



O'BRENNAN NS NEWSLETTER

December 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As another term comes to an end, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas. It has been a busy and enjoyable term, and we were delighted to present our Christmas shows on Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th December.

Congratulations to all the pupils and staff on two excellent performances. A great deal of work went into learning lines and songs, and we hope you enjoyed the shows as much as we did. Six, Seven was certainly a highlight on both nights. It was lovely to see such strong support, with full houses for our ever-popular Christmas show.

We were also delighted to welcome a very special visitor on Friday 5th December, just in time for the Toy Show. Santa spent time with all classes, and the children were thrilled to receive a chocolate Santa. Our sincere thanks to the Parents' Association for organising the visit and for preparing the Toy Show goody bags.

December also saw many classes enjoy school trips. Junior Infants, Senior Infants, 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes, along with the Arabella Room, visited Ballyseedy and enjoyed a wonderful morning out. Fourth, Fifth and Sixth classes travelled to Siamsa Tíre to see Sister Act, which was a lovely treat for all classes after a busy term.

We would like to wish Tracey all the very best as she begins her maternity leave. Emer O'Mahony will be covering Tracey's leave from January, and we look forward to welcoming her to our school community. We also take this opportunity to thank Ms. Brennan for her contribution to school life as she leaves O'Brennan NS at the end of this term. We wish her every success in the next chapter of her career. Ms. Gorman will be teaching the Arabella class for the remainder of the year.

Finally, on behalf of all the staff and pupils at O'Brennan NS, I would like to wish all members of our school community and their families a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the New Year.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Michelle White

Arabella

The Arabella Class has had a fantastic term filled with learning, fun and wonderful achievements. The children worked very hard and showed great enthusiasm throughout the term.

We learned all about winter, focusing on winter animals and where they live, both in Ireland and around the world. The children enjoyed exploring these topics through stories, songs and hands-on activities. We learned lovely songs such as "Winter Time" and enjoyed singing together every day.

The children were very excited to learn about the North Pole, and this led to some fantastic science experiments. We explored ice melting and then turned our ice into art sculptures using food colouring. The children showed great creativity and curiosity during these activities.

We also spent time listening to seasonal stories and completing many Christmas-themed activities, including jigsaws, counting, pegboards, colouring, art, matching, cutting and other fine-motor tasks as we prepared for the festive season. We thoroughly enjoyed playing 'Santa Says', 'Avoid the Grinch' and making Christmas cookies, hot chocolates and reindeer buns! The children demonstrated excellent listening skills and worked very well with their teacher.

A big highlight of the term was horse riding, which

the children absolutely loved. Córa especially enjoyed grooming Moonshine the horse, while Salahudeen was delighted to ride every time we went. Fionn created wonderful ice sculptures, particularly enjoying making dinosaur ice cubes, which he loved both creating and eating! Caragh had great fun with ice skating, followed by hot chocolates to warm up after! Oliver was a huge help around the classroom and loved baking treats for everyone while Gavin loved our music lessons and snowball fights with his friends!

We were also very excited to go on our trip to see Santa, which brought lots of excitement and anticipation to the class.

Overall, it has been a wonderful term in the Arabella Class. The children should be very proud of all their hard work, progress and achievements. Well done to everyone!

Ms. Gorman

Junior Infants

What a busy couple of months we have had in the Junior Infant room. The children have worked so hard and deserve a well-earned break for Christmas. We now know 18 sounds and are blending words to read very well in lists and books. We have begun our cursive handwriting and are working hard on this tricky skill.

In maths we have been playing lots of fun counting games with dice and maths bingo has been a favourite. And we have read some really fun and interesting books in school such as 'Baby Brains', 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', 'Dear Father Christmas' and 'The Night Before Christmas'.

In Free Play, the children enjoyed playing in 'The Hospital' and 'Santa's Workshop'. Wrapping presents to have ready for Santa's sack was so much fun.

