



Number 4

16<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### Message from Mr. Kirwan

I would like to wish our pupils and everyone involved with the school a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. What a busy year it has been so far! I hope the pupils have enjoyed this term with their friends and teachers. They have worked so hard and learned so much, I'm sure they are more than ready for their Christmas holidays at this point. Well done boys on a great first half to the school year! A big word of thanks to the teachers, SNAs secretaries, cleaners and caretaker for all of their work this year too, again, the break is well-earned.

Best wishes to all the families of pupils in St. Mary's BNS and thank you for your ongoing support.

*Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh!*

Mr Kirwan

### Staff News

Very best wishes to Ms O'Connor as she retires on 14th January. Ms O'Connor is a long standing member of the teaching staff who is highly respected and very popular amongst all members of the school community; pupils, parents and staff alike. She joined the staff of St. Mary's BNS in September 1995 and has served the school for over 26 years. Over those 26-plus years Ms O'Connor has helped hundreds of pupils reach their potential; her kind and caring manner always helped pupils feel right at home in her classroom. That kind and caring nature shines through with her colleagues too and she will be greatly missed by the staff. Her expertise and advice to teachers and parents in the area of special education will also be greatly missed, her understanding and knowledge in this area has been a tremendous and reliable resource and support for teachers and parents alike over many years.

We want to say a huge thank you to Ms O'Connor for her dedication and commitment to St. Mary's BNS over many years and we wish her health and happiness in the years ahead.



### School Books going home for Christmas

Over the coming days, some of your son's school books will be sent home by the class teacher - you may already have noticed one or two books arriving home yesterday. This is just a precautionary measure in case of a school closure in January - we really hope that it will not be necessary for boys to have to use these books and that we will reopen fully and safely on January 6th. Please keep the books safe and ensure they are returned to the school after Christmas, all going well.

### School Building Update

It is a challenging time for the construction industry with serious supply chain issues and labour shortages causing difficulty. While work on site at St. Mary's BNS is progressing and will continue to do so; it is very likely that the project will be affected in some way by these industry-wide problems. We hope that the effect of the problems will be minimal and we will let you know more information in the coming weeks.



### Virtual Book Fair



Thank you to all of our parents/guardians for supporting the school's Virtual Book Fair. It was a great success and your support will enable us to restock our school library in the new school for all of the boys of Maynooth BNS. Happy reading to all over the Christmas break! Ms. Murphy

### Percent for Art Scheme

The commission for the school's Percent for Art project has been awarded to Maree Hensey and Mark Ryan. Maree and Mark are very experienced and professional artists who value pupil and school community involvement greatly. They will start the commission with a residency once we move to the new school. We are really excited about working with Maree and Mark and look forward to creating something beautiful for the school, its pupils and staff and wider community. A short video from Maree and Mark accompanies this newsletter and it will give you some idea of what they will bring to the school.

### PE Timetable for the next term

The PE timetable for the next term is attached. Until now we have been very fortunate to have extra space for the boys to do PE however, from this week onwards the space available for PE has been reduced due to construction work on the old MPP/MCC campus and we have had to adjust the timetable to suit.



### Christmas Jumper Day - Reminder

We will be holding a **Christmas Jumper Day** on **Tuesday 21st December**. Pupils are asked to **donate €2.00** to Children's Medical and Research Foundation (Crumlin) and to wear their Christmas jumper to school on the day.



Buckets will be placed at the doors. Please ask the boys to have the €2.00 ready as they approach the door to avoid queues.

Please note: All donations are voluntary and will not exclude pupils from wearing a Christmas Jumper and joining in the fun. Donation buckets will be placed at the doors of the school for the collections.

### Half-day Closure for Staff In-service - Friday 17th December

School will close early on **Friday 17th December** to facilitate a Curriculum Planning Day. Please note the following times for collecting your son:

**12.00 a.m. - Junior & Senior Infants**

**12.10 p.m. - 1st & 2nd Classes**

**12.15 p.m. - 3rd to 6th Classes**

### Enrolments for Junior Infants and Croí na Coille - September 2022

Enrolment application forms for Junior Infants 2022 and Croí na Coille (ASD classes) have been published on the school website. It is important to submit an enrolment application for your son as soon as possible. The closing date for enrolment applications is **28<sup>th</sup> January 2022** – please ensure that applications for siblings are submitted in time.



