

The Harold Times

February 2023



Principal's Message

Dear Parents & Guardians,

It gives me great pleasure to share our first newsletter of Spring with you. It is packed with information on exciting activities that have been happening since the start of 2023 and fun events planned for the coming month. Our pupils and staff were very happy to see the end of the dark mornings in early January. We are looking forward to brighter days and more daylight. Last week was a big week for BIODIVERSITY. Our pupils learned about caring for themselves and also looking after their local environment.

Thanks to everyone for their help with our wonderful Grandparents' Day. This was part of our Catholic Schools' Week. There was a big FÁILTE for our most enduring supporters over the years. It was such a pleasure to welcome them back after a gap of over 3 years. The pupils really enjoyed meeting so many of the grandparents. Well done to the pupils and teachers for the lovely artwork, poetry and song that was on display for our visitors. A big thank you to Father Kennedy for celebrating the day with us and grateful appreciation to the PA for providing all the refreshments.

I hope that you all have an enjoyable mid-term break with family and friends. Remember to practise the 3 F's- Fresh air, Fun & family.

Kind regards,

Dervla Nic Mhathúna (Principal)

SCHOOL CLOSED—MID-TERM

As per calendar the school will close for the mid-term break from Mon 13th to Friday 17th February inclusive.

Please note NORMAL CLASS FINISHING TIMES ON FRIDAY 10th February.

We wish you all a well-deserved, happy and relaxing week!

Other dates to note

- Friday 24th February 2023 Junior Infants Photos
- World Book Day— details to follow
- Book Fair w/c 1/3/2023 —further details to follow.
- Friday 17th March 2023 Bank Holiday
- Easter Holidays Mon 3rd April to Friday 14th April (2023 inclusive)

INTERNET SAFETY DAY



We celebrated Internet Safety Day in The Harold School this week. A talk for parents of classes 3rd to 6th Classes was held via zoom on Tuesday 7th February. Class workshops were held over Wednesday and Thursday for the children in those classes.

Many thanks to CyberSafe Kids for facilitating these events **and to Reception for co-ordinating the timetable etc.**



INTERNET SAFETY

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of parental supervision of children's activity on the internet as many websites can be used for cyber bullying, paedophilia, etc. Please warn children not to give names, addresses or personal details over the Internet under any circumstance. In our school we have a filter system (in line with Department and PDST filter recommendations) which blocks access to unsuitable websites. Pupils who bully other pupils from our school on the internet will be sanctioned in accordance with our school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Please see some very helpful [inforWebwise-Advice for parents](#)



Green schools and Gardening update February 2023 :

Even though it is only the start of spring the green schools have been busy planting some native trees in our pocket forest at the front of the school. Take a look the next time you are there.

We have been delighted with our battery recycling drive and the first load of batteries have been collected. So far we have collected 10 large boxes which is more than 50kg of batteries. Well done all and keep collecting. The WEEE competition will continue until the end of March.



We are continuing our work towards getting our green flag on biodiversity and we had a terrific day of action on Friday 3rd of

February. The green theme started with lots of our pupils and teachers dressing in something green. Activities included nature walks and scavenger hunts in all the local parks, minibeast hunts, making bug hotels and making fat balls to feed the birds. Lots of new words were discussed and learned such as biodiversity, habitat, climate change, wetlands to mention just a few. A fun day was had by all and hopefully lots more awareness of the importance of biodiversity.



Our gardening programme is continuing and is always enjoyable. Some of the projects are as follows. Senior infants have been planting bulbs and were rewarded with beautiful paper whites blooming. Garlic has been planted also. 2nd class have been learning about herbs and 1st class have been learning about compost. We are hoping to get two new composters soon to be used in our garden. 6th class have had their first session and junior infants will be busy soon as spring begins in earnest.

Enjoy the midterm break. **A BIG GREEN THANK you to Ms Murphy for all her efforts in this project, and to the members of the GREEN SCHOOL Committee**



St Brigid's Day:

On Friday 1st February we celebrated St. Brigid's Day here in The Harold School. The children read the stories of St. Brigid's Cloak and her miracles. There is lovely artwork around the school to celebrate her day and among these are the iconic St. Brigid's cross. The children enjoyed honouring her in this way and celebrating her feast day. We all also enjoyed the Bank Holiday in St Brigid's honour on Monday, February 6th



BOOK FAIR: We are delighted to announce the return of the Harold School Book fair which will take place this year from March 1st to 8th.

