds with go-karts and with the sand. Safe to say we were all exhausted on the way back to school after a fantastic day exploring.

Seán B, Lily and Fíonn were our May assembly certificate winners while Robyn, Seán O'B, Ivan, Rian and Alina joined them in June. Well done to all our certificate winners this year!

I have really enjoyed teaching Senior Infants this year and I hope you all have a fantastic summer.

Best of luck in 1st Class!

Ms. A. O'Sullivan

First Class

We have had a very busy final term in First Class. We learned a new song called 'When Will My Life Begin' from the movie *Tangled* and had great fun putting dance moves to it.

In Art, we practised pointillism while painting lovely stars for our Amber Flag Committee. Our motto was 'It's A Good Day To Be Happy'. We also did some lovely Art work on the theme 'April Showers Bring May Flowers'.

During Active Schools week we learned circus skills, enjoyed football, Taekwondo, hurling, Pilates and finally had a moment of zen with a Yoga teacher!

We have loved trying the hot lunches – they have been a big success!

Water Safety has been top of our list during SESE discussions in preparation for summer holidays. We were very excited to have an ice-cream party in the classroom to celebrate all of our hard work during the year.

We had a fantastic day on our school tour in Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium. We were delighted to go to the playground afterwards, followed by a yummy ice-cream!

Well done to First Class on a great year. They are wonderful children and I am very proud of them. I hope they are proud of themselves too! Also, many thanks to the parents for your hard work and support during the year.

I hope you all have a lovely summer.

Ms S O'Sullivan

Second Class

What a fantastic few months we have had in 2nd Class. The last term has been action packed with lots of highlights along the way!

After returning to school after the Easter break,

we began preparing for the First Holy Communion Ceremony on 18th May. The Communicants worked very hard in the build up and shone brightly on the day! We are so proud of you all! Many thanks to Fr Walsh for his help in preparing the boys and girls and for such a lovely ceremony.

In May we also had dance workshops on Wednesdays from Aileen Murphy and a circus skills workshop where the boys and girls practiced skills and tricks such as juggling, plate spinning, juggling flower sticks and diablo. The last day of the month was a trip to Ballymac GAA club for a football blitz with the other local schools. The boys and girls were split up into teams and were treated to an ice-cream and a medal at the end. A massive thank you to all at Ballymac GAA for organising the day.

Active Schools Week took place on 4th, 5th and 6th June. We had two activities each day including football, Taekwon-Do, dance, hurling, basketball and yoga. The week ended with a jersey/colours day. What a fun filled week it was!

On 13th June we visited We Can Cook Children's Cookery School and Ballybunion Crazy Golf for our school tour. The boys and girls baked and decorated yummy cupcakes, played a round of mini golf, played in their own playground and were treated to a choice of a slushie or an ice cream. This was followed by a stop off visit at Listowel Castle!

Other highlights this term included the Student Summer Bake Sale, First Holy Communion party, a visit from artist in residence Emer for lino printing, an athletics workshop with Cian (Róisín's Dad), Aisling and Ethan, making rice crispie buns, lots of summer art and an ice-cream treat from Ms Slattery!

What a busy, fun-filled year it has been. It has been a pleasure to teach the boys and girls and get to know them! Thank you to all the parents and guardians for your support during the year. I hope you all have a great summer. Enjoy the break!

Ms Barry



Third Class

What a fast year it has been! I can't believe we are in the month of June already. After Easter break we had a busy final term. We have enjoyed GAA, Taekwondo, Basketball, Dance, Yoga, Circus Skills, Drumming to name a few.

June also brought our school tour where we enjoyed a great trip to Dingle Aquarium, Harringtons for lunch and Kool Scoops for Ice Cream. We brought some pocket money for a few treats on the way back.

I would like to wish all of 3rd Class a very enjoyable summer break. Hopefully we will get some lovely weather!

Ms Carroll

Fourth Class

It has been a busy Term 3 for us in 4th class with lots going on.

