

Whitechurch N.S.



Oct/Nov 2021 Newsletter

New Acting Chairperson Appointed

We warmly welcome Canon Adrienne Galligan (Rural Dean and Rector of Rathfarnham Parish) as our Acting Chairperson of the Board of Management. Canon Galligan was appointed by the school's Patron, The Archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough, Michael Jackson, while the process to appoint a replacement rector of Whitechurch Parish takes place. This may take some time so we are very grateful to Canon Galligan for kindly stepping into the role in addition to her existing work in Rathfarnham Parish. We were delighted to welcome Canon Galligan to our assembly last Friday after which she met many of the pupils and staff.

Canon McKinley Retirement Surprise Assembly

The whole school community came together to congratulate Canon McKinley on his retirement after 43 years at the helm of the school on the 30th September. A surprise outdoor assembly was held and members of Canon McKinley's family were in attendance as well as Board members and PTA Committee members. The staff and pupils formed a guard of honour in the laneway entrance to the school and gave Canon McKinley a big surprise! The Garda Band very kindly joined us too and made the event even more memorable as they played in between classes reciting poems, singing songs and telling us their favourite Canon McKinley memories from over the years.

The PE Hall was renamed 'The Canon McKinley Hall' in honour of Horace's great service to our school. The children also presented Canon McKinley with a book of special messages from pupils, staff, school families, past pupils, past staff members and others closely associated with the school. A very special letter from President Michael D. Higgins was also presented to Canon McKinley (see end of newsletter).

Take a look at some more of the photos from the Special Assembly on our website [here](#).

Take a read of Canon McKinley's School Story [here](#). It describes the efforts and history behind the reopening of the school in 1978.



A reminder to only cross the road at the far gate exit at the Church. The bend is too sharp at the entrance gate to see safely along the road for oncoming traffic. Please remind your children about this if they walk home from school this way.

Primary Language Curriculum Notice of Upcoming Training Days for School Staff

The school closed early on Monday 4th October for Primary Language Curriculum Training in the area of Assessment. This training session focussed on the variety of methods used to gauge how and what the pupils are learning. An interesting take away from this training is that we are encouraged to move away from an over reliance on standardised testing. There will be another half day and a full day closure for this training also. The dates are:

18th March – Full Day closure.

29th April – Half Day closure- 11.20 for infants that have no siblings in the school and 11.30 a.m. for all other pupils.

New iPads

We are delighted with our new class set of iPads (funded by the PTA) - thank you to all of our parents once again for your support of the fundraising that was involved and also to our IT Coordinator, Ms. MacLachlan, for setting these up with assistance from Ms. Deacon and Ms. Masterson.



3rd Class- Work on Colour Descriptions

Having learned about the amazing achievements of Louis Braille, 3rd Class were using their senses to describe colours. Here is a written piece from Rowan Killingsworth;

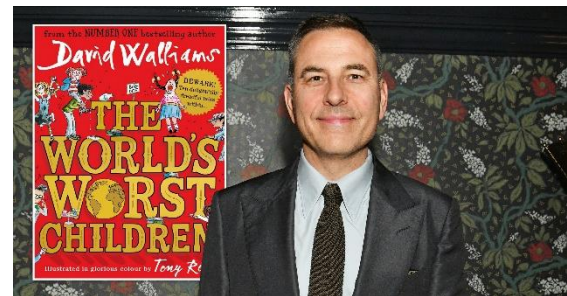
Colours

Yellow is sour like a lemon and loud like a firework and soft like a baby chick and smells nice like flowers.

Red is nice on chips. It is like the crackling sparks on the fire and round like a strawberry.

Brown tastes so good and sweet like chocolate and smells bad and squishy when you step on it!

Blue is loud when the waves crash up against the rocks and sweet like blue berries and cream and feels soft like my blue pillow.



An Astonishing Interview with David Walliams by Juliet Trenaman (6th Class)

On Monday 5th October, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Classes joined a webinar to watch an interview featuring David Walliams!

David Walliams is a prominent children's author and, throughout the deplorable COVID 19 Pandemic, has continued to bring smiles to the faces of many, many small children all across the world! His latest book, Mega Monster, has earned the approval of many children, and praise for his books continue to soar.

