



# Connect

Respect

Hospitality

Compassion

Justice

Excellence

**Issue 30 June 2020**

# A Message from Mr. O'Brien

Dear Parent / Guardian

As we near the end of the 2019-20 academic year, I would like to thank all of our wonderful staff for their efforts, including Ms. McGrath for compiling this newsletter. Since 12<sup>th</sup> March our staff have tried to find new ways to support our children and families at a challenging time for all. They have also helped with school meal deliveries and sharing resources with families. Our students have continued to inspire us each day with their development of skills in academics, cookery, sports, jigsaws, cycling, gardening, recycling and independence.

Thank you to all families for sharing images and updates of our students continuing to develop new skills as it has given our community a lift on challenging days to see our students being as resilient as ever. It is important to celebrate each of these accomplishments.

We thank all of our parents for continuing to support school work while balancing other commitments during Covid-19. The support of SASPA as always is much valued and I really appreciate the sharing of information amongst our community and offers of assistance.

# A Message from Mr. O'Brien

We await further updates from the Department of Education & Skills to assist with planning for the next school year and for July Provision.

We look forward to celebrating our graduation with school leavers on 25<sup>th</sup> June via Zoom. We are very proud of all students for staying at home and saving lives during this pandemic. We will be welcoming families of new students to our school in late August to help with the transition and know that all in our school community will make our new students feel at home.


A final thank you to one person who has embodied all the qualities that help to keep St. Augustine's School running smoothly each day. Our school secretary, Anne Manning, has inspired many over the last 3 months especially. We salute you Anne and appreciate all that you do for our school.

Yours sincerely

David O'Brien

School Principal





Sample of the ceramic birds  
all the students made before  
the school closed. All the  
birds are safe and looking  
forward to being reunited  
with their owners in  
September

---





Here are some samples of the fantastic art work our students produced during the year for Junior Cycle visual art. Well done Harry Byrne, Bobby O'Brien, Sophie Short and Jack Curran.

---





Tim in PV1 with his dog Beau  
and with and his sister  
Charlotte enjoying their  
trampoline.



Colin O'Brien in  
PV1 having fun  
brushing up on  
his vacuuming  
skills!!!!

Colin has great  
fun cycling  
everywhere  
with his dad  
and also doing  
his daily walk  
to Seapoint.





# Confirmation Class 2020



- Take a look at this lovely group of children who made their Confirmation way back on February 14th before all the Covid restrictions were put in place. It was also a very special day for 3 of our children who received their First Holy Communion.
- They received their sacraments from Archbishop Diarmuid Martin in the church of St. John the Baptist, Blackrock. We had an amazing day and all our students did us proud.
- Many thanks to Fr. John and the wonderful team in school who helped prepare the children for their special day. Confirmation and Communion party in school: Ryan Breslin, Kieran Long, Amanda Lawless, Hannah Reardon, Levi McGarrity, Lennon Dixon, Ben MacDermott, David Hunston, Cian Barnes, Ruthanne Gallagher, Kate Hoskins, Katie Fitzpatrick, Milly Walsh, Daniel and Maria.



**Patrick completed a very tricky jigsaw at home.**

**Katie Fitzpatrick  
(Vocational 1) busy working on her Maths at home!**

**Martha O'Flynn  
(Vocational 1) walking her cat Romeo in the garden.**

**Martha also has a new look and dyed her hair pink!**



# Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

---

On March 12th last our lives changed in the blink of an eye. For me as I reflect on the last number of months since instructions were given by the government to close all schools, I have been reminded very forcefully of what St Augustine's School in Blackrock is all about.

During this Covid 19 pandemic, St Augustine's School community (or family) have all been absent to one another. We can no longer meet and be present to each other. The school building still stands tall on Carysfort Avenue, but it is missing the staff and students which make up the school community and makes St Augustine's the place that it is. The absence of each student/staff makes me strongly aware of your presence at St Augustine's School. Each student's absence from the school at this time allows me to really appreciate your presence, uniqueness and beauty that is in each one of you that attend this school. The teachers and snas who go over and above the call of duty for each student and who look out for colleagues are also missed - your absence is felt.



# Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

---

Along with presence, another building block in our school community that helps us form friendships and deep relationships is the whole notion of touch. When we speak about touch, we can often say to another, what you said to me meant a lot to me, it really touched me, or when a student paints a beautiful picture or plays an amazing piece of music, or simply opens the door to another on the corridor, all these actions can be very touching. When someone says thank you or someone is nice to us, this can touch our hearts at a deep level.

In the past I may have taken these two realities of Presence and Touch for granted but certainly during these weeks when I have been deprived of these two elements I have gained a greater appreciation of each student and indeed staff member and how each of you contribute to making St Augustine's School the amazing and beautiful place that it is.

I believe our school community will be all the stronger because of this difficult time. I believe that we will have a greater appreciation for the presence of each other and of how each person touches our lives by their very presence at St Augustine's, which we have all missed so much over these last weeks.

David O'Connell (School Chaplain)

---

Nick Brabazon had  
a poem printed in  
the Sunday Times  
children's section.

