

Lusk J.N.S.

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Parish of St. MacCullin



S.S.S Lusca

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Annual Report Lusk JNS 2022/2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Please find below the end of year school report for the school year 2022/2023.

This document provides an insight into the many achievements and developments of Lusk JNS, St MacCullin's in the school year 2022/2023.

Curriculum Development

1. Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Well Being

School Plan for SPHE

As a working document, the curriculum plans are continually reviewed and updated and continue to be a focus during team planning and staff meetings.

FRIENDS:

Friends is an evidence-based programme, recommended by the World Health Organisation, that builds emotional resilience in children by teaching them the coping strategies required to deal with the everyday stresses of day to day life.

The Fun Friends programme is specifically designed for young children and runs over 11 to 12 weeks. Each session must be delivered by a trained facilitator. There are three staff members trained in the FRIENDS programme in the school and so, all of the 1st class groups received the training during the school year 2022/2023.

Development of Sensory Spaces:

The development of Sensory Spaces within the school continues to a big project in the school. The project continues to be funded by the Voluntary Contributions made by parents. As well as the sensory spaces available on the corridors, each classroom developed a calm corner and an area with sensory trays. These areas benefit all pupils as they:

- Provide spaces for movement breaks for whole class groups
- Provide safe spaces where children can be supported to calm and regulate i.e.
 - By reducing sensory overload

- Provide the necessary sensory input for students requiring increased stimulation to enable the regulation of sensory and emotional needs
- Incorporate mindfulness activities to facilitate self-regulation and support social and emotional learning
- The development of these discrete areas, while an important resource for all children, are of huge benefit to some children in the prevention of behaviours of concern, before escalation occurs.
- Areas now available in the school include the following:
 - Motor skills trail
 - Bounce and balance station
 - Talk and touch corridor
 - Play 'aistear' area
 - Sensory balcony:
 - Water play
 - Sand play
 - Games
 - Art
- New areas 2022/2023:
 - Calm corner with sensory drawers
 - Bounce pad
 - Outdoor nature trail
 - Outdoor sensory garden

School Yard:

Children were taught yard games on a monthly basis with their class and were encouraged to play them during unstructured times.

Quiet Area:

A quiet area was introduced for the children who feel overwhelmed on yard. In this area, children can sit and read or talk to their friends. There is no running or group games played in the quiet area.

'Inclusion Week and Inclusion Assembly'

Lusk JNS annual inclusion assembly took place on 31st March 2023. The children celebrated neurodiversity on the week of the 27th October. The children celebrated the differences in people's brains and how people think in unique ways. The aim was to support the pupils to not only accept and to understand differences, but to enjoy the diversity that it brings to our lives. Pupils were also invited to donate to charity and the student council decided that this year the donations would go to the Remember Me Centre in Balbriggan and the Down Syndrome Centre in Swords. €480 was raised.

To celebrate Inclusion at Lusk JNS, each child and staff member's fingerprint was printed. The fingerprints were then used to create the letters LJNS. This activity reminded the children that while we share many characteristics, we are all unique and special in our own way.

Student Council

Lusk JNS values the voice of its pupils in contributing to the development of school life. During the year 2022/2023, Lusk JNS formed a new student council which comprised of 2nd class pupils. The council was extremely beneficial in that the children gave invaluable insights into the thoughts and the feelings of the pupil population in the school.

Gardening Project

2022/2023 saw the completion of the outdoor nature trail on the campus of Lusk National Schools, in liaison with the Heritage in Schools Programme. The pupils in both Lusk JNS and Lusk SNS can enjoy learning about the native plants and animals that are in their immediate environment.

2. SESE

To add to the school plan for SESE which was drawn up during the school year 2021/2022, the School Plan for **Local History** was updated and redrafted during the school year 2022/2023.

3. Language 1: English

Early Literacy Webinar

- A webinar was held for parents of Junior Infant Parents on Wednesday 19th October 2022 that focused on the development of early literacy skills in Junior Infants.

World Book Day

- World Book Day took place on 2nd March 2023. Each stream focused on an author and did a range of activities based on the author's work.

Literacy Standardised Testing

- Standardised testing in 1st and 2nd classes took place in May 2023.

There was an overall improvement in standardised scores based on testing in May 2023, compared to testing in May 2022. Lusk JNs will continue to push literacy initiatives during 2023/2024.

New Non Reading Intelligence Test (NNRIT) Testing 2022 for 2nd Class pupils

- NNRIT testing took place in October 2022. Testing is used as a screening tool to highlight children who may be presenting with a specific difficulty with literacy and/or numeracy.

MIST Testing for Senior Infants

- Middle Screening Infant Test was used with Senior Infants in May 2023 to highlight children who may require additional support in literacy.

PLC training days

- The staff in the school engaged in one half day training session which focused on the new Primary Language Curriculum. Staff also engaged in another half-day session, which was added to a half day's training session on the new Primary Curriculum Framework.

