



St Beacons NS

Obair, Súgradh, Fairde

Principal: Thomas O'Brien
Deputy Principal: Imelda Geraghty

MULLINAVAT,
CO. KILKENNY.
Telephone: 051-898442
Email: stbeaconsns@gmail.com

December 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As we complete the first term of school year 2020-21, I would like to thank you for all your help and co-operation since we returned to school in September. It has been a very different and challenging year for all in our school community. Our Board of Management have put in place some important and necessary changes to our school to ensure the safety for all the families and school staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to say well done to all the children in the school who have adapted so well to the changes. They have been very positive and are happy to be in school with their friends.

I would like to thank all teachers who have worked so hard to ensure that children are happy and comfortable in school and for the wonderful work the classes have done during the term.

Thankfully, we can now enjoy our Christmas holidays and look forward to 2021 with a lot more optimism.

Enrolments

Pre enrolment forms have been returned and 25 junior infants have been confirmed for school year 2020-21. We look forward to meeting them all in the new year.

Total enrolment in St Beacon's N.S. is now at 190 students.

I.T. Grants

During this term we have purchased new laptops and made important upgrades to our school broadband. The grants provided have given us the opportunity to also invest in tablets for use throughout the school.

In December, we received a further I.T. grant which will enable us to further invest in both hardware and software for the school.

School Extension

We were granted planning permission in December 2020 for two SEN rooms. The building work will begin in March 2021 and should be completed by September 2021.

Science Week

All classes were very involved in Science Week this year.

There was a variety of project work undertaken by students and demonstrations in all the classes. We also availed of our links with WIT and thank Dr June Keane for her support in providing online lessons and the use of a STEM kit for our 6th class students.

Debating Team

This year our debating teams prepared their debates and submitted their debates online. We had two excellent teams involved and would like to thank **Miss Power** for all the help and support she gave to the students and for submitting the video recordings.

Team 1: Luke Ryan, Emily Flynn, Saoirse Walsh Subs: Monika Wawak, Saoirse Corcoran, Caoimhe Corcoran, Jessica McNamara. Team 2: Mike O'Malley, Sarah Walsh, Heather Ryan Subs: Ben Cantwell, Evan Aylward, Barry Furlong Stevie Dempsey.

Well done to all the students who prepared their arguments so well **and enjoyed the development of their public speaking skills.**

Heritage Ireland

During November, 1st to 6th class took part in Heritage Ireland online project. The focus was on local history in the time of the Normans. Part of the work involved researching and making Norman Shields and construction of a model of Kilkenny Castle. The project was very informative about our local history and we thank Stephen Mandial and Lisanne O'Loughlin for their wonderful presentation.

Student Teacher

Killian Dunphy worked with **Miss Collins** for a period during October and November Killian worked very well with this senior infant group and they enjoyed many of the fun activities which he introduced as part of his lesson plans.

Preparations for Christmas

Our preparations for Christmas this year have been very different than previous years. However, we have adapted to the current restrictions and all children and teachers and staff have made a big effort to prepare for Christmas.

This year we decided to have our Sensory Garden as the focal point for our Christmas celebrations. We erected an outdoor Christmas tree and each child placed a hand made decoration on the tree. We thank Peter and Karen McDonald for their donation of this beautiful tree. We used our outdoor furniture as an outdoor crib.

Many classes are continuing with school plays and activities and are eagerly looking forward to Christmas

Christmas Pantomime

This year, we decided to treat our children with an online Christmas Pantomime. All classes enjoyed the performances which were screened in December.

Creative Colouring Books

Miss Geraghty's class have been very creative in recent weeks. As part of their art work they have developed individual colouring books. They have decided to make the work available for sale to children in their school. They were very popular with all the children. The class were very successful in their venture and plan further activities later in the school year.

Parents Association

Our Parents Association were not in a position to have our usual fundraising event this Christmas. However, they generously provided a selection box for each child in the school in recognition of the work they have done under the current Covid-19 restrictions. A lovely gesture. They have been very supportive of all school initiatives and hope to be in a position to support us again in 2021. Our Parents Association would like to thank all our families for their support during 2020 and wish everyone a very Happy Christmas.

St Beacon's Board of Management 2020-21

The following are the members of the Board: **Fr. Barron, Niall Mulhern, Tom O'Brien, Serena Collins, Ciara Aylward, Dick Murphy, Richie Carroll, Maria Kenneally.**

The board of Management has been very busy in the current year. There have been many changes which needed to be implemented during Covid-19 and we thank all the Board members who have been so helpful in this period. The priority for the Board is to ensure that all who work and learn in our school can do so in safety. We have put many structures in place which ensures our school is very safe and that the teachers, ancillary staff and children are safe and relaxed coming to school. We thank the principal and teachers for all the work done since our return to school. We thank the parents/guardians who have supported our school and assisted with the changes implemented.

We wish all our families a very happy and safe Christmas.

School Sacraments

2021 will be an important year for many of our students. We shall have both First Confession and Holy Communion in 2nd class. We shall also have our Confirmation during the final term. The following are the dates which have been set for our parish sacraments.

First Confession is on **Tuesday 2nd March.**

Confirmation is on **Thursday 15th April.**

First Holy Communion is **Saturday 8th May.**

Green Schools Update

We recently were successful in our application to Kilkenny County Council to help make our school a Pollinator Friendly area. As a school with plenty of surrounding space and potential

we would like to enhance and develop the area's biodiversity for pollinators. With the grant received we have purchased a number of identification signs which will make our school community more aware of what can be developed on the school grounds. We will plant further suitable wildflowers and continue to develop our sensory garden to enhance what already has been put in place.

Kilkenny Camogie

Huge congratulations to the Kilkenny senior camogie team who won the All- Ireland final in December 2020 following a great contest with Galway. Team captain for Kilkenny, **Lucinda Gahan**, is a past pupil of St Beacon's N.S. and played for all our school teams in Camogie, Hurling and Gaelic Football at primary schools' level. A wonderful achievement by Lucinda and all her team.

School Absences

It is very important that the school is informed regarding your child's absence. On the Aladdin app, parents/guardians may now inform the school of your child's absence. You may submit this information on the day prior to your child's return to school. You may also use the child's homework journal to inform the school of any absences

Thank You

On behalf of the Board of Management, Parents Association, school staff and children in our school we wish to sincerely thank all who have helped our school since our return to school in September. We hope that all in our school community have a well-deserved. Christmas holiday and we look forward positively to 2021.

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School closes on Tues December 22nd at 12 noon

School re-opens on Wed January 6th 2021

You can check details on

www.stbeacons.com

[facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/stbeaconsnational) - (group page –St. Beacon's National School)

Reminders for Term 2 and Term 3

January

Staff Meeting Thursday 21st – all children go home at 1.45 p.m.

February

Mid-term Break – Thursday 18th and Friday 19th

March

First Confession – Tuesday 2nd (Provisional)

Easter Holidays – Friday 26th March

Public Holiday – Wednesday 17th March

April

School Re-opens Monday 12th April

Confirmation – Thursday 15th April

May

May 3rd – Public Holiday

Tues 4th – School Holiday

Saturday 8th Holy Communion

Thursday 13th – Staff Meeting - all children go home at 1.45p.m.

June

Monday 7th Public Holiday

Tuesday 8th – School Holiday

Tuesday 29th – Summer Holidays