---

# **HANG OUT**

**BY NICK BRABAZON**

**I like to relax at home,  
outside and in my bedroom,  
I can read or write a poem  
about fireworks that go boom,  
and cars that go vroom.**



# Cycling Programme

Ms. McGrath decided, as part of the Green Schools initiative during this school year, to run a programme to help our students become both fitter and more independent. After a lot of discussion it was decided to run a cycling training programme. An Taisce were prepared to give us a very generous grant of €600 and we are extremely appreciative of this. We contacted the company Cycle Right and started to make our plans. This company has provided training for some of our students through other clubs and groups and they are very well thought of.

Families contributed just €5 which was excellent value. The entries came in thick and fast and we were nearly overwhelmed with the demand. We initially had places for 60 students and we got about 95 applications but Cycle Right kindly offered to run a second course after Christmas.



# Cycling Programme

The first course started in November and as the weather was cold and wet we decided the PE hall was the most suitable venue.

Noel and another trainer Graham brought all the bikes and helmets in a van. They got the students relaxed very quickly and used the trick of removing the pedals so that the learner got their balance under control first. Both trainers had a totally relaxed manner with the students and confidence was built very quickly. All students were accompanied by either a teacher or an SNA so a supportive audience was always available. The joy and pride of the children who started out as "very nervous" and ending up flying around the hall was a joy to see.

A word of warning: all our cycle training was done indoors and we did not get to any road cycling, so caution and time will be needed to build up road awareness and safety. There are many good tips available on the Cycle Right website. We are very grateful to the company Cycle Right for the kind, courteous and efficient way they presented the programme.

Thanks to Ms. McGrath for planning the Green Schools initiative. Lastly, well done to all our students who took part; we are proud of you and especially proud of the students who were most nervous and worked on conquering their fear.





Kieran Brennan is having a great time at home, working hard and getting out and about. He's doing great gardening.



# **Anne Golden Vocational Skills**

Technology – our Vocational students might have thought that they were getting away from their typing skills (Touch Type Read and Spell ) in lockdown, but had not allowed for the fact that we could go online... ! Sighs of dismay but the technology students have all been improving their skills regularly on the online platform and have made me very proud. We will have a number of Gold Achievement Certificates for graduation folders, so well done all of you and keep practicing!

# Fish & Chips Cook – Off!!

- It was such a delight to see the wonderful master chefs we have here at St. Augustine's display their efforts for the whole school Fish & Chip Cook - Off!!
- 1<sup>st</sup> place goes to Lana Killilea from Ms. Carroll's class. Lana went all out with her Italian flags and well-presented fish and chip dish. Well done Lana!





**The prize for most creatively presented goes to Anna May Kelly from Mr. Rattigan's class.**

**Anna May made her favourite fish dish –  
“Scampi á la West Cork”.**

**I am sure you will all agree  
they looked delicious and so  
creatively presented!!!**

**Well done Anna May!!**

**Last, but certainly not least, the award for  
best staff effort goes to our very talented,  
Ms. Cotter.**

**The image below speaks for itself.**

**The meal is very well presented and  
fantastically garnished!**

**Well done Ms. Cotter!**





In P5 Ryan has enjoyed being out for a cycle.  
Maria has been busy looking after her flowers.  
Rhys has loved spending time jumping on his  
trampoline.

Dylan had a brilliant time at the top of the Hell Fire  
Club.





**P5 have been working very hard over the last term at home and everyone has enjoyed our beautiful weather.**  
**Some of the class sent in some beautiful pictures as they enjoy their time outdoors.**

---



**We are very proud of all the children in P5 and we miss them very much!!**  
**Enjoy the summer everyone, see you all in September.**

**Ashvin looking after the garden.**



**Tariku has been helping his dad in his allotment.**  
**Hazel has been enjoying time hiking with her family**





## PP7

Well done to everyone in PP7 who is working so hard at home since March. Each Friday we share some of the projects we have completed on a Zoom call. We used recyclable materials we found at home to make robots. Here are some pictures of our robots created by Jazmin, Jamie, Adam, Johnny and Willow.

# Shane Furlong

Shane in our class also became a Twitter star for his '*Keepie Uppie*' football skills. His brother tweeted a video of his skills on twitter and he became a viral sensation. He even appeared in a Scottish Newspaper online. So impressed were some of the Celtic players that Shane received a signed jersey from one of them in the post. Here is Shane with his jersey. If you'd like to check out Shane's skills you can go to

[https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/celtic-fan-downs-syndrome-impresses-21970708?utm\\_source=whatsapp&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=sharebar](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/celtic-fan-downs-syndrome-impresses-21970708?utm_source=whatsapp&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar)



# BUSY IN THE KITCHEN

It was very refreshing to hear and see photos of all the students who were extremely busy in the kitchen over the past number of weeks. Conor McNamee was one such student. Conor has been busy making cookies and nachos! Those cookies look yummy Conor, well done!!

Following on from our newly launched healthy eating policy (which is available on our school website), it has been fantastic to see and hear students becoming more and more interested in the area of healthy eating. Well done to all those who took part in the Food Dudes Programme remotely at home. A reward chart is available on our school website for those who would like to get involved. Many have also found the sensory activities on the Food Dudes website worthwhile. **Remember to achieve a healthy diet we should eat a rainbow** (lots of different foods)!! We look forward to continuing all the great efforts in September.

<https://saintaugustines.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/My-Reward-Chart.pdf>

<https://www.fooddudes.ie/food-dudes-fun-at-home/>





# A Big Thumbs