We are looking forward to your support and as the fair takes in World Book Day, what better way to celebrate than with a new book! All books sold at the fair will earn us new books for our expanding school library. Details of how you can purchase books and offer support will follow shortly.

A big THANK YOU to Mrs Boyle

Gardening:—an exciting new venture!



As part of the Harold School's curriculum, every pupil this year has gardening classes with Onja and Mags.

Our 8 year programme has been developed to cover all aspect of gardening including growing vegetables, making compost, plant propagation, herbs, bulbs, trees, and in school planning, planting for and holding a plant sale. The feedback from pupils and teachers has been really positive!

THANKS to Onja and Mags for all their hard work!

HAROLD TENNIS: The Leinster Primary Schools Tennis League will be commencing the week of the 6th March. There was a great level of interest among the pupils from 5th and 6th class in the league. We now have three teams in place and a strong squad to represent our school. **Many THANKS to the parents who helped out with this and to Mrs Reynolds for co-ordinating it all!**



SWIMMING:

Following the reopening of Castlepark swimming pool, our 4th classes and Ms Monaghan's 3rd class have now recommenced their swimming lessons every Friday. This is a great opportunity for our pupils and we are glad to be able to facilitate it. 6th Class will begin swimming lessons in March.



THANKS to Gráinne/Sue for making all the arrangements

HAROLD HOCKEY:

Our 6th Class girls have now finished competing in the Leinster Primary School Girls' League.



They represented The Harold School really well

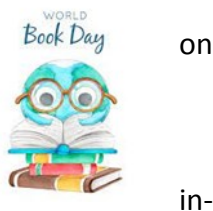
and showed great sportsmanship throughout the League. Lovely to finish the league on a high with a 3-1 win over Rathmichael.

Many thanks to Emma Meir for coaching all our teams and to Abbie Van Lonkhuyzen for managing our League team.

Hockey continues every Tuesday afternoon on the pitch in Cluny for our 4th, 5th and 6th class players – they will be playing some friendly matches and blitzes throughout the Spring.

Thanks to Emma Meir (Coach) & Ms McKeogh for co-ordinating this, and to parents for lifts and support for the girls at matches etc

WORLD BOOK DAY: We are excited to let you know that plans are in full swing for our amazing 'World Book Week' starting Monday 27th February and running until Friday 3rd of March. Children will take part in various whole school initiatives such as a 'Get Caught Reading' photo competition. The main event of the week will be a dress up day on Friday 3rd, where children will be asked to dress up as a character from their favourite book. It would be great if the children could also bring in their favourite book on that day. We are sure all children will enjoy the many exciting activities based around literacy that will take place that week.



THANKS to Ms Madden for arranging this lovely event!

MOCK TRIALS:



Each of our 6th Classes participated in a mock criminal trial over recent weeks. This was facilitated by Barry Ward, a criminal barrister (and Senator). The trial gave our pupils an insight into how the criminal justice system in Ireland works.

The prosecution and defence counsel, and the judge were played by practising barristers and the students played the other roles, such as the witnesses, jurors, defendant, solicitors, court registrar, etc. The trial involved a scenario of an allegation of shoplifting/theft in a local shop and was tailored to our local area so that the children were familiar with the issues discussed.

This was a hugely popular project and a great opportunity for our 6th class pupils to see firsthand how a criminal trial might work and to see important principles like the presumption of innocence in action, as well as having some fun.

Many THANKS to Barry Ward and his colleagues for giving so generously of their time., and to MS McKeogh for co-ordinating the events.

Our 6th class pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



CREDIT UNION QUIZ:

Congratulations to the U11 and U13 quiz teams that represented The Harold in the Credit Union quiz on Monday, January 30th. The children endured 12 rounds of questions over two hours, which was very tough after a day of school. Both teams stood out in their red jumpers and did our school proud. Our U13 team finished in third place. Well done to all!

U13 team...
Conor McCashin
Kyla Harford
Luca Barrett
Sophia Roberts

U11 team...
Eloise Matthews Kelleher
Harry Long
Senan Nolan
Tristan Kelly

THANKS to Ms Wall for co-ordinating this and to all the parents for their support!