The ESCI, or, Education Support Centre of Ireland, as part of their Inspiring Schools, Inspiring Students Series, were remarkably compassionate towards multiple schools in Ireland in sharing a truly outstanding interview with David Walliams. All of the students in Whitechurch National School were chuffed and completely honoured to receive a call via Zoom featuring David Walliams, a favourite author of some students.

When David appeared in the screen I think we were all wowed by seeing him there, and just believing that he wanted to talk to us was amazing! David Walliams said that he went to the library a lot of the time when he was a young boy. He would get lost in his stories and seeing children laugh at his books now has made him feel elated.

David was asked if he had any pets. He held one of his two dogs up to the screen and everyone thought that he was adorable! David was also asked, had he based any characters on his dogs - or Simon Cowell? His answer was: Not yet... David read us an extract from 'The World's Worst Children'. He read a chapter about a young girl who goes by the name of 'Windy Mindy'. Mindy has an unlikely but 'special' talent... We shall say that she can produce a lot of wind. The story of Windy Mindy depicts how she can make her 'wind' and how her music teacher was wowed at how she could play wind instruments such as the trombone as she stood beside the blow pipe.

Towards the end of the interview the interviewer and David played a game! The interviewer would name something and David would have to choose one word he describes that thing as. Here is what they both said:

"Children!" "Lovely."
 "London!" "Dirty."
 "Ireland!" " Beautiful."
 " Britain's Got Talent!" " Well-paid!"

Everyone in the school was incredibly excited to hear such an inspiring and famous person! Alice Lyster (6th) said, "I think it really helped and inspired people to start reading and writing books again." David Crossan (6th) said, "It was enjoyable. I liked the part where they described the places using one word."

From the questions to the fun games, seeing David Walliams was an overall amazing experience and on behalf of the students we would like to thank all of the teachers for organising this!

Heritage in Schools Visit

Over the last 2 weeks, all classes have had visits from a Heritage in Schools Biodiversity Expert. These workshops are part funded by the Heritage Council.

A lady came to school. Her name was Goska. She told us about nature and biodiversity. We saw some skeleton bones. We saw a fox teddy.

We found really cool creatures like wood lice, millipedes and spiders. We found a daddy long legs which is not really a spider at all! We put the animals in the tray so we could see them better. By Senior Infants



New Books for the Pupil Library!

We were delighted to receive three boxes of new children's books donated to us by Carole Dunbar (wife of the late Robert Dunbar, Children's Book Reviewer and College Lecturer).



Anti-Bullying Week 2021/2022

Theme- THINK!

We held our annual Anti Bullying Week once again at the beginning of October and focussed on the THINK acronym (see poster below).

Before you speak:

THINK

T = Is it True?

H = Is it Helpful?

I = Is it Inspiring?

N = Is it Necessary?

K = Is it Kind?



Covid-19 Illness Procedures

Thank you to all parents for your continued support in not sending ill pupils to school. This means that we do not have to go into our isolation procedures too often. When a pupil shows symptoms of Covid at school, we must enact our isolation procedures. Sometimes a child will only start to display symptoms of illness while at school but at times, some children are sent into school already displaying symptoms such as a cough. We must follow the procedures at all times and parents are reminded that this is because we have a duty of care towards all pupils and our staff. We are not trained medical professionals therefore we cannot determine what may be causing symptoms.

When a child in a class displays possible Covid symptoms, it can cause quite a bit of disruption to the teaching and learning for that class and other classes as other staff members are needed to help isolate and to clean the room.

Always check with your GP if unsure and if coughing is due to something like Asthma, please let us know this in advance after you have checked with your GP.

Of course some children will only start to feel sick in school and we understand this however, if we only have to deal with those pupils who only start to feel ill while in school, then it will save us all a lot of disruption and we can spend our time teaching instead of cleaning!

Hockey

Many thanks to the new PTA Hockey Committee for all of their hard work in setting up hockey for 1st to 6th Classes. The members of the PTA Hockey Committee for this year are Neal Megarity, Rebekah Byrne, Claire Barry,

We held a special assembly at the beginning of the week led by Ms. Brown, our Anti Bullying Coordinator, and we also revised our school Anti Bullying Sign- The 'STOP' Sign. This is a picture up in every classroom and we remind us of two things-

What is bullying? Several Times On Purpose!

Bullying is when someone repeatedly targets you with unkind words or actions, exclusion, hurting. Cyberbullying of course needs only one action as the picture or post can have potential to be viewed multiple times.

What to do if you are being bullied or see someone being bullied? Start Telling Other People!