### Christmas Finish Date and Times

School will finish early for the Christmas holidays on Wednesday **22<sup>nd</sup> December**.



There will be staggered finishing times to reduce crowding and ensure everybody can leave the school grounds safely. Parents should leave the grounds as quickly as possible after collecting their child.

**11:45 a.m. - Junior Infants, Senior Infants and children travelling on buses**

**11:55 a.m. – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> classes**

**12.05 p.m. - 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes**

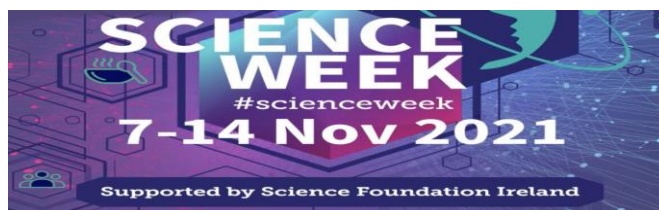
## **Children's Influenza Vaccination Campaign 2021/22: All children aged 2-17 can get the free flu vaccine**

The nasal flu vaccine is now available in Ireland for children aged 2-17. Participating GP practices and Pharmacies can give the vaccine. It is given as a spray up the nose, there is no need for an injection. It is a safe, easy and pain free way to help protect children against flu this winter. The flu vaccine will also help reduce the spread of flu to others such as siblings, parents, teachers at high risk of flu complications (e.g. pregnant or chronic health conditions) and grandparents. See additional information leaflet and poster attached.

## **Information on Mask Wearing**

Mask wearing for boys in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class is now operating as follows in St. Mary's BNS:

- Mask wearing has become an expectation for children in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December
- Masks are worn once children go to class in the morning; they do not have to arrive wearing masks outside the school unless there is reason for this (e.g. a large crowd at one of the entrance gates)
- Masks are worn indoors during class time
- Pupils are not expected to wear masks outdoors on yard or at PE
- Masks are removed when eating or drinking
- When masks are not required they should be stored in school bags. Parents are encouraged to give their son a reusable zip lock bag for storing masks



**Science Week 2021** was a great hit in our school. This year we focused on Forces and Motions. Our junior children were involved in exploring ramps and friction, gravity, magnetic cars and used forces to create some very colourful blow painting pieces. The great balloon race and pom-pom popper caused great excitement in some classes.

Our senior students looked at gravity challenges, pendulum painting, forces and frictions and air forces. Skittle experiments were a great hit along with some static electricity games.

Overall we had a great week.

Lots of photos up on Twitter for all to see!!!!

Ms Flynn



## MBNS Student Council



Student voice is valued in our school and the active and positive engagement of pupils in decision making is promoted. A Student Council is a representative structure for students, through which they can become involved in the day-to-day affairs of the school.

All students have a valuable contribution to make to their school and the Student Council represents the voices of all at each class level. Each class nominates a candidate for election. A Ballot Box voting system is used at each class level – secret ballot. Notification of newly elected Student Council members is sent to the school community via the school newsletter.

**Purpose:** to build a generation of caring leaders who collaborate to make our world a better place, by starting within our school community.

**People:** A team of two pupils per class level are elected annually from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class. Junior Council is open to students from Junior Infants to 2nd class. The Senior Council is open to students from 3rd to 6th class.

**Role:** The main role of a Student Council as set out in the Education Act (1998) is "to promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in cooperation with the board, parents and teachers".

**Meetings:** Meetings of the Council will be held in the school and will be student-run, facilitated and supported by Ms. Kelly and Ms. O'Connor.

**Communication:** The student Council will communicate their projects through the school website and school Twitter page. Student Council items will be brought to the Parent Teacher Association and school management by Ms. Kelly.

We look forward to working with the Student Council and we are excited to see the boys' active engagement. Facilitators will visit classes to discuss what's involved this week.

Ms. Kelly and Ms. O'Connor ·

*All staff members of St. Mary's Boys National School would like to wish all our families a very happy, safe and healthy Christmas.*



## Dates for your Diary

School Closure—Planning Day	Closing 12 Noon - Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
Christmas Jumper Day	Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2021
End of term finish	Wednesday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2021 - (see times above)
Christmas school holidays	23 <sup>rd</sup> December 2021 - 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 (inclusive)
School re-opens	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
Enrolment closing date for Junior Infants 2022	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
School Closure - staff in-service	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2022