St. Francis Xavier Senior School
Roselawn Glade, Castleknock, Dublin 15

Term 1 Newsletter

Dear Parents,

As we approach the Christmas Break, just a reminder that the school will be closed from 11.50am on Friday 22nd December 2023 and will reopen on Monday 8th January 2023 for the new term. Since our return in September we have been really busy, here are some of the highlights:

Retirements

We have said goodbye to a number of staff this term. One of our Cleaners Liz at the end of October and SNA Linda White on November 6th. Linda has been replaced by Aoife Slater after 17 years in our school. We also said goodbye to our caretaker Brian Donegan after 24 years. They will be hugely missed from our staff.

Assemblies

Our monthly school assemblies have resumed with 3rd/4th Class and 5th/6th Class. During assembly we discuss the events of the month, highlight school and pupil achievements and classes and school groups take turns to perform for their peers.

Non uniform Day

We recently held a non uniform day for past pupils from Class 2022/23 Sophie Lanigan. Thanks to all the students who donated €2 and more, we were delighted to be able to present her with a cheque for €1,000 raised.

GOAL Workshop

5th Class recently did a workshop with GOAL about Uganda. They taught them about their culture, that they farm to get food and how they farm stuff like potatoes, tea, coffee, bananas and much more. They got an irrigation system from GOAL so they don't need to walk around in the heat to get water. It was very entertaining and fun and we would all want to do it again. We played a game at the end of the workshop with differences and similarities between Ireland and Uganda.

Workshop with Dale Treadwell

Dale visited some classes in our school in November with a series of workshops on conservation and caring for the environment. This visit was sponsored by Fingal County Council & tied in really well with our Green Schools Work. He gave the pupils new insights into wildlife & habitats, showing how to make bee hotels, reading stories about nature, planning fun games outside & showed us the trees around our school. At the end of the day he planted some holly bushes with 5th Class.

Green Schools Update

We are thrilled to have submitted our application for our First Green Flag for Litter and Waste. We hope for a positive result next year. We continue to work closely with Blanchardstown Tidy Towns on exciting projects and improving our recycling systems in the school. Thank you for all your support thus far.

SARI Workshop

Sports Against Racism Ireland came into 5th and 6th classes recently. They taught us about racism, peer pressure and equality. We explored the themes using fun games and it was great fun.

Trip to Blanchardstown Library

Ms. Shovlin's 5th Class recently visited Blanchardstown Library for the launch of the Community Recognition Fund. Thank you to Ms. Garvey for organising this. The author Alan Nolan was there and he did a drawing tutorial with the class. The class then had their photo taken with the Mayor of Fingal and were given some great books to bring back to class. All 3rd, 4th and 6th classes visited the library recently. They were given a tour and given the opportunity to join the library.

Maths Week 2023: 16th – 20th October

We enjoyed the 'Guesstimation Station' where we tried our best to guess the weight of the pumpkin, the number of pasta pieces, the length of the string and the capacity of the jug. Well done to all who got correct guesses, it was a difficult challenge!

Each day two challenges were selected and read by pupils over the intercom. We all had lots of fun trying to solve them! Well done to all who created some really interesting and rather tricky maths challenges.

Other activities included creating maths diaries or maths displays for our classroom, designing 'Maths Eyes' posters, going on maths trails around the school grounds, playing maths games on the Ipads and taking part in the maths 'Mega' and 'Mini' quizzes. Finally, well done and a huge thank you to the children from 6th class who visited some of our 3rd classes to do IZAK9 activities with them. They were superb mathematicians and role models!

Science Week 2023 13th – 17th November

There were lots of wonderful and creative science projects created by the children. Very well done to all, as it was clear a huge amount of time and effort was put into many of these imaginative projects, both in school and at home.

A variety of scientific activities and experiments took place throughout the school. A selection of these activities included a Light, Sound and Mammal Scavenger Hunt around the school grounds, online science shows and the creation of paper rockets and lava lamps, using skittles to investigate colour, watching gummy bears grow, exploring volcanic eruptions and balloon boarding were just some of the many exciting experiments taking place in the classrooms.