We have had lots of Birthdays in Junior Infants this half term; Ellie, Anna and Valeriia celebrated their birthdays in November, and Lilly's birthday was in December.

Our trip to Boyle's of Ballyseedy last week was a huge success. We visited Santa, played in the playground and even got some delicious hot chocolate and a cookie as a treat. The children were so well behaved and very careful walking on and off the bus and were so good at listening. I am so proud of them all.

Elfie our Christmas Elf arrived at the beginning of December and has been keeping a close eye on everything in the classroom. He was very impressed by all the hard work and beautiful handwriting happening in Junior Infants. I'm sure he will have a glowing report for Santa!

We had our movie night where we watched one of our favourite movies, 'The Grinch'. The children really enjoyed coming to school in the evening and watching a movie together.

Our Christmas play 'Ralph the Reindeer' was a huge hit. The children were so brave saying their lines into the microphone and worked hard learning the songs and dancing for a big audience. Well done, everyone!

Merry Christmas everyone and Happy New Year!

See you in January 2026!

Mrs. O'Donnell

Senior Infants

From Halloween hijinks to Christmas capers, Senior Infants have enjoyed a wonderfully busy and joyful few weeks! Through directed play, the children explored how a café works, learned all about the Post Office, and discovered how Santa receives his letters. We loved reading The Jolly Christmas Postman and hearing about his exciting adventures, as well as enjoying heart-warming stories about how King Puck saved Christmas in Kerry and how Dasher became the very first reindeer. A surprise power cut even brought an unexpected treat of chips, sausages and goujons from Den Joe's takeaway – a day we will certainly remember!

We welcomed Saoirse to our class in November and

are thrilled to have a new classmate. December saw another new arrival - Robin the Elf. Robin made a grand arrival from the North Pole with some brand-new playdough and has kept us smiling ever since. His mischievous antics included wrapping our Christmas tree in blue tissue paper, photocopying pictures of himself to decorate the classroom, and hiding in Santa's sleigh. He even popped into the halla to watch our Christmas show, Santa's Hat. Robin was extremely impressed with the children's acting skills and was so proud of all their hard work. "Golden" and Feliz Navidad have been our firm favourites to sing. Robin discovered some jellies in Ms Slattery's press, which we used to decorate our delicious Rice Krispie buns!

Robin was delighted to report back to Santa that all the boys and girls in Senior Infants are firmly on the good list this year. He was very impressed with their excellent work in phonics, maths, art, cutting, and their super organisational skills.

We were lucky enough to meet Santa twice this year – once in our school grotto and again on our festive trip to Boyles of Ballyseede. It was a magical day filled with foam snow, hot chocolate and cookies. Our favourite moments were playing with our friends in the playground and chatting happily on the bus. We also enjoyed our annual Christmas movie night, when we came to school in our pyjamas to watch Santa Buddies – a very special evening indeed!

One of the highlights of the term was our visit to the Palliative Care Day Unit in Tralee General Hospital, where we sang for staff, patients and visitors. It was wonderful experience, and we felt very privileged to share some Christmas cheer with everyone there.

Senior Infants were also delighted to celebrate the Ballymac Senior Men's team's recent success as Munster Champions. We wish them every success in their next match in January. Ballymac Abú!

We celebrated some lovely birthdays too – Daisy Mae and Jake O'D in November, and Alice celebrated her special day in December.

Finally, Senior Infants bid a fond farewell to SNA Tracey and look forward to welcoming her and her new baby back for a visit next year.

Wishing everyone a restful Christmas break and every good wish for the New Year. Fingers crossed for a white Christmas!

Nollaig Shona Daoibh! 🎄 ✨

Ms. Slattery

First Class

The children have been working hard during the term and are looking forward to the Christmas holidays.

In November, we had great fun during STEAM week. The class participated in a Maths Trail around the school. In Science we made butter. This was a big highlight for the children. They even got to taste their butter with crackers. Additionally, we made marble mazes and recorded them on IPADs. At the end of STEAM week, the children used their 2D shapes knowledge to create wonderful city landscapes for art.