We took part in Active Schools Week at the start of June. There were so many activities to sample- volleyball, soccer, Taekwondo, football, hurling, pilates, dance yoga, basketball. We thoroughly enjoyed these activities and were so thankful to the outside coaches who came in to work with us. One highlight of this week in particular was getting the chance to drop our usual homework and take part in active homework instead. Some children created dances, cycled their bikes, went for a walk with their family and some even used the time to do some active housework by tidying their rooms and toys.

For PE this term, we explored the strands of Athletics and Outdoor and Adventure Activities. We surely have some athletes in our group be it in running or in the throwing and jumping sections. We practised our relays and long jumps. In June we practiced our map reading skills and took part in orienteering tasks.

The highlight of term 3 was our School Tour on Friday 14th June to Splash Sports in Castlegregory with 5th class. We learned how to surf followed by trampolines, pedal boating and stand-up paddle boarding. We were very lucky with the weather on the day. We stopped at the shop on the way home followed by a trip to the playground. A fun day was had by all!

This term was particularly creative in the Arts subjects. In Drama we created freeze frames and sketches about World War II. We included heroic people such as Sir Nicholas Winton and Desmond Doss in our Drama activities. In Art, we had fun learning how to weave and created beautiful rainbow weaves. We also made story dioramas out of shoeboxes based on our favourite books. In Music we listened to various compositions such as Mussorgsky's 'Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks' and Ralph Vaughan Williams' 'The Lark Ascending'. We really enjoyed singing Pink's hit 'Cover Me in Sunshine' and taking part in the Drumming Workshop in the halla.

In History we explored Ancient Egypt. We wrote our names in Hieroglyphics. We also used the iPads to visit the pyramids of Giza. This really brought the topic to life and we could see what remains of the pyramids today. A highlight in Science this term was making catapults and having a catapult competition in the corridor to see who could sling pompoms the furthest. There was fierce excitement and cheering for that STEM catapult challenge.

In English, we improved our letter writing and postcard writing skills. We even wrote a letter to Ms. Slattery telling her about some things we would like to improve in O'Brennan NS. Hopefully

the children will put their postcard writing skills to use over the summer holidays writing to their friends.

Congratulations also to our Assembly winners for April, May and June– Caoimhe, Abby, Luke, Donnchadh, Matvii, Miah, Aoife, Scott and Seán.

All the boys and girls in 4th Class have worked fantastically the past few months and truly deserve a wonderful summer break. We would both like to sincerely thank you the parents for your cooperation and support throughout the year. The children in 4th class are a credit to their families.

We wish you all an enjoyable and safe summer holidays.

Ms Brosnan and Ms Costello

Fifth Class

What a quick run in to the end of the school year it has been. So much has happened in 5th class this final term!!

After a relaxing Easter break Ms Walsh joined our class for 3 weeks as part of her teaching practice. A big thank you to her for all the fun and engaging lessons she prepared for the class during her brief time with us.

In April our 5th class boys got an opportunity to take part in the FAI soccer blitz that was held in Mounthawk Park. They enjoyed the numerous games on the day and represented their school very well. This was a great experience for them and we are already looking forward to participating in next year's blitz.

Our 5th class also enjoyed a day trip to Gaelcoláiste Chiarraí. Our pupils got the opportunity to see what life was like on a daily basis in a secondary Gaelscoil. We also got a chance to explore the impressive new building as well as taking part in a mixed fun GAA blitz. Míle buíochas to the múinteoirí and students for looking after us and an enjoyable day was had by

all.

At the end of May our 4th and 5th class boys were invited to take part in a football blitz in CBS 'The Green'. Our team performed really well and narrowly missed out in the final. The players got burgers and drinks afterwards and really enjoyed the day out.

Active School's Week began this year with an inspirational class chat with former world mountain running champion John Lenihan. John was also kind enough to invite 5th and 6th class up to Glanageenty for a short excursion to sample the terrain of this beautiful local woodland.

June also brought lovely weather for Active School's Week which enabled us do a lot of our activities outside. We enjoyed GAA (hurling and football), Taekwando, athletics, basketball, yoga, volleyball, rugby and soccer. A massive thank you to all the teachers, parents and coaches for being so generous of their time to afford children experience all these activities. We also began our dance sessions in June which was also a very enjoyable experience! The circus workshop also tied in nicely with Active School's Week where everyone got the chance to partake in circus based activities.

