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Dear Parents

**Issue: 04**

November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

### **Condolences:**

- Sincere condolences to the Presentation sisters on the sad passing of Sr Martina Morris, may her soul rest in peace. Our thoughts and prayers are with the sisters in the convent & with Sr Martina's family at this sad time.

### **Remembrance Tree:**

- In November we always take the opportunity to remember the Holy Souls. Our wonderful SNA team have created a beautiful "remembrance tree" which is currently hanging in the school hall. All children have been given the opportunity to write the name of a loved one who has passed away on a piece of paper shaped like a leaf. They coloured and decorated the leaf and all the leaves have been hung on the remembrance tree. This is a small gesture for us all to remember our loved ones who have passed away.

### **Special Achievements:**

- Congratulations to Alice Casey from Ms Alani's 3<sup>rd</sup> class who won 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the *Athenry Castle Halloween* drawing competition!

### **Halloween Fun day fundraiser:**

- Sincere thanks to Kim Somers and her team at *Flex-yo style / Ultra flex* for making our Halloween Fun day before the mid-term break such a special day for all the children!!!
- Thanks to everyone who donated to the non-uniform day: we raised €410 for *"Little Princess Trust"*.
- Thanks also to everyone who baked & supported the Halloween Bake Sale! €2,000 was raised for the Parents council.

### **Attendance:**

- Congratulations to Miss Muray's 5th class on having the Best Attendance for October

### **Gaeilgeoir na Míosa:**

Congratulations to the following pupils who made an extra special effort to speak Irish during the month of October; Kacper Wozniak, Jasmine Abouantoun, Beckett Jennings, Martin Belanec, Emily Moore, Wiktor Bachor, Seamie Gannon, Julia Bielias, Tara Monaghan Scanlon, Brooke Daly, Julia Zakowicz, Sofia Grassi, Holly Farrell and Sarah Murray.

### **Parent / Teacher meetings:**

- Sincere thanks to all parents for attending their parent / teacher meetings over the past few weeks. It was lovely to be able to meet with you all face-to-face.

### **Presentation Day:**

- Scoil Chroí Naofa is a Presentation Primary School. Tuesday November 21<sup>st</sup> was Presentation Day, our school feast day. We celebrated the day by going to mass in the church. We did this to commemorate the Venerable Nano Nagle (foundress of the Presentation Order) and her work.
- We wished all the Presentation sisters in Athenry convent a very special feast day!

### **Student Council:**

Our new Student Council held their first meeting just before the mid-term break. All the representatives made great suggestions and all items were discussed with Mr Hanley, who explained that some of the suggestions were simply not possible but all the others would be considered and discussed with Mr Naughton and the other staff.

The next student council meeting will take place next week.

### **Vaccines for Junior & Senior Infants:**

- A community medical doctor & a school public health nurse visited the school on Monday of this week to vaccinate the children in Junior Infants (whose parents had signed a consent form) with a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of the MMR vaccine and the “4 in 1” vaccine.
- A community medical doctor & a school public health nurse visited the school on Wednesday of this week to administer a nasal flu vaccine to children in Senior Infants, whose parents had signed a consent form.

### **Accelerated Reading Programme:**

- All pupils in classes from 2<sup>nd</sup> up to 6<sup>th</sup> class are participating in the accelerated reading programme. The girls seem to be really enjoying it and it is definitely fostering a love of reading among them all.

### **Science Week:**

This week is science week and we have been celebrating science in the following ways over the past few weeks:

- All 14 classes in the school had a 1 hour ***Lego workshop*** with the wonderful facilitators from Bricks4Kidz. (*Sincere thanks to the parents council for funding this*).
- Ms Alani’s 3<sup>rd</sup> class attended a workshop in Galway City Museum entitled “***Superhuman***”. This was an exciting exhibit full of hands-on fun and interactive elements which invited the pupils to explore the creativity and innovation of medtech research, seeking to find solutions for human illness. It was facilitated by Galway Science & Technology festival.
- Ms Tyrrell co-ordinated a ***Science fair*** in the hall today. A few pupils from each class demonstrated a science experiment to all the other classes in the school. Experiments covered Biology, Chemistry and Physics!! E.g. How the digestive system works, breathing & the lungs, Rainbow bridge, Lava lamps, the science of sound, magnets and many, many more! Keep an eye on Instagram for all the photos!
- Mr Kelly’s class will be learning all about DNA by using the “***Fantastic DNA in a box***” kit we received from the Galway Science & Technology festival organisers.
- Different classes also linked in with ***Science Foundation Ireland*** who produced two jam-packed shows which were live streamed on You Tube. The theme of the shows were what it means to be human in today’s world and how the decisions we make today will impact humans of the future.