Tell someone who can do something about the problem- a teacher, a parent, another trusted adult. Don't be a bystander and don't ever take part or join in.

Jill Moffett and Janet Gamble, with some assistance from Gail Garry. It's great to be back to some normal activities!

Other Extra Curricular Activities

We are still awaiting an update on any possible further easing of restrictions for pupil bubbles mixing- this is what is making it impossible to run indoor activities with a number of different classes. We will update you if there is any change as we would love to get back to our pre Covid activities involving groups of pupils from different class bubbles soon!

Cycling to School

It is great to see so many pupils cycling to school every day. A reminder that anyone cycling to school should get off their bicycle at the top of the lane and walk your bicycle into the school grounds so as to avoid any danger to pedestrians. Helmets should always be worn when cycling to or from school.



Traffic Action Group

Whitechurch Road is a difficult road to navigate at busy times so

please always drive with care and caution for everyone's safety including pedestrians, drivers and cyclists.

Thank you to all who continue to be mindful of the local residents and other road users while driving to and from and parking around the school.

Well done if you already walk, cycle, scoot, park n stride. Be as safe as you can and wear all the right gear- helmets and high vis!

If you are using the church car park, please be extremely cautious here and cross the road at the exit gate where there is more visibility.

Work is ongoing in looking to improve the road and footpath conditions including pathway upgrades, pedestrian crossings, flashing lights and a yellow box or apron at the school entrance. We will need your support in approaching local politicians whose influence may be helpful in delivering the required changes. We are currently writing a letter and drawing up a petition that will be sent to the relevant politicians as well as to the council that could also be circulated by you. Please let us

know through the school office any politicians you can approach.



Remember:

- Afterschool Care mini buses only may park in the laneway outside the school gate.
- Park well away from residents gateways
- Do not park on the corner of the laneway which creates difficulty for cars exiting the school
- Communicate this information with all those who collect your children

Many thanks for your cooperation and support. Keith Quinn, Dave McGuinness, Geoffrey Conn, Melissa Steele, Lisa Carey (Parents), Gerry Pullman (BoM), Alan Keegan (Resident Representative), Judy Brown (Teacher Representative)

Have you parked safely today?



Don't just park where you dare, show you care park with care!



Class Blogs

Have you subscribed to your child's class blog yet? If you go to the relevant class page on our website in the pupils section, you will find a subscribe button. If you sign up to a class blog, it means that any new post will be emailed directly to you and you won't miss out on seeing what your child is doing in school! If you are still getting emails from a previous class blog, just click on 'unsubscribe' at the bottom of the email. If you have any queries about class blogs, please let us know.

Reminder: WNS is a NUT FREE SCHOOL! This includes nut spreads. Please do not send nuts into school as we have a number of pupils with serious nut allergies for whom any contact with nuts could prove fatal.

PTA Facebook Page

If you are not already a member of the closed group on Facebook for WNS parents, please request to join it. Search for Whitechurch National School PTA. Liking it will not send a request to join, you must click on request to join. One of the page's admins will then check you are a parent at the school and add you to the group.

Enrolment for Junior Infants Sept 2022

Please send in applications as soon as possible if you wish to apply for a place in Junior Infants

in September 2022. The BOM will meet shortly to decide on place offers. Please note that with a very large number of applications each year, it is vital that you send in the required forms on time. Please also ensure that if there are younger siblings at home that you have sent in an Intention to Apply for Enrolment form so that we have their details on file. This really helps us with future planning and also ensures that you do not miss out on a place for your child.

Our Enrolment/Admissions policy is available to view on our website. The key dates for the admissions process for next year are as follows: The school commences accepting applications for admission on 25th October and ceases accepting applications for admission on 15th November 2021.

Please note that siblings of children currently attending the school will get priority within each enrolment category.



P.T.A. Clothing Collection

The PTA will hold a clothing collection on Wednesday 3rd November. Please leave all bags of clothing at the school under the porch roof at the entrance near 5th Class on the morning of the 3rd or else at the Drop Off Zone. Due to current restrictions, we cannot store the bags inside the school.

Items accepted:

- Clothes (men's, ladies, children) except pyjamas
- Socks in pairs, underwear, bra
- Shoes in pairs
- Sports shoes, runners, rugby boots etc. (can be soiled, but not ripped)
- Hats, scarfs, belts, costume jewellery, etc.
- Bed sheets, pillow cases, duvet covers, curtains, table cloth, towels.
- Soft toys (not plastic)

All items in wearable condition, clean.

