**St. Francis Xavier Senior School**

  

 February 2020 Newsletter

**Internet Safety Week....**

 

This month we welcomed back Paula O’Connor, cyber safety expert to deliver workshops for both parents and pupils on online safety, online gaming and the dangers of social media.

Following these workshops, teachers taught the *“My Selfie and the Wider World”* programme which reinforced the message of the workshops and specifically taught our pupils how to recognise and deal with cyber bullying should it arise. Further information can be sourced on [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie).

Please refer to our Internet Safety Blog for *“Tips for Parents*” for some important guidance. Keeping our children safe online should be an ongoing conversation both at school and home. We ask your continued support with the work we do at school. A word of thanks to Ms Greene for her ongoing work in this important area.

  

Our 6th class Confirmation candidates were confirmed on Tuesday, 18th February by Bishop Raymond Field and mass was concelebrated with Fr. John Casey, Fr. Cyril Mangan and Fr. Aloysius Zuribo.

Earlier this month, at the Ceremony of Light, we were joined by TY students from Mount Sackville who have worked with our pupils for the past 5 weeks sharing their faith through the Lighthouse Leaders Programme and under the guidance of Deputy Principal, Dr. Orla Walsh.

Thank you to teachers Ms. Walsh, Mr. Gurhy and Mr. O’Séághdha, and SNAs Samantha and Carmel for their work in preparing our pupils for Confirmation. Our thanks also to Ms. Deirdre Byrne and the 5th class pupil choir for enhancing the ceremony with such beautiful music; to the Parents’ Association for funding the printing of the Confirmation booklet and assisting with the Confirmation robes before and after the ceremony; and to Stephen Hudson for printing the booklet.

**Debating Team – Dublin Semi-Finalists!**

Congratulations to this year’s Debating Team on their achievement in reaching the semi-finals of the Concern Primary schools Debating Competition - Dublin Region. Our team debated the following motions over the past 4 months winning three out of the four debates.

 Homework is a waste of time for Primary School Students. *(SFX proposed this motion)*

 Primary School Students should be banned from owning a mobile phone*. (SFX proposed motion)*

 World Hunger will be eliminated by 2030. *(SFX proposed this motion)*

 Young people should not be allowed to vote at 16. *(SFX opposed this motion)*

The SFX team was comprised of a total of 16 pupils who were involved in debating, researching, drafting possible counter arguments and preparing rebuttals. Well done to the pupils listed below for their tremendous work and willingness throughout the competition. Many thanks also to Ms. Reidy for assisting in coaching the pupils.

 Grace Atkinson Faye Cherry Maguire

Eliza Breban Ben Mc Cartney

Eva Clarke Haritha Meenakshi

Sorian Costis Emma Ní Nualláin

Cara Dixon Rafia Nauman

Keelin Dooley Eva Phillips

Mariya Khosa Shaun Rehman

**School Quiz Team** 

Well done to our Quiz Team who took part in the recent Credit Union School Quiz and to their coach Ms Scullion. The team represented the school very well scoring on the evening. Well done to team members: Adam Byrne, Robert Dunne, Elise Lowthe, Eva Phillips and Aisling Whelan.

 **Dogs’ Trust**

This month St. Francis Xavier SNS participated in some educational workshops delivered by the Dogs Trust.  Led by Audrey and accompanied by Lucy, her King Charles, each class learned about the purpose of Dogs Trust and how to care for and look after a dog.  Important information such as how to approach a dog, what not to feed a dog and the responsibilities of being a good pet owner were discussed in these workshops.  All the children thoroughly enjoyed the workshop and especially loved meeting Lucy.  Audrey and Lucy will be back in March to finish off these workshops.

We look forward to their return visit.

  **Amber Flag Committee** 

A Committee of students and with the help of Ms. Donoher and Ms. Ward are currently working towards achieving the school’s first “Amber Flag”. The Amber Flag initiative is co-ordinated by Pieta House and focuses on the promotion of positive mental health in schools. Our committee have been working very hard on events and activities. An art competition with the Amber Flag as its focus gained a huge response and the wonderful entries will look amazing hanging in our corridors. On the 20th of March SFX will have its first “Amber Flag Day” where children will be encouraged to wear odd shoes and orange t-shirts as a fundraiser for Pieta House. Our committee will be coordinating some fun, active activities throughout the day to promote an environment of positive mental health among our students and staff.

**Action Team for Partnership (ATP Team)** 

Following the parent survey completed in January, the ATP team have collated the results and have prepared a report which will be available to view in the ATP Blog on our website. One of the key findings across all class groups was the very positive experience of families for the *Screen-Free Evening* with many parents suggesting this be considered on an ongoing basis.

Taking this feedback into consideration and following discussion with the teaching staff, it has been agreed that every Wednesday from March 4th until Easter break will be promoted in the school as a Screen-Free Evening with a focus instead on family activities. In order to support this important initiative, teachers will not give written homework on Wednesdays.

Following Easter break, the ATP team will conduct another survey of parents in order to assess the success of this initiative. A number of parents expressed interest in supporting the work of the Wellbeing Programme in the school. We invite those parents to contact Ms. Darby to discuss further.

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|  **Reminder: School Closures -** Teacher Inservice Days Thursday, 12th March Tuesday, 5th May |