We had two surprise visitors come to our school recently. Firstly, the Sam Maguire came to see all the boys and girls. The excitement brought lots of joy to us all. Santa Claus was our second visitor. The children had fun meeting him. The class also met Santa in Boyles of Ballyseedy. We ate cookies and drank yummy hot chocolate.

It is fair to say the Christmas spirit came in bundles to First class. We have had an exciting time preparing for our Christmas Show. The children created fabulous Christmas wreaths to decorate our classroom. They also made lovely drawings of Rudolf. The Christmas Movie Night was a big success, and the children enjoyed their treats with their friends.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the term. Best wishes to everyone for 2026.

Nollaig Shona Daoibh go Léir!

Ms. Dillane

Second Class

As we approach the festive season, 2nd Class has been buzzing with activity throughout November and December! Everyone is ready for a well-earned Christmas break!

In November, we celebrated STEAM Week with plenty of hands-on fun. Highlights included a maths trail around the school, the sweet jar estimation challenge, exploring Dublin Zoo and Áras an Uachtaráin through virtual tours on the iPads and a paper chain engineering challenge. The creativity and teamwork were fantastic!

In English, we focused on recount writing. The children wrote and published detailed accounts of their Halloween break. We also learned about making connections as part of our comprehension strategies as well as reading all about Christmas Traditions in India in our class reader!

In Maths, some topics we explored were fractions, time, addition and subtraction. We particularly enjoyed discovering different ways to solve problems and sharing our strategies on mini whiteboards.

As Gaeilge, we have been learning all about 'bia' and we've been having lots of fun asking and answering questions in our 'bialanna'.

In art, we drew inspiration from the cold, chilly weather to create beautiful winter scenes, used paint to print snowflakes and also crafted our own wooden snowman decorations.

One unforgettable day in November that will live long in the memories of the boys and girls was when the power went out in school, the Sam Maguire Cup visited, and Den Joe's arrived for lunch!

One of the highlights of the year so far has been our Christmas Play. The boys and girls worked so hard learning their lines, practicing on the stage and preparing for our show, *Straw and Order*. We had

lots of fun rehearsing for the final performance and the boys and girls were absolutely fantastic on the night!

As the Christmas preparations got under way, we counted down the days with our Advent calendar. We welcomed Ralphie, our elf, into our classroom and on 5th December we visited Santa's Grotto upstairs and wore Christmas Jumpers to celebrate the Late Late Toy Show! We also thoroughly enjoyed our trip to Boyles of Ballyseedy to meet Santa, a Maths Quiz with Michelle Culloty and of course our Christmas Movie night last Wednesday!

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas!

Nollaig Shona Daoibh go Léir!

Ms. Barry

Third Class

It's hard to believe that Christmas is already here! What a busy, exciting and fun-filled term we have had in 3rd Class.

One of the highlights was our incredible Science and Maths Week. We designed our very own marble mazes and enjoyed lots of hands-on learning. A special well done to Jessica, who won the "Guess the Sweets in the Jar" challenge! A big thank-you to Ms. Barry for organising such a fun and engaging week of activities.

In English, we focused on explanation writing. The children chose topics that interested them most and produced some fantastic work. We also had a lot of fun during oral language sessions, exploring some very thought-provoking "I wonder..." questions.

In Maths, we tackled more challenging topics, especially multiplication and division. We have been working hard on our times tables and are becoming really confident with them.

As Gaeilge, we explored Caitheamh Aimsire, An Teilifís, and An Nollaig.

In Science, we learned all about the robin its bright

red breast, cheerful songs and the important role it plays in nature during the winter months. To bring our learning to life, in art we created beautiful robin paintings, capturing their colours and wintry surroundings. These were just some of our many fabulous winter and Christmas themed artworks that have really brightened up our classroom.