Items not accepted:

- No pillows, duvets
- No ripped, soiled, damaged, wet, mouldy items
- No single, ripped shoes
- No Slippers, flip flops
- No Pyjamas

P.T.A. School Recipe Book Fundraiser

The PTA are giving the final call for recipes for the school recipe book fundraiser. All going to plan we should have our first draft by the start of November and printed and ready for Christmas presents. With the recipes they would like a picture of the family/children/grandparents/aunties/carers making and or enjoying the food. To avoid duplicates please send your intended recipe to the PTA email address before submitting pta@whitechurchns.biz

PTA AGM

There was a fantastic turnout for the PTA AGM last month. Sarah Richards thanked the PTA for all of their work over the last year as well as the general support of all parents. Lindsay Delahunty chaired the meeting and thanked the outgoing members of the Committee along with making a speech of thanks to Canon McKinley for his time at the school as he retires. The PTA presented Canon McKinley with a holiday voucher on behalf of all parents. Etain Magennis (PTA Treasurer) gave an overview of the financial report for the PTA for last year. Canon McKinley spoke fondly about his time at the school and his love of interacting with all of the pupils and families over that time. He also thanked the PTA and all parents for their support for the work of the school and encouraged the parents to keep up the essential work in fundraising. Fiona Masterson, 6th Class Teacher, gave a short presentation for parents on Growth Mindset- this is the approach taken to encourage pupils to persevere. It is a very interesting topic as it challenges the notion that we are all fixed and states that we can all improve our intelligence with effort. Mistakes are part of learning and are to be embraced as learning opportunities. If you would like to know more about Growth Mindset, google it as there are lots of helpful resources online as well as in the email sent out after the AGM to all parents.

The newly elected PTA committee for this year is:

Lindsay Delahunty (Chairperson)
Etain Magennis (Treasurer)
Sarah Richards (Principal)
Fiona Masterson (Teachers' Representative)
Geoff Sparling (Board of Management Parent Nominee)
Rowan Hillis (Board of Management Parent Nominee)
Sonia Champ
Máiréad Dorney White
Rania Mehanna (O'Connor)
Sarah Courtenay
Sarah Jenner
Rachel O'Donoghue
Zoe Panayotou (Phelan)
Pamela Blackwell
Sinéad Mc Goran

Aladdin Absences- it is very helpful to the class teachers if parents could click the reason for absence when your child is out. It auto inserts into the teacher's roll records and avoids the school secretary having to phone you to see why the child is absent.

Student of the Week

Each Friday at Assembly, a 'Student of the Week' certificate is awarded to a pupil from each classroom. This award could be given out for good behaviour, effort with school work, kindness, etc. Class teachers find that positive rewards can work well for children who may be struggling with a particular area. Do not be worried if your child has not received an award yet. We have many deserving children but can only give out 1 per week!

We also give out the much coveted 'Class of the Month' award at the end of each month. The winners for September are 1st Class who have been speaking lots of Irish to Ms. Richards each morning and who have been behaving well with excellent manners! Well done 1st Class!



Ada Clarke receiving the Principal's Award earlier this month



1st Class being presented with the Class of the Month Trophy

SSE Gaeilge

We are continuing with our improvement plan for Irish. We wanted to improve our pupils' attitudes towards Irish, increase confidence and provide more opportunities for speaking Irish. We have delighted to see more pupils using Irish throughout the day and increased enjoyment of the language. Part of our plans to improve the speaking of Irish include having a whole school phrase of the week which is taught at assembly on Fridays and then encouraging and rewarding our pupils for using these phrases throughout the week. We will once again include our phrases in each newsletter so parents can use them at home and support our Irish improvement plans.

Heather MacLachlan
Gaeilge Coordinator

Frásaí na Seachtaine

Our phrases of the week for October will be:

- Tá brón orm.-I am sorry.
- Tá brón orm a mhúinteoir. – I am sorry teacher
- Timpiste a bhí ann.-It was an accident
- Seo duit. – Here you are
- Seo duit m'obair bhaile a mhúinteoir – Here is my homework teacher.
- Níl a fhios agam.-I don't know
- Tá brón orm a mhúinteoir ach níl a fhios agam. –I am sorry teacher but I don't know

Our phrases of the week for November will be:

- Rinne mé dearmad-I forgot
- Rinne mé dearmad ar m'obair bhaile a mhúinteoir – I forgot my homework teacher

- Breithlá Shona Duit!-Happy Birthday to you!
- Go raibh maith agat.-Thank you
- Briethlá shona duit! Happy Birthday to you!
- Míle buíochas.
- An bhfuil cead agam dul amach?- May I go out?
- An bhfuil cead agam dul amach más é do thoil é?-May I go out please?
- Tá peann luaidhe uaim.-I have a pencil
- Tá (the thing that you need) ag teastáil uaim.

