



# MUIRE GAN SMÁL NEWS

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094 9371496

## October 2023

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Muire Gan Smál  
Primary School



The children in every class were busy again this year designing and decorating their own Christmas cards. Every family will have the opportunity to buy these cards if they so wish. The cost will be €8.00 for a pack of 10 cards.



The theme for the month of September in Scoil Mhuire gan Smál was

**CELEBRATING DIVERSITY**

Thank you to the children from Mrs Cosgrove's 1st and 2nd Classes and Ms Sheridan's 3rd Class for their beautiful artwork.

### Some Upcoming Dates

Science Week will run from Nov. 13th –17th in Muire gan Smál.

Parent-Teacher Meetings will commence after the Mid-Term Break. Dates/Times can be booked on Aladdin.

Christmas Performances: We will be in touch after Mid-Term Break with dates for our Christmas Concerts!

# What's been happening...



A huge **"Thank You"** to all the parents who came to the meeting in the school hall on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October. The aim of the meeting was to identify areas in which the school community could support new families to Claremorris, including those from Ukraine.

The following was identified:

- The language barrier is one of the children's biggest obstacles to integration.
- One of the most areas they would like help in is information on clubs and activities outside school. They hear of other children doing activities but don't know how or where to join. Transport would be a problem for a few, but not in general.
- They wanted to highlight that the Ukrainian school system is very different to the Irish one and that it has taken them time to get used to the Irish system. In Ukraine children start school at 6 years. They stay in that school for 10 years and have the same teacher for 3 years.

Suggestions:

- Compile a list of after school activities in the Claremorris area and share with all parents. Approach clubs about inclusion events, demos, induction events.
- It would be great to organise social occasions/ events where parents and children get the opportunity to participate together e.g. visit the playground together, 5k walk at McMahan park etc. This may be an area where our new Parents Association could get involved.
- Other possibilities to explore include organising different classes meeting once a month in venues such as Pots of Fun on a quiet evening of the week. Children can play while parents have a coffee.

## Amalgamation Discussions

The Diocese of Tuam and Archbishop Francis Duffy, Patron of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál and Claremorris Boys School, have appointed Malachy Molloy as facilitator for the discussions on the amalgamation of the two schools.

A Steering Group meeting was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October with representatives from our school and the Boys school. It was established that there is a local commitment and interest in setting up a newly amalgamated school. The surveys were 90% (SMGS) and 90% (CBNS) in favour of the amalgamation.

We would be using the existing facilities with some movement between the two sites. No additional resources are being allocated.

No one loses out in the amalgamation process i.e. post holders, ancillary staff

All stakeholders will have input into the new school name and the uniform.

Both schools need to start looking at school-related issues and facilities to address any potential issues.



# What's been happening...

## Book Fair

We were delighted to host the Tara Book Company Book Fair from 16th –20th October. It was great to see the enthusiasm of the children for selecting and buying books. For every two books purchased, the school get one book for our school.

Thanks to all who supported this!



The pupils, staff and Board of Management of Muire gan Smál would like to wish Ms Burke and her fiancé, Paul, every blessing as they get married over the Halloween break. We wish them many years of happiness together.

The children from **3rd to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes** are now all very familiar with **Star Assessment** and **Accelerated Reader**. Children from **2nd Class** will be introduced to the system later in Term 1.



### **Star Assessment**

Star Assessment is a new and valuable approach to assessing Literacy using computer-adaptive tests. Unlike conventional Reading tests that had a very limited amount of material to test each pupil, Star Assessment has a bank of over 4,000 questions. It also adapts the questions to the students responses. This means that a more able student will get more challenging questions while a student experiencing difficulty will get questions at their level of ability. In this way every student experiences success.

Conventional tests are only valid if there is a significant time gap between tests. With Star Assessment however, it can be used as often as every two months as the pupil will be given different questions each time. As it is self-correcting a whole class can be tested in twenty minutes and results are reported immediately.

The test identifies not only what the child knows but also what they need to learn next. It highlights what intervention needs to take place. It also tells you whether they are performing below, above or as expected.

### **Accelerated Reader**

Following the Star Assessment each pupil will be given a Reading Zone (e.g. between 1.6 and 2.3). The student then chooses a book from the school library within this zone. Once they finish a book, students take a short quiz on what they have read. Each quiz is written to ensure students have read the entire book. Accelerated Reader has quizzes on more than 200,000 books.

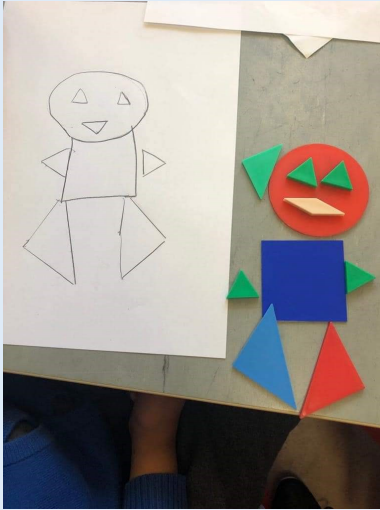
Teachers and parents gain instant insight into students' quiz results. They can use that data to set goals and monitor students' continued progress.

Accelerated Reader awards points for different books read. This way the student can build up points as they are encouraged to read more books. It also lets them know when they have read one million words, becoming a Millionaire!!



# Maths Week 2023 in Muire gan Smál

We celebrated Maths Week in MGS from Monday 16th-Friday 20th October. Each classroom had a daily maths challenge posted on the classroom door. Classes also engaged in colour hunts, quizzes, puzzles, art and math trails. We learnt that maths can be fun!



# Happy Halloween Everyone