In History, we discovered the fascinating lives of Christopher Columbus, who sailed across uncharted seas; Nano Nagle, whose dedication to education changed countless lives and Beethoven, whose music continues to inspire people all over the world.

In Geography, we explored the world of water learning why it is so important, where it comes from, and how it is carefully treated to keep us healthy and safe.

We poured our creativity and energy into our Christmas play, "A Device-Free Christmas," bringing the story to life with fantastic acting, fun-filled performances, and lots of festive cheer. The children truly shone on stage and made it a performance to remember!

Finally, we celebrated some special birthdays this term. A big Happy Birthday to Jack C. and Sam.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Ms. Carroll

Fourth Class

We have had an action-packed November and December in 4th Class with lots of fun and learning taking place. Here is a little glimpse of life in 4th Class the past two months.

In English, we have enjoyed Station Teaching with Ms. Geraghty and Noel. We have had lots of fun playing oral language games such as Articulate, Don't Mention it and Headbands. Our reading fluency is continuing to improve and we have been using the Connecting and Visualising Comprehension Strategies in November and December.

A big highlight of November and December was our preparation for our Christmas Concert – Mrs. Brown's Sitting Room. Drama and Music classes took on a life of their own with children really stepping outside of their comfort zone to get into character. Children enjoyed exploring different ways of using their voices and bodies to give a character a stronger sense of identity. We all had great fun preparing the synchronised swimming, lip syncing and weather report sketches. There was lots of excitement and healthy jitters before going on stage, the children had a ball performing for you all. Thanks for being such a great audience.

In History, we have been learning a lot about shops in the past. We learned that you could buy items on credit and that people mainly shopped daily as they may not have had fridges to keep their food cold.

In PE, we were playing games where we focused on the fundamental movement skill of running and striking with a hand. We had lots of fun playing fruit basket; Rock, Paper, Scissors Tag and Release Tag.

In SPHE we have been covering the topic Growing and Changing. Each child brought in a baby photo and we had to guess who was in each photo. It was quite tricky! Needless to say, we have all grown so much! We had the photos on display in our classroom for any visitors to see and make a guess.

In Religion in November we took time to pause and remember our loved ones who are in Heaven. In December, we have been learning about Advent as a time of preparation, the birth of John the Baptist, the Angelus and the Epiphany.

Finally, a big congratulations to our November and December assembly winners – Kalen, Zoeya, Zoey, Oisín Brick, Mason, Shona and Mia. All the boys and girls in 4th Class have worked fantastically the past two months and truly deserve a wonderful Christmas.

We wish you all a lovely Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Nollaig shona daoibh go léir.

Fifth Class

What an action-packed term this was in fifth class. Everyone has been working really hard in class and are all ready for a well-deserved Christmas rest!!

Following the Halloween break as the evenings became increasingly darker we started the month of November focusing on road safety awareness. The children did fantastic work in creating road safety awareness posters that are displayed around our class and school for all pupils to see.

Science week also took place in November where we began the "Meet the Scientist" programme for 4th, 5th and 6th class children. This programme runs up to February and involves children seeing scientists from different fields explaining their area of expertise followed by a Q&A session from all participating schools. We had great fun doing our STEM paper tower challenge build which really uncovered some really creative design and engineering ideas in our class. We also enjoyed participating in two on-line maths quizzes with Michelle Culloty from Tralee Education Centre as part of our STEM week.

It was great to see all the children's hard work pay off in the run up to Christmas to perform brilliantly in the school Christmas drama. We had a great class representation also in our school music group and school choir for the Christmas shows. A big thanks and well done to everyone involved.

The boys and girls rounded off the term nicely with a lovely, festive trip to Siamsa Tíre to see some of our fellow pupils star in a Brian Carr production.

Lastly, I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and look forward to seeing you all refreshed in the new year.

Mr. O'Connor

Sixth Class

As the Christmas season sparkles into full swing, we are thrilled to share the magic, joy and creativity that have been filling our days in Rang a Sé!