Pupil Financial Contributions

A huge thank you to those families who have sent in their Contributions already or their Monthly Standing Order forms. Government funding for our pupils is just €1 per day which simply does not cover the cost of running our school. When you consider the cost of childcare/ Montessori/Pre Schools/ Secondary Schools/ other activities and lessons for pupils, our suggested amount is really very good value and provides our pupils with so much. We are also more reliant than ever on parental financial assistance as we have lost the ability in recent years to hold our biggest fundraisers due to Covid. Of course, we want to see funding to all primary schools increased, but until it is raised to adequately cover the day to day costs of running a school, we really appreciate your prompt payment. As a school we never speak to pupils about payments and any correspondence is sent directly to parents. If there is any family, who for whatever reasons cannot pay the requested contribution, please make contact with Ms. Richards in the strictest confidence. The school has several charitable contacts that have provided grants to families experiencing financial hardships and we may be able to help.

Revenue Charity Tax Refund Scheme

As the school is a registered charity, each calendar year, the school can make a claim to Revenue for a refund of 31% of the voluntary contributions paid. The conditions for receiving the refund are:

- The amount paid in a calendar year is greater than €250
- The payer completes a CHY3 form, and this form is returned to the school to be held on file

Since 1 Jan 2013, self-assessed and PAYE taxpayers are treated the same – all tax relief goes to the charity, not the taxpayer. So, while you don't get the relief yourself, your donations to Whitechurch National School can be worth 44.9% more, at no extra cost to you. This reclaim is a significant source of income to the school annually and does not represent a further cost to the payer of the voluntary contribution. Each year the school loses out on between €1,500 and €1,800 because CHY3 forms have not been completed. In order for these reclaims to be made, the school would be grateful if you please return a signed CHY3 Certificate. If you have already returned a form in recent years, then there is no need to do so again until the five-year period is up. If you are in any doubt about whether you have a current CHY3 form on file, then please ask the school office.

Etain Magennis, PTA Treasurer

Garda Vetting

All Junior Infant parents and new parents to the school were issued with Garda vetting forms earlier in the year. We would urge all parents to return these completed forms to the office as soon as possible. It is school policy (and the law!) for any parent who helps out with the children in any way to be vetted, whether it is helping with lifts, accompanying school tours, supervising an extra curricular activity etc. Any other parents wishing to complete a Garda vetting form can ask Laoighse in the office for one. It really is a painless process and once it is completed, it does not need to be done again. Please note that all information provided is confidential and having a previous conviction eg. driving offence does not necessarily preclude you from being allowed to work with children.

Updated School Calendar for next year

We have made a slight change to our school calendar for next year. The updated version is attached at the end of this newsletter. It is also available on our school website.

Green Schools Committee 2021/2022

Congratulations to the newly elected members of Whitechurch N.S. Green Schools' Committee. They are:

6th – Jack Nolan & Juliet Trenaman

5th – Marianna O'Shaughnessy & Rory Webb

4th – Ollie Conn & Amelie Magennis

3rd – Noah Pieroni Gilboy & Emma-Jane Murphy

2nd – Katie Quirke & Alex Delahunty

1st – Noah Gamble & Eloise Prendergast



Our Green Schools committee met for the first time in September for an extremely productive meeting on reducing single use plastics in our school. This will be our goal for the year. The committee is taking action by introducing *No Waste Wednesdays*. Each Wednesday, our Green schools members will be encouraging their classmates to pack their lunches with reusable plastics, i.e. beeswax wrappers / containers. By doing so, the children are reducing their use of single use plastics (cling film / tin foil / plastic bottles).

We also discussed our bottle cap collection for the creation of our school mural and the committee were so impressed by the amount collected so far this year. We're off to a flying start and we hope to keep up this momentum throughout the year.

We appreciate your continued support!

