



DECEMBER 2016

# St Olaf's Newsletter



As Christmas draws ever nearer, I would like to wish you all a Happy and a Peaceful Christmas. Preparations are well underway here in St. Olaf's for our Christmas Plays and Carol Service (see below) and we hope that you are all on your best behaviour in preparation for the 25<sup>th</sup> December!

Thanks to all who have donated to our **Christmas Shoebox** appeal – almost 300 shoeboxes collected this year. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Can we also ask you to please drop in any **old, unwanted or broken mobile phones** to the school as we are collecting them for Autism Ireland and hope to get another iPad in return for 180 phones?

Best wishes to Paula (The Real Boss!) on her recent retirement as school secretary. She will indeed be missed and we wish her a long healthy & fulfilling retirement. Fáilte too to Karen deVeale who has the unenviable task of filling Paula's boots and is doing so brilliantly. Onwards and upwards!

Sadly, Paula isn't the only staff member leaving us this term as we will also see the departure of Mr Irving, our Deputy Principal, who is retiring in January after almost 38 years at St. Olaf's.

Mr Robinson has been appointed as Principal to a school in Tipperary and will be leaving us in January also. We wish them both the very best for the future.

**St Olaf's Maths Quiz Team  
Who did so well in the  
recent Primary Schools Quiz  
in St Attracta's school.**



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**School  
Closes for  
Christmas on  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>  
December  
at 12.15pm**

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**School re  
opens on  
Monday  
January 9<sup>th</sup>  
at 8.50am.**

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Our 2<sup>nd</sup>  
classes will  
be making  
their  
Communion  
On Saturday  
May 20<sup>th</sup> @  
10am

**Our Christmas School Plays** will be on in the school Hall on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December (from 9.15am – 11.30am approx.) beginning with Junior/Senior Infants, Ukelele Performance @10.15, Break at 10.30 to 11am. 1<sup>st</sup> classes, 2<sup>nd</sup> classes from 11am and finishing with our 6<sup>th</sup> classes.

Places are limited and you are asked to come on time as doors will be closed during the actual performances to minimise disturbance and ensure the children are heard.

You are asked to make a special effort to keep background noise to an absolute minimum in fairness to the children and their teachers who have put a lot of work into these performances. Siblings in other classes will not be allowed into the hall on Friday as they will have attended a dress rehearsal / performance for the whole school on Tuesday.

3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> classes will not be performing a Drama on this occasion due to time constraints but they will have their opportunity towards the end of the school year.



**Our School Carol Service** will be held on Thursday Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11am in the school Hall. Places for parents will be very limited as the entire school will be attending the service. Please come early if you want to get in – standing room only & strictly no buggies in the Hall!

*All classes go home at 12.15pm after the Carol Service which is also the last day of this school term. We re-open on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*

We also celebrated our **Digital School of Distinction** award in November when another past pupil Stephen Donnelly TD raised the flag and presented the Digital School Award to Mr Irving as an acknowledgement of best practice in the use of ICT.

It recognises primary schools who deliver the best educational experience for their pupils through information and computer technology.

This award is great for the school but more importantly it is an investment in the future of our pupils as modern technology becomes more and more an integral part of ordinary life.

We also participated in the **Microsoft Hour of Code** in December when 6 volunteers from Microsoft spent the day in the school with our Senior classes doing Coding. A fabulous occasion enjoyed by all.

### **Voluntary Contributions.**

Sincere thanks to all families who have contributed to our annual Voluntary Contribution appeal. Can we remind you to return either the CHY3 or CHY4 form attached to our appeal as this is essential if we are to benefit from the Revenue refunds applicable to this scheme.

Can we also remind anyone who may have forgotten, to consider making a contribution as this is our main source of extra funding without which we would be unable to provide the facilities which your children deserve.



Friday Nov 18<sup>th</sup> was another exciting day for us when David Byrne, a former pupil of ours, brought the Sam Maguire Cup back to the school for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running.