This year, we've been extremely lucky to welcome Pia, our wonderful art teacher, who has helped the class design unique Christmas scenes—complete with twinkling lights! Our festive art sessions have truly brought the Christmas theme to life in a burst of colour and imagination. From bright red noses to cheerful green and snowy blue backdrops, every pupil has created their own unique Christmas masterpiece. These beautiful creations will be proudly displayed in the hall during the children's Christmas shows.

Another highlight of the season has been our Christmas Toy Show Auditions, where the children showcased their amazing talents - singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments. The excitement, practice sessions and build-up to the show brought great energy and confidence to everyone involved.

We also enjoyed some wonderful festive treats together - from cosy hot chocolate in school, to finishing our class novel Wonder, to a fantastic day out in Tralee, where we played basketball and enjoyed a performance of Sister Act: The Musical in Siamsa Tíre.

It has been a magical and memorable run-up to the holidays in Rang a Sé.

Nollaig Shona Gach Duine! (Wishing Everyone a Merry Christmas!)

Ms. Buckley



School Choir

Christmas melodies have been filling the corridors the past few months as our school choir prepared for their Yuletide performances. The first festive performance of the season was in Boyles of Ballyseedy last Saturday morning. The children sang lots of carols with plenty of cheers and clapping from family and friends. Some of the songs included on the day were Jingle Bells, Deck the Halls, The Little Drummer Boy and Mary's Boy Child. It was wonderful to have some of our younger siblings and cousins join in with the choir on the day. Thanks to Boyles of Ballyseedy for treating the children to tasty chocolate marshmallows afterwards. This week the choir performed on both nights of the much-anticipated School Christmas Concert. It was a real treat to hear their lovely harmonies in 'We are the World' and 'Silent Night' sung in three different languages - Irish, French and English. Well done to all involved. The next term of choir will resume on Thursday 15th January and any new members from 3rd Class upwards are very welcome to join our lunchtime practice.

Green School

This year we are focused on the initiative "Global Citizenship Litter and Waste". The Green Schools Committee and the school community are invested in recycling our rubbish properly and taking home our own waste. Our Christmas Jumper appeal was extremely successful and we raised over €300. We hope to invest more into our biodiversity garden and our school grounds. We would like to thank you all for donating and helping our environment a little more. Also remember we are collecting plastic bottles, aluminum or steel cans in our red bin outside the school. We would be grateful if you have recycling from the Christmas to add to our red bin.

We would like to Wish you a Healthy and Happy Christmas!

The Green Schools Committee

Student Council

Our Student Council co-ordinated the Team Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal once again this year. Team Hope's Christmas Shoebox Appeal is an annual campaign that delivers gifts straight into the hands of children affected by poverty. Often these shoebox gifts are the only gift that a child will receive at Christmas and the joy that they bring is incredible.

The shoeboxes were gathered and then collected by local volunteer Mike just after the Halloween Mid-Term Break. The school received 118 shoeboxes which is incredible. Thank you to Mike for collecting the boxes and donations! A massive thank you again to everyone for supporting such a wonderful cause and brightening up Christmas for lots of boys and girls ✨



School Basketball

Both our boys' and girls' basketball teams have been training over the past few weeks during lunchtime sessions. There has been great enthusiasm and teamwork on display as the children developed their skills and prepared for the Tralee Primary Schools League Christmas Tournament, organised by St Brendan's Basketball Club.

Our junior teams (3rd and 4th class) played two games on Wednesday 17th December against Scoil Eoin and Presentation Primary School. with both teams winning both of their games! Well done to all the boys and girls on their fantastic efforts.

Our senior teams (5th and 6th class) took part in the senior tournament the following day, Thursday 18th December. They also played two games against Scoil Eoin and Moyderwell and represented the school with great skill, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Both teams had one win and one

loss.

A big thank you to St Brendan's Basketball Club for organising two fantastic days of basketball. We can't wait for the next tournament in the new year!

Upcoming Dates

- School reopens 5th of January at 8.50