### Active School flag:

Scoil Chroí Naofa encourages our pupils to be active on a daily basis. With all the sporting & active options that the school takes part in, Mr Kelly is co-ordinating our application to renew our “Active School Flag”. Between now and the Christmas holidays we are taking part in the following:

- The whole school has taken on the challenge to do a **5 min movement break** every day for 20 school days. The challenge is running from Nov 13<sup>th</sup> to Dec 8<sup>th</sup>. We are being guided in our breaks by our national Olympic athletes. : <https://www.daretobelieve.ie/olympic-movement-breaks/>
- The girls in Miss Morris’ and Mrs Greally’s classes are having weekly triathlon sessions which include cycling, running and transitions. Our thanks to Padriac Benson from **Triathlon Ireland** for providing these sessions.
- The pupils in Mr Hanley’s & Ms McSpadden’s classes are having weekly **camogie / hurling** training sessions with Cian O’Toole (Galway GAA coach).

### Parents Council:

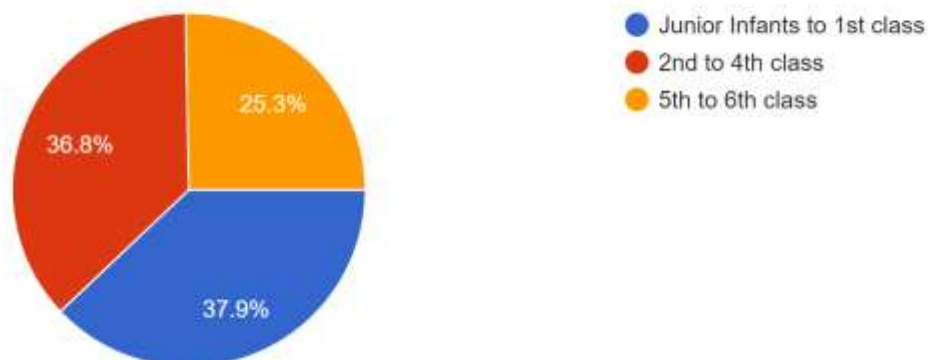
- The **Cash4Clobber** collection held before the mid-term break raised €192 for the parents council.
- The first **Parents Council meeting** of this school year took place before the October mid-term break.
- Mr Kelly gave a very informative presentation about the use of **Smartphones** by primary school children. All parents present at the meeting agreed that the school should survey all parents to see if they would be willing to postpone the purchase of a smartphone for their primary school child until they move on to secondary school. (Summary of results below)
- Each child in the school was given the opportunity to design their own **Christmas Card**. Parents were able to order packs of the Christmas cards on-line via the Design a Card portal. These orders should be delivered shortly. *A number of parents missed the deadline for placing orders. Design a Card have temporarily re-opened the portal for very last minute orders. The portal will close for the final time on Sunday night (Nov 26<sup>th</sup>) and any orders placed during this time will be delivered in a few weeks time.*

### Smartphones:

Thank you to all the parents who took the time to complete our Smartphone survey. Please see results below. We will be in touch again soon regarding what is now to happen next. Please refer to “Keeping Childhood Smartphone free” sent to all schools by the Minister for Education recently.

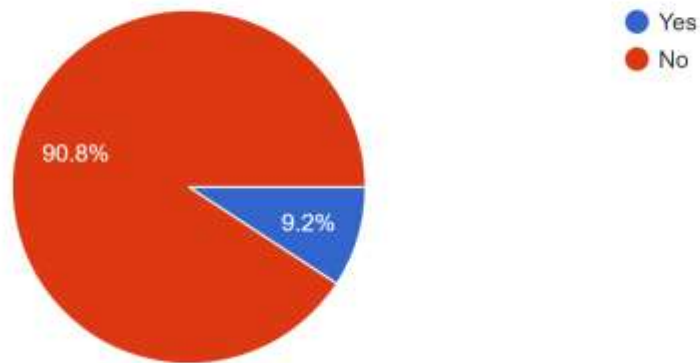
In what class range is your eldest child in primary school?

87 responses



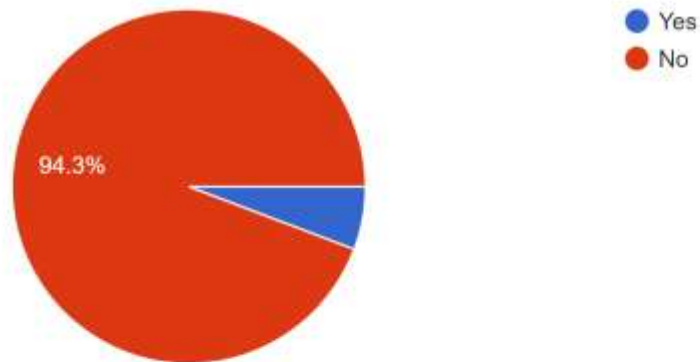
Do any of your children attending primary school own a smartphone?