SPORT

Hard luck to our incredible girls' Gaelic football team and their coaches Ms Daly and Ms Donoher on C na mB semi final loss in October. They showed unbelievable resilience and teamwork and made our school very proud throughout the competition.

Boys
Soccer Blitz – 22nd November
Twenty boys from 6th class attended a soccer blitz in Corduff Sports Centre. A great day was had by all and the boy's represented the school really well with great team performances, reaching the semi-final on the day. Thanks to St. Patrick's SNS Corduff for organising a terrific event.

Comhghairdeas to the 6th class students who took part in the Dublin 15 Basketball League in November to December. They engaged in tough matches against local schools and are looking forward to more basketball in Term 3 at the National Arena. Well done to all involved!

Our 5th and 6th Classes have been participating in the 8 week Marathon Kids programme with daily mile activities. On October 18th David Gillik former Irish Olympian and Marathon Kids Ireland Ambassador gave a wonderful insight into his career as a professional athlete and the importance of physical activity. He spoke about the physical, mental and social benefits of the Marathon kids programme, as well as the value he places on nutrition and rest for performance. They completed their final mile on December 14th.

Congratulations to the 5th Classes who participated in our Leinsters Cricket and our 4th/ 6th class students who benefited from the Sports Partnership programme, focusing on fundamental movement skills, enhancing their sporting skills and experiences.

Thanks to Mens Sheds Mulhuddart, we have the lovely new addition of a Calm Corner bench which arrived December 6th, for any of our students that need a quiet place on the yard.

PA Christmas Fair

Well done to the Parent Association and all the volunteers, on the great success of the recent Christmas Fair, held in the school. Everybody had a great time and it has left a wonderful festive spirit in the school.

Green Schools Competition

Our Green Schools Committee have run a competition in the run up to Christmas, promoting 'Reduce, reuse and recycle'. Pupils have been asked to make Christmas decorations using recycled materials. We have had some wonderful creative entries!! These are on display in the school foyer!

Festive Fridays

For each Friday in December we are promoting a festive atmosphere by asking the pupils to wear a Christmas jumper or some other Christmas item. The children and staff have certainly enjoyed each Festive Friday so far!

SONAS News

Our pupils in SONAS have been having a brilliant time this term! They have been participating in many different school activities like Marathon Kids, and music therapy. And they have been exploring nature outside each day. Our SONAS class pupils have been working so hard this term.

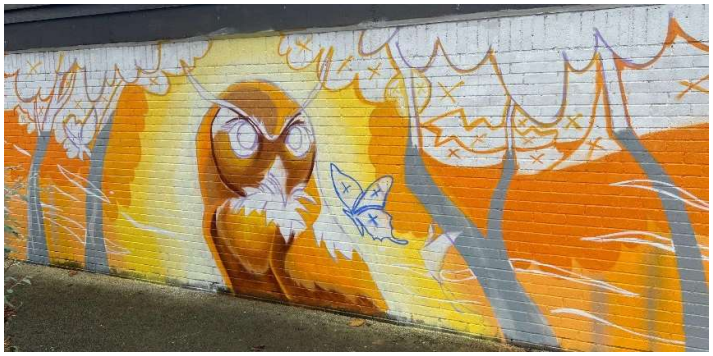
Credit Union

Blanchardstown Credit Union visits the school every Thursday morning at 11am for any of our students wishing to save with the Credit Union. This will resume 18th January 2024.

We have been very lucky this year to have an extensive range of afterschool activities available including Irish Dancing, Coding, Art, Chess, Guitar, Choir, Lego, Robotics, Spanish, Homework Club. In addition to this Tigers provide childcare to SFX pupils after school.

ART BLAST

Special recognition to Mr. Gurhy's class and several 6th class students involved in the Blast Artist Residency. Working with artist Juliette Viodé they created a vibrant mural that brightens up our school's entrance.



Wishing all our families a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year. We look forward to seeing you again on 8th January!

Kindest Regards,

Mr. S. McKeown

Principal