David is a fantastic role model for all of our pupils and he gave an inspiring speech to the entire school assembled in the Halla. We look forward to 3 in a row next year!



## From the Parents Association

### Happy Retirement Paula

As a token of our appreciation to Paula (our school secretary) for all the support she has given both the Parents Association and the school, our PA chairperson Sharon, presented her with a Blue Book Voucher and some personalised gardening gloves and secateurs (to assist with her gardening plans!).

Paula's help, experience and patience was invaluable to us and we wish her and her husband Liam a very happy retirement. We look forward to seeing her around the school collecting her grandchildren.




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### St Olaf's Parent's Association AGM – Tues 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016

We had a great turnout to our AGM this year. Our guest speaker was John Harnett who is a counsellor & psychotherapist in Pieta House. John's talk covered

- Anxiety & depression in children – what to look out for, how to cope, and what support is out there for families.
- Parenting styles – how our behaviour and communication methods impact on our kids.
- Self-harm – what it is, how it typically materialises and develops, how to deal with it.
- General parenting tips.

John highlighted that our kids have many modern pressures imposed upon them – social media, 'always on' communication, too much screen time etc. Teenage years can be difficult and these additional pressures can impact hugely on everyone.

We need to be aware of what our kids are communicating (and how), and keep close (as much as we can) to what is going on in their lives.

John explained that he sees a lot of "permissive style parenting" today – children tend to get more and have more done for them. This can present a challenge for young adults when they then try and cope with the real world.

John favours a different style – "internal control" parenting – where we look to our kids to suggest possible solutions to problems and situations, and where we are there to guide but not to dictate and do everything.

He suggested that we all need to praise and support our kids everyday – and let them know we love and value them.

John also suggested that kids of different ages have different core needs of their parents

- 0-7 years olds need to be thought through love
- 7-16 year olds need a balance of love and discipline (structure, consistency, rules)
- 16+ may need a more "friendship" style approach from their parents, along with some rules!

Our Principal Mr. Ger Murphy also spoke on the night and the PA Presented the Chairperson's and Treasurer's report.

Tea and coffee was served afterwards and parents had a chance to mingle. Thanks again to those who helped organise and to those who attended.

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## Our Halloween Disco on October 26<sup>th</sup>



Our first event held in the new school term was the 2016 Halloween Disco. It was held on October 26<sup>th</sup> for our 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> classes. It turned out to be another "SPOOKTACULAR" evening.

This was a new experience for the two 3<sup>rd</sup> classes - and once they got over the noise and some scary dance moves fun was had by all.

A big thank you to our resident disco master **DJ Dave Kinsella**, and also to all the parents who offered their help, making it another successful event.

A total of €984 was raised for the school.



### UP AND COMING EVENTS

Table pub quiz to be held in Naomh Olaf GAA Club on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February.

Tesco bag packing will be on February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. We will be in touch to recruit teen and adult helpers for the weekend

"St Patrick's Day Disco" - Date to be announced soon".

Skipathon in April

### Liberty recycling

Thank you to all the parents who did a pre-Christmas clean up and donated their clothes and blankets etc. to Liberty recycling.

This time around we donated 130 bags, for which we get €4 for each one. We earned a hassle free profit of €520.

### Pastures new for our longstanding committee member Karen

Best wishes to Karen de Veale in her new role as school secretary.

Karen has been a long standing member of the Parents Association and we know she will do a super job keeping the show on the road in the secretary's office!

## Christmas Cards and 2017 Calendars

Our annual Christmas card project (with cards created by every child in the school) was another great success. We have sold 493 packs, and after deducting printing costs the overall profit was €1361.00

Our wonderful St. Olaf's school calendars are for sale in Karen's office. We have a small amount left so please don't delay in picking some up. They cost €10 and as well as being a practical planning tool, they make lovely gifts for the family.

Similar to last year, we secured valuable sponsorship from local businesses, and hence this will give a very healthy profit on every calendar that is sold.

The last few Calendars will be on sale in the school hall after each play for those of you wish to buy them.