Our school tour took place in June where our 5th class enjoyed a great trip to 'Splash Sports' on the Maherees. This was followed by a stop off in Castlegregory for lunch and treats in the playground. Thankfully the weather was fabulous on the day and everyone had great fun in the water!

Finally, I would like to thank the boys and girls for their efforts in class this year and wish them a very enjoyable summer break. I look forward to seeing you all back refreshed for the new school year at the end of August.

Mr O'Connor

Sixth Class

Greetings from Rang a Sé. Well... we did it!! Where did this year go? We arrived back in January, refreshed from our Christmas break and it was all things Confirmation. We began preparing for our Confirmation with our Pledge in the Church of the Immaculate Conception Ballymacelligott. On March 15th the children celebrated their sacrament of Confirmation in Clogher Church. The children put a lot of time and hard work into this day.

In April we continued our JEP (Junior Entrepreneur Programme). The children's concept was a lunchbox with O'Brennan logo and knife and fork. This involved sales, finance, marketing and IT. The children had a showcase day which was a wonderful event. Thank you all who supported us.

May – Tri Heros was the main focus of this month. We were very lucky to have Niamh Murphy from Triathlon Ireland visit us. This initiative not only focuses on nurturing the physical skills necessary for running and cycling, but also emphasises the importance of safety, teamwork, and personal development.

June- Our final trip took us to Emerald Park. The excitement beforehand was palpable. We left at 6am and arrived early and many queued for the Cú Chulainn straight away. We spent the day laughing, chatting, eating and enjoying the rides. We landed back to Kerry at 7.30pm, exhausted but with so many memories of our final trip together. The last week of term was by far the most memorable.

Finally, our Graduation mass was on the 25th of June. All children participated in the ceremony where we prayed, sang and danced. Our families joined us on the day. A huge thank you to Tracey, Ms. Lane and Mrs. Broderick, the school choir and Caroline with the preparation of graduation mass and yearbook. I would like to give a sincere thank you to Fr. Gearóid & Ms. Slattery for all their help and guidance.

Ms Buckley

Green Schools



Our Green Code

We are all working together,
I'm sure you'd be impressed,
To reduce, reuse, recycle,
Let's go and try our best

Our Green Schools Committee this year are working on the theme "Global Citizenship Litter and Waste" We have worked hard to ensure our school O' Brennan is doing its best to look after our future.

This theme really made us look at our classroom recycling. Our Green Schools Committee each Friday check the classroom bins and this has greatly reduced our waste. We also ensure that we use as much recyclable material to use in art class.



We are also working on our food waste from the "Hot Meals ". The Dineen Family thankfully have helped the school eliminate food waste with the help of "Mommy Pig".



Next year we will continue working on this theme. We are hoping to bring new and exciting initiatives to the school. Have a wonderful summer from all of us here on the O' Brennan Green Schools Committee.

Choir

A big thank you to our school choir who sang so wonderfully for the First Holy Communion in May. Best of luck to our 6th class choir members as you move to secondary school in September. Thank you for sharing your lovely singing and musical talents with us over the past four years at school masses, concerts and performances. Keep singing and be sure to join choirs, musical groups and musicals in the years ahead. We look forward to welcoming new members to the choir next September.

Curious Minds

Science Foundation Ireland

We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded Gold in the Curious Minds Awards this year. This award is in recognition of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths activities, tasks and design challenges undertaken by all classes since September.

The award adjudicators were particularly impressed with our STEM Showcase for parents during our Open Days in February. Other activities also completed included designing circuit powered motor vehicles, researching garden birds on the iPads and making bird feeders, constructing a wall for Humpty Dumpty, experimenting to see which material was the best insulator, plus many more.

This is now our 13th STEM award in O'Brennan. Well done everyone!



Student Council

Our Student Council had a busy start to the final term with their annual bake sale taking place on 1st May. It was a summer themed Bake Sale with lots of fabulous cakes and extremely creative baking on show. A massive thank you to all who baked, bought or contributed on the day. The event was extremely well supported once again this year.

