

Winter Newsletter, 2023

It was a very busy half term in Gaelscoil Lir and we are so proud of the children's great work.



New Board of Management

Thank you to our former Board of Management members for all their support and guidance over the past few years. They were instrumental in creating a positive, open and cooperative culture in Gaelscoil Lir that benefits our whole school community, but especially impacts our pupils.

As per the Governance Manual for Primary School, we were instructed to appoint a new board for the period 2023-2027. Following an invitation to parents to submit nominations to the Board of Management, one mother and one father were nominated. As there was only one nomination in each category, both parents were deemed elected. The new Board of Management for 2023-2027 is as follows:

- Cathaoirleach/Ionadaí an Phatrúin: Siobhán Ní Dhúill
- Rúnaí/Ionadaí na Foirne: Sinéad Bheilbigh
- Ionadaí na Foirne: Ciara Nic Oscair
- Ionadaí an phobail: Conchubhair Mac Ghloinn
- Ionadaí na dtuismitheoirí: Fionnuala Ní Bhaoill
- Ionadaí na dtuismitheoirí: Osgur Ó Ciardha

We are short a female community representative. If you know of anyone who might be suitable for the role, who is living or working in the area, with a good level of proficiency in Irish, please let me know.



Saggart Christmas Fair

We had our first choir outing on Saturday 2 December. The children performed at the Saggart Christmas Fair and they were amazing. They sang beautifully and their behaviour was outstanding. We were so proud of our little choir. Thanks to the families for coming out to support them. Thanks also to our wonderful team for all the work they did in preparation and for being there on the day. It was a great start to the festive season.

Attendance

All schools in Ireland must maintain attendance records for all students. The school principal is obliged to inform the Child and Family Agency's educational welfare services if a child between the ages 6-16 is absent for more than 20 days in a school year.

The principal must also inform the Child and Family Agency's educational welfare services if, in their view, a student has an attendance problem. This is a legal requirement and beyond the control of Gaelscoil Lir.

Following Covid, and the restrictions that were imposed, it is difficult for families to know when they should keep their child at home, or send them to school. Please find attached a document that reflects the current advice from NEPS (National Educational Psychological Services). Please use this as a guide when deciding whether or not to keep your child at home. If in doubt, please contact the school directly.

Punctuality

It is important for children to attend school on time every day. Core lessons are taught from 8:30 (Mathematics/Primary Language Curriculum). If a child is regularly late for school, it creates gaps in their learning and limits their educational attainment.

Punctuality is also very important at home time. Children in infant classes must be collected at 1:10pm, all other classes need to be collected at 2:10pm. We understand that on occasion parents are unexpectedly delayed, but children become anxious and upset when they are collected late, especially if it is a regular occurrence.



Science Week

During Science week, we had lava lamps, volcanos, parachutes, eggs and food colouring all over the place. Scientist Emma did a lively show for us from Junior Einstein. Everyone enjoyed the active learning and we are very grateful to Michaela, Laura and Ciara for organising the activities and events.

After school service and after-school clubs

Our children may access afterschool services in KidsInc. which is next door to Gaelscoil Lir. It's a great option for parents who need an extra hour if they are under pressure to collect children from school or need a full-time childcare. Contact: rebecca@kidsinc.ie for more details and application forms, or chat to Sinéad.

Other afterschool clubs available to our pupils (renting space from Rathcoole ETNS):

- Catch Dance Academy
 - Thursday 1.10pm - 2.10pm (Junior and Senior Infants)
 - Thursday 2.10pm - 3.10pm (1st and 2nd Class)
 - Contact Melanie: catchdanceacademy@gmail.com
- Serena Brady Ballet and Lyrical/Modern Dance (All ages)
 - Friday from 3pm (Class times available from Serena)
 - Contact: serena@serenabradly.com

If there is a club that you would like us to run, please come and talk to Sinéad. Some of our teachers would be happy to run after-school clubs such as art, sports or games if there is enough interest to run them.



Drumming Workshop

The children had the opportunity to take part in a drumming workshop with Neil Dowling from Drumming Nature. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

School Lunches

Last year, the Department of Education invited expressions of interest for the School Meals Programme. An application was made, and we were delighted to recently learn that Gaelscoil Lir will be

able to provide all our pupils with hot meals from, hopefully, April 2024. We have requested quotes and samples from various companies, and a group of our pupils will be involved in the selection process.

Active School / Bike Racks

Bike racks have recently been installed on the school yard, offering a safe place for the children to park their bicycles and scooters. The children are encouraged to bike or scoot to school, even if it is from the old carpark.

No homework

As the children will be busy preparing for the Christmas Show (20/12/23), there will be no written homework for the rest of December. Lyrics will be sent home, so please ask the children to practice.

Bookfair

Our first Book Fair was a massive hit with the children. Thanks to your generosity, we raised over €350 profit from the sales. This will be spent on buying books for a school library that we hope to develop in the new year.

Policy Review: Anti-bullying

Our anti-bullying policy will be reviewed at the next Board of Management meeting. Parental feedback is very important to us and we would very much appreciate it if you could take the time to read the policy and offer suggestions as to how it might be improved. Pupil and staff wellbeing is central to our approach: if people do not feel happy and safe they cannot thrive, and we want our whole school community to flourish.



No gifts necessary

In Gaelscoil Lir, we love the creativity of our pupils. We would be delighted to get handmade cards this Christmas. There is no need to send in presents, working with your wonderful children every day is a gift in itself.

Lámh

A huge thanks to SLT Clara, Barra's mother, who is coming in to teach Lámh to the children this Friday. Lámh is a form of sign language for people who might need additional help communicating. Keep an eye out for Lámh signs when we sing Rudolf at our Winter Concert.

Christmas Raffle

We will have a Christmas Raffle this year to raise funds for Aistear equipment and toys. There is a fabulous hamper up for grabs, tickets are €2 each or 3 for €5. Tickets can be purchased from the office, or prior to the draw, which will take place during the Winter Concert next week (20/12/2023).

Cairde na Scoile

Our new parents' association, 'Cairde na Scoile', will host their first event this Friday, 15 December from 8:30am. Parents are invited to come into the school for a coffee and a chat. Thanks to Anne-Marie, Clara and Thomas for organising this event. For more information, please email them at cns@gslir.ie, or talk to Sinéad.

Dates to note:

- 15 December: Hearing and Vision Screening (Junior Infants)
- 15 December: Parents' Coffee Morning from 8:45am
- 20 December: Winter Concert at 12pm (2 guests per child)
- 21 December: Visit from Santa
- 22 December: Last day of Term 1 (finish time 11:30am)
- 8 January: First day of Term

As a team, we feel supported and appreciated by the children's families. Thank you for everything you do.

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain Faoi Mhaise daoibh go léir.

Foireann Ghaelscoil Lir