Fine Motor Skills/Handwriting

Handwriting was the focus of our **School Improvement Plan** in the previous SSE cycle. The focus of fine motor skills' development continues to be a focus during the first term in Junior Infants, which helps to develop shoulder, hand and finger strength. Teachers, as a result, continue to report a better degree of 'readiness' in the children when more formal writing lessons begin in the 2nd term of Junior Infants and less problems in handwriting skills developing later on.

4. Language 2: Gaeilge

CLIL

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL): part of the Department's 20 year strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 and the associated Action Plan 2018-2022, which is committed to exploring partial immersion in Irish in schools and early years settings.

Lusk JNS_{is} continuing to embed the practice of teaching certain strands of PE through Irish each year, in addition to the teaching of well known children's stories through Irish.

Seachtain na Gaeilge took place in March. There was an emphasis on Gaeilge neamhfhoirmiúil and children tried their best to speak as much Irish as possible during the week and their efforts were noted by teachers. Activities during the week included Biongó, damhsa, gníomhaíochtaí as gaeilge and so much more. We finished the week with a 'lá lán glas' where children could come to school wearing anything green.

5. STEM (Science, technology, Engineering and Maths)

Maths

- Standardised testing in 1st and 2nd classes took place on week in May 2023

6. Special Education Teaching

Special Education Team

During the school year 2022/2023, the Special Education Team focused on in-class support in order to maximize access to the greatest number of children requiring School Support. In-

class support included 'Literacy Power Hour' in Senior Infants, 1st Class and 2nd Class. It also included station teaching for Maths in 1st and 2nd Class.

SET support also included small group School Support to some, aiding the development of literacy and numeracy skills as well as social, emotional and behavioural development, language skills development and motor skills development.

Transition to Senior School

- Visits were arranged for 2nd Class to visit the Senior School and see their classrooms for 3rd Class
- SET teachers from both schools engaged in information sharing meetings
- SNA visits were arranged for SNAs from the Senior School to visit Junior School
- Copies of Student Support files from Junior School were shared with Senior School
- Assistive technology was transferred from Junior School to Senior School

7. Arts Education

- The School Plan for Music was updated
- The School Plan for Art was updated

8. Physical Education

Sport's Day

The school's sports days took place in June. Children took part in a range of sporting activities. Focus was on participation and enjoyment rather than winning.

Child Protection

The school's Child Protection Policy was reviewed at the beginning of the school year and its Safety Statement and Risk Assessment document reviewed and updated on 22nd September 2022. The school's Child Protection Safety Statement and Risk Assessment documents are on display in our school foyer and in every classroom in the school.

Anti-Bullying

The annual review of the anti-bullying policy and its implementation was reviewed during the Board of Management meeting on 22nd September 2022. These guidelines are strictly adhered to in the event of any incident of bullying that is reported. Our anti-bullying strategies focus on the prevention of bullying by adopting school wide practices that promote a caring and nurturing environment.

Our annual anti bullying campaign took place on the week of 14th November. Its theme was "reach out and be kind" and focused on how children can be kind in school.

Policies Reviewed during School Year 2022/2023:

- Anti-Bullying Policy (Along with Anti-Bullying Checklist)
- Child Protection: Safety Statement and Risk Assessment (along with Child Protection Checklist)
- Code of Behaviour
- Health and Safety Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Student Teacher/Work Experience Policy

Admission's Notice 2023/2024

- The Admissions' Notice for Lusk JNS was published on the school website in November 2022. Parents/guardians were notified of the availability of 100 places for Junior Infants. The enrolment process began in January 2023 as per the school's Admissions to School Policy.

Website:

- Lusk JNS continues to use its website, launched in March 2022 (www.luskjns.ie), as a means of sharing information about school life and communicating with the wider school community in regard to school policies and procedures. It also offers parents/guardians an insight into the activities of the children at school via photographs and videos.

Ethos

Christmas

- The children raised money for St Vincent de Paul through donations that were made on the school's Christmas Jumper Day.

Sacraments

- The First Holy Communion celebrations took place on May 20th 2023. Children worked very hard with their teachers and the Parish Pastoral Council in preparing for these special sacraments during the school year. The 1st class choir provided the music for the Communion ceremonies.

Junior Infant Visit

- An information evening for parents of the incoming Junior Infant pupils for school year 2023/2024, took place on 19th June. The Junior Infant teachers spoke about what to expect in Junior Infants in terms of day to day school life and curriculum.

- Lusk JNS welcomed the incoming Junior Infants for the 2023/2024 school year at an open day on 26th and 27th June. Each child got a chance to visit their classroom and meet the teachers.

200 Year Celebrations and Presidential Visit

- Lusk National Schools welcomed President Michael D Higgins to the school on 25th May in order to help celebrate 200 years of education in the parish of Lusk. It was a very special occasion marked by a Presidential speech, a special planting of a holly tree by the president and a visit to both schools by the President with the Student Council members relaying important information about the schools.