Ms. McCobb and Ms. Durnin

Whitechurch NS Green Schools Committee

Active Schools Committee 2021/2022



Congratulations to the newly elected members of Whitechurch N.S. Active Schools' Committee. They are:

6th – Tristan Magennis & Erin Anthoni

5th – Kirsty Graham & Winnie Cawley-Comerford

4th – Alex O'Herlihy & April Murphy

3rd – Josh Clarke & Zoe Garry

2nd – Daniel Somerville

1st – Ross Murphy

The Active Committee held their first meeting recently to discuss the different ideas and activities that will take place throughout the year in order to make WNS more active!

Student Council 2021/2022



Congratulations to the newly elected members of Whitechurch N.S. Student Council. They are:

6th – Matthew Ryan & Alice Lyster

5th – Ivor Guinness & Katie Harrison

4th – Harley Gibbons & Lily Hennigan

3rd – Aoife Nolan & Jacob Gamble

2nd – Luc Mc Call & Holly Mc Cormack

1st – Evan O'Grady & Lottie Fitzsimons

This is the seventh year we have had a Student Council in operation at Whitechurch N.S. The Student Council will meet each term to carry out its work including bringing issues affecting pupils to the attention of Ms. Richards and the staff, contributing ideas and suggestions to policies, decisions etc. This is democracy in action in WNS!

Book Fair

Our Annual Book Fair took place from Wednesday 29th September to Wednesday 6th October. A huge thank you to Ms. Farrar who collated all of the orders for us. This year like last year as we have to restrict the numbers of visitors coming into school, the pupils visited the Book Fair with their teacher instead of their

parents. Thank you for your support of the Book Fair. We will receive a commission based on the total sales which will enable us to fund the purchase of new books to supplement our school library and class library corners.

Drama

This term each Thursday, all pupils are taken for specialist Drama lessons with Mary McCoy. The children develop and learn many new skills including public speaking, acting, posture, movement, expression, confidence, as well as having fun! The cost of this activity is funded through the pupil financial contributions.

Pupil Personal 24/7 Accident Policy

The Board of Management have arranged to purchase a Personal Accident Policy whereby all pupils on the current school register have 24 hour cover from 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2022. This covers medical or dental expenses resulting from accidents which are not recoverable from any other source. An example might be where a child falls accidentally, breaking a tooth and needs on-going dental treatment for a number of years. All costs relating to the original injury are covered under this policy. If you require any further details about this policy or a claims form, please contact the school office. The cost of this additional pupil personal accident insurance is paid for using your voluntary contributions. Some other schools charge a separate amount for this or do not offer this at all. This insurance is in addition to the school's own insurance, and covers your children 24 hours a day including school holidays. Over the last number of years, many families have benefitted from this extra insurance where their children have had accidents outside of term time.

DROP OFF ZONE and Parking

Most families are using the Drop Off Zone extremely efficiently in the mornings. However, a small number of cars are causing unnecessary delays. Please keep the following in mind when using the Drop Off Zone or parking near the school:

- Children using the DOZ must be ready and able to get out of the car themselves. If you need to help them out, then you should park out on the road.
- Three cars may use the DOZ at the same time. If you are first in the queue, please

move right up along the yellow markings, so that others can use the DOZ behind you.

- All children must follow the path to the school- no cutting across the roundabout through oncoming traffic.
- Set a good example- do not walk across the roundabout- use the zebra crossing!
- Never drive through the zebra crossing if pedestrians are waiting to cross.
- If parking on the road, please leave room for pedestrians to use the footpath.
- Afterschool minibuses are given permission to park on one side of the lane at the school only. Parents should not park here.
- If you are the first parent to arrive for 8.10am, you may open the gates so that you can drive to the DOZ. This is to help ease congestion on the road.

We would also remind you that younger children should not be allowed to run around the school grounds at collection times. All younger children should remain with their parent/guardian at these times. Parents and younger children must leave the school between the infant home time and later home time.

We thank you for your continued co-operation.

Dress Warmly!

We would ask that all parents send pupils into school in warm clothing. Shorts are fine if a child is running around all day playing sports but if sitting in a classroom doing work, they may be a bit colder. With the DES guidelines on preventing the spread of Coronavirus, we must leave the windows in classrooms open for ventilation and even with the heating on, this means that pupils may need warmer clothing.