87 responses



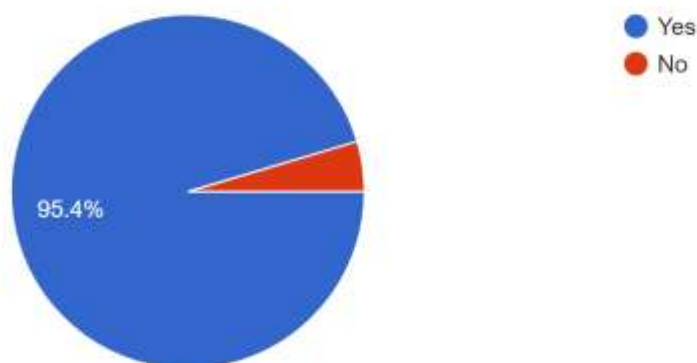
Do you think your primary school aged children should own their own smartphone?

87 responses



Would you consider postponing the purchase of a smartphone for your child until they finish in primary school, if other parents also agreed to do the same?

87 responses



### **Band & Lighting of Christmas Tree:**

On Friday December 1<sup>st</sup> the Athenry Christmas Lights will be turned on at 7pm in the Square. The Medieval Town Band has been invited once again to perform at the ceremony. The children are putting a lot of hard work into this performance and we would be very grateful if you would support us by being present on this occasion. All band members (children from 3<sup>rd</sup> up to 6<sup>th</sup> class) are requested:-

- To arrive in school at 5:45pm (*Gates & yard doors will be locked, so please use one of the 3 front doors*)
- To wear their full school uniform.
- To wear extra layers under their uniform.
- To bring their raincoat.
- To wear their hair in plaits, if possible.
- To wear Santa Claus hats or reindeer hair bands (optional).
- Children will be supplied with band sweaters.
- Children can be collected from the school after the event (approx. 7.30pm)



### **Christmas:**

- Sunday (November 26<sup>th</sup>) is the first Sunday of **Advent**. The First Sunday of Advent is actually the Christian Church's New Year's Day.



- Christmas is only around the corner! On this topic we'd appreciate it if the **magic of the season** is preserved for all the children in the school. Staff will certainly play their part. It is a special time in particular for primary school children. We'd like to ensure it remains that way. We thank you for playing your part

- Pupils in Junior infants up to 2<sup>nd</sup> class will be hosting a ***Christmas Concert*** on Friday December 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - All children are to wear a Christmas jumper and / or a Christmas hat, if they have one, on the day
  - All family members are invited to attend
  - The carol services will take place in the hall
    - 9:15am–9:45am: Ms Tyrrell’s Jun Infs, Mrs Duffy’s Jun Infs & Miss Dolan’s Jun/Sen Infs
    - 9:50am–10:20am: Mr McDonalds’s Sen Infs and Mrs Stewarts Sen Infs
    - 11:15am-11.45am: Mr Hanley’s 1<sup>st</sup> class and Ms McSpadden’s 1<sup>st</sup> class
    - 11:50am–12:20pm: Mrs Callanan’s 2<sup>nd</sup> class



- ***Santa*** usually visits the school in the days before we get our school holidays. This year, he hopes to make an appearance on Wednesday December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- All the children will receive a ***Christmas annual*** courtesy of the Parents Council this year. These are fun & educational Christmas-themed activity books which will be given to the children in December. (*Thanks to the parents council for funding the cost of the annuals*).
- The school will hold a ***Christmas Jumper*** fundraiser on Thursday December 21<sup>st</sup> in aid of the Athenry Christmas lights committee. This will be a non-uniform day. The children may come to school wearing a Christmas jumper, hat etc., if they wish. We ask for a donation of €2 for this privilege, which will be given to the Athenry Christmas Lights committee, to assist them in making our town look so festive every Christmas.
- The school will close at 11.45am on Friday December 22<sup>nd</sup> for the ***Christmas holidays*** and will re-open on Monday January 8<sup>th</sup> at 8.40am (with class starting @ 8.50am sharp)

### **Community Links:**

- Children in 3rd-6th class are invited to a new ***Children's Choir***. Starts on Tues Nov 28<sup>th</sup>, with weekly practice on Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> from 3-4pm to perform Christmas carols at Holy Mass on Christmas Eve. Everyone welcome! Meet in the Pastoral Centre of St. Mary's Church of the Assumption, Athenry; parents to come in with children on the first day to register, get information, and meet the choir director and volunteers. For more information, contact Grace at [musicgracekelly@gmail.com](mailto:musicgracekelly@gmail.com) or Kaneesha at 0858222551
- ***Athenry Christmas Shopping Fair*** in aid of ***Athenry Community Playground*** will take place today in the Raheen Woods hotel from 3pm to 9pm. All support greatly appreciated.
- ***Annual Craft fair*** in aid of ***Athenry Christmas lights*** will take place in Town Hall on Saturday November 25<sup>th</sup> from 10am
- ***Christmas Lights*** will be turned on in Athenry at 7pm on Friday December 1st
- On Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup> ***Santa*** will be going around the housing estates in the town (weather permitting)

Yours sincerely

***Fergal Naughton, Principal***