

St. Brendan's Boys P.S.

November 2015



Visit of Irish defence Forces—1916 / proclamation

The school were delighted and honoured to welcome 2 members of the Irish defence forces to the school last week. They taught us about the flag and proclamation and presented a copy of both to the school. The boys played music and had a lovely version of Roisin Dubh with 5th class led by Ms Katie Costigan on fiddle. Two boys (JI /6th) were chosen to receive the flag and copy of proclamation in their full uniform on behalf of the school community. We also learned from the 6th class about the raising of the flag in 1916. This has sparked our heritage project theme for the year- Eamonn Bulfin raising the flag on GPO in 1916.

Heritage awards 2015

Well done to a great group of boys from 6th class who are undertaking the Laois /offaly Primary schools heritage project with Laois Education centre this year. We have a proud tradition in this competition winning awards over the past 2 years. This year with 1916 in mind they chose to study and learn about the life of Eamonn Bulfin who raised the flag on the GPO in 1916 and has strong connections to Birr through his dad William Bulfin. The boys researched the story and visited Birr Library where Martina was able to assist them in finding actual newspaper articles from 1916 when these events occurred. The team wrote an essay collaboratively and are then undertaking to make a model of GPO and flags involved. Finally some of the boys hope to travel to Portlaoise after school to present the project to the judges next week after school hours. Thanks to Martina from Birr library, Mrs Gorman, Mr .McArdle and Mr.Crofton for their help with the project and for parents in support of their boys on this project.

Dates for your diary:

Christmas Holidays : Tuesday 22nd December at 12.30pm

HSE Screening for Senior infants—hearing / vision—Wed 9th December

Liam Farrell—AKA “The big bad wolf” will do some storytelling sessions with classes and present prizes for the POETRY COMPETITION (1st-6th)

Christmas events at school

Weekly advent ceremonies for our school assemblies with some thoughts and prayers for advent along with some carols and the infamous “12 days”!

Switching on the Christmas lights in Birr- Our school will be singing carols from 2pm-3pm (some senior classes) down at the square. Lights will be switched on at 6pm.

8th December—Some classes will attend 10am mass at St. Brendans church. Other will mark the day at class level.

Christmas Panto in Birr theatre- JI /SI —Monday 14th December at 12pm

Christmas concerts / recitals.- All welcome to attend
Some classes are doing plays / recitals this Christmas
Date—Tuesday 15th December 2015

Order of performance

9.30-10.00	Junior Infants songs
10.00-11.00	Senior Infants / 1st / 2nd songs
11.15-12.15	4th class play
1.00-1.45	3rd class play
2.00pm-3.00pm	5th class play

PA Christmas draw—Friday 18th December at 12pm approx.

Car park

We thank the school community for your co-operation with our car-park procedures which keep our pupils safe at home time. Reminder to all that the car-park is for STAFF and BUS/TAXI services only and we ask all involved to respect this.

Casual day earlier this year to support costs towards hurling wall completion came to €275.94. Many thanks to all for your support

Folens Christmas annuals will be on sale for any boys who wish to purchase from next Monday . Cost € 4

Parents Association

THE PA have designed lovely calendars for the school this year 2016. They have photos of each class from various parts of the school and are a lovely Christmas gift. They are on-sale in school at € 10 each and all proceeds go towards purchase of IT hardware for the pupils.

Hope Christmas shoebox appeal

Our Student Council organised the Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2015-16. This year we collected 57 shoeboxes and we would like to thank anyone who brought in a shoebox. We also raised 303 Euros this year which will cover the cost of postage and spare money was donated for water, food and medication to the country receiving the shoeboxes. We would also like to thank other pupils for making Jersey Day such a big success and anyone who brought in money because we would not be able to post the shoeboxes without the funds. By Aran Corcoran (5th class)

Sports

The school football team retained the Cumann na mbunscoil championship before Halloween with a hard fought win in final against a skilful Dromakeenan team. Well done to all on the panel and coach Mr Kennedy. (Pictured)
Catch and kick lunchtime leagues finishing up in November with lots of future footballers enjoying the games.

Thanks to our hurling coach Mr Colm Mulrooney for the excellent hurling coaching in term 1 and we look forward to having him back in term 3. Thanks to Birr GAA club with their support with coaching.

Travelling Thetare visits St Brendans PS

We were delighted to welcome the West Midland Theatre group from UK again to the school where they performed "The Sorcerers Apprentice " for the boys on Friday. It was an excellent show yet again with plenty of Audience interaction and pupil performances on stage. Thanks to all the families who sent in € 2to support costs towards the show which allows the boys a great opportunity to experience theatre in school for fun , enjoyment and inspiration. Pictured below the "lucky" volunteers !



School attendance- Information

Pupil absences

Please do not ring the school to report/explain a child being absent as this will not be recorded. In accordance with the Education Welfare Act (1998), the school is obliged to inform the Education Welfare Officer (Donna Fanneran) of any pupil who has been absent from school for 20 days or more. Parents/Guardians are asked to complete the Pupil absent slip for EACH period of absence and return to the class teacher.

3 year plan—data feedback

Our attendance plan for past 3 years has been very successful.

No of school days missed in year reduced by 20 % - 694 less absent days than 3 years ago.

No of boys who got 100% attendance for a term cert- increase of 230% to 70 boys through the school

8 boys with 100% attendance for the school year—Amazing

However the number of boys who missed 20+ days has increased by 8% to 40 boys. This can be partly explained by families travelling abroad / home for long periods of the year / travelling to other schools at certain times of the year but it still leaves a lot of cases where boys are not attending school with no reason / explanation. As mentioned above the education officer / gardai are then informed and will follow these cases. Therefore it is VITAL that all efforts are made to send your child to school each day (not when sick) and when absent to complete absent slip / send copy of medical cert. The school is currently drawing up its new 3 year plan with support for school services and we hope to continue to support families and encourage good attendance. We would like to think that school is a warm, happy and safe place where each child can reach his maximum potential and fulfil his individual promise. Thank you for your continued support

Science week 2015

We had a great science week at school again this year despite it being so busy. Classes did in-class experiments and the highlight of the week was the SCIENCE FAIR in the hall. Boys who showed interest and did extra work in planning an experiment were picked out from 6th class. They purchased materials from Tesco and planned their experiment. They laid out a timetable for other classes to visit the hall and so all the boys got to experience lots of cool hands on science. At 2pm they also showed the JI/SI the coke volcano with mentos (chemical reaction) and so hopefully the seeds have been planted for future scientists in the school. Thanks to Ms. Grace , Mr Cunningham for their planning and to Ms. Costigan for all her help on the day.

Kind regards, Niall Crofton (Principal Teacher)