Team Hope Christmas Shoeboxes

We will be collecting shoeboxes filled with presents to be sent to children in developing countries once again this year. Please remember to keep shoeboxes to fill. You could also start collecting bits to put in the boxes eg. small toys, personal care items (toothbrushes, hairbrushes etc.). Leaflets have been given out next week. Please leave in your Christmas Shoeboxes by Wednesday 3rd November. Thank you

Parent Teacher Meetings

We will hold our annual Parent Teacher meetings by phone again this year between 22nd

October and 1st December depending on which classes your child is in. Even though we did the meetings remotely out of necessity for Covid prevention, the feedback was that it suited parents very well so perhaps this will remain an option for those who would like it even when restrictions ease. The teachers will shortly upload a blank timetable for the meetings and we will let you know when you can choose your slots.

Dress Up Day

We will once again hold a dress up day for charity on the last day of school before Half Term Friday 22nd October. All pupils in the school will be allowed to dress up in costumes for the day. We are asking that any pupils who participate, bring in a suggested donation of €2 to school that day. We would ask that all pupils dress up in costumes appropriate for a school with younger children ie. leave the weapons, blood and gore at home! A prize will be awarded in each class for the most inventive costume. We will be donating all money raised to The Parish Mission Link in Rwanda.

Half Term

Please note the school will close at normal times on Friday 22nd October for Half-Term and will not re-open until Monday 1st November. We hope you all have an enjoyable break!

Dates for your Diary:

- **29th Sept –6th October** – Book Fair
- **Monday 4th October**-Early school closure for Primary Language Curriculum Training.
- **Tuesday 12th October** – Heritage in Schools Workshop on Biodiversity for Junior Classes
- **Tuesday 19th October**- Heritage in Schools Workshop on Biodiversity for Senior Classes
- **Friday 22nd October:** Dress up Day for pupils.
- **Friday 22nd October:** School closes for Half Term
- **Monday 1st November:** School re-opens
- **3rd November**-PTA Clothing Collection
- **Wednesday 3rd November** – Last day to bring in Christmas Shoeboxes
- **22nd November – 1st December:** Parent Teacher Consultations



UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

May I send my best wishes to Canon Horace McKinley as he retires as Chairperson of Whitechurch National School.

As one of the longest serving School Chairpersons in Ireland, Canon McKinley's legacy is a considerable one. He has impacted positively on the on-going development of Whitechurch National School since 1978, and on the lives of the several generations of pupils who have spent their formative years at the school during that time.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to thank Canon McKinley for his remarkable and generous contribution to Whitechurch National School, and for the great spirit of human solidarity which has defined his work. May I join with all those who have had the good fortune to encounter Canon McKinley, as schoolchildren or as staff and colleagues at Whitechurch National School, in wishing him a very happy retirement and every success with his future endeavours.

Beir beannacht,

Michael D. Higgins
Uachtarán na hÉireann
President of Ireland

Whitechurch National School
Calendar for 2021-2022

Term 1 Thursday August 26th – Wednesday 22nd December 2021

August	26 th	School opens at 8.10 a.m.
October	4 th	Half Day closure for Primary Language Curriculum Training 11.20 for infants that have no siblings in the school and 11.30 a.m. for all other pupils.
October	22 nd	Half-term - school closes at 2.00 p.m.
November	1 st	School re-opens at 8.10 a.m.
December	22 nd	School closes for Christmas Holidays at 11.30 a.m.

Term 2 Thursday 6th January – Friday 8th April 2022

January	6 th	School re-opens at 8.10 a.m.
February	18 th	Half-term. School closes at 2.00 p.m.
February	28 th	School re-opens at 8.10 a.m.
March	17 th	School closed for St. Patrick's Day
March	18 th	School closed for Primary Language Curriculum Training
April	8 th	School closes for Easter Holidays at 11.30 a.m.

Term 3 Monday 25th April- Thursday 23rd June 2022

April	25 th	School re-opens at 8.10 a.m.
April	29 th	Half Day closure for Primary Language Curriculum Training 11.20 for infants that have no siblings in the school and 11.30 a.m. for all other pupils.
May	2 nd	School closed for May Bank Holiday
June	6 th	School closed for June Bank Holiday
June	23 rd	School closes for Summer Holidays at 11.30 a.m.

Please note that in the event of school closures, resulting from prolonged adverse weather conditions, there may have to be some flexibility in relation to school holidays. Staff, parents and guardians will be kept informed of this as the year progresses.