Over €800 was raised which was spent on yard games and PE equipment! The boys and girls put together a list of games which were ordered along with 3 sets of new goal posts for the yard! Giant Connect 4, frisbees, draughts, X's and O's as well as boxes of chalk are now available for the yard!

A big thank you to our Student Council members for the 2023/2024 year. Best of luck to our two 6th Class members, Sadhbh and Rory who are moving on to secondary school!



Amber Flag

We recently received fantastic news that our school has been awarded its first ever Amber Flag! The students and staff put a huge effort and commitment in promoting positive mental health by encouraging teamwork and friendship across the whole school. A special word of thanks to the Amber flag Well-Being Warriors and staff committee for helping put the application together. Also, a big thanks to parents for contributing donations to such a worthy cause. We look forward to show casing our flag proudly in the front of our school next year.



Active Schools Week

Local former world mountain running champion, the great John Lenihan, officially opened our 2024 Active Schools Week on Thursday May 30th. Fifth and sixth class were delighted to welcome John to their class and got to listen to many fascinating stories from his illustrious career. John spoke very passionately regarding the benefits of being active and our students were very grateful for all of the advice and encouragement they received on the day.

The following day, Junior and Senior Infants, along with First and Second class, attended a football blitz at the Ballymac GAA pitch where they got to play fun games against the other schools from the parish. The remaining classes took part in soccer and volleyball blitzes in the school on that day.

The following week was action packed to say the least. The children got to participate in sporting activities including taekwondo, dance, hurling, yoga, Pilates and basketball. The infant classes also enjoyed navigating some fun obstacle courses while we were also delighted to welcome local footballing stars Anna Collins, Donal Daly and Tadhg Brick to the school for some GAA coaching and games.

Joe O'Connor from Nisus Fitness called into sixth class to share some advice about keeping both mentally and physically fit as the children get older, while a few weeks prior to Active Schools Week we were delighted to welcome Joao Ferreira from Olympic Handball Ireland for a fun-filled day of handball.

Each day the children also completed some active daily challenges with their class, while they also received some fun 'active' homework each night.

A huge thank you to all of the coaches who so kindly offered their time to our school which helped make this year's Active Schools Week so enjoyable for everybody. As a follow on, John Lenihan also kindly agreed to lead the fifth and sixth classes on a walk of Glenageenty Woods which took place on Thursday 20th May.

Creative Schools

As our Creative Schools Project for the 2022-2024 tenure comes to an end, we celebrated the past few months with a variety of workshops and art projects. The initiative has been a massive success over the past two years with children from all classes getting incredible opportunities to explore the arts and express themselves creatively in different forms.

Recently we welcomed Urs from Drum Dance Ireland to do a workshop with each class as well as Konor who taught the boys and girls some circus tricks. Aileen returned again this year to do dance lessons with each class while Jenny from Super Stars Yoga introduced us to mindfulness and yoga techniques.

We have recently secured funding for the BLAST project for next year again which will see our school paired up with a local artist to work on a creative project of our choice! We also look forward to working with the Kerry County Council Artist in Residence and Writer in Residence in the future!



Dates / Upcoming Events:

- School re-opens for all children (Senior Infants – 6th Class) on Thursday 29th August at 9.00am.
- Incoming Junior Infants shall commence school on Thursday 29th August at 9.30am.
- Our school calendar for 2024/2025 is now available on our school website www.obrennanns.ie

And so we come to the end of another school year! I was delighted upon on return from maternity leave to see all the wonderful achievements this year – the Amber flag, our 13th Curious Mind awards, the JEP project to name a few. Well done to all the boys and girls! They certainly are ready for their summer holidays!

Thank you to all our parents - we are grateful for your partnership, all that you do complements and enhances our efforts here at school. To our staff thank you for your dedication and your commitment to fostering a supportive and stimulating learning environment. Enjoy a well-deserved break over the summer! And a special word of thanks to Ms Slattery for acting up as Principal this school year!

Have a great summer! 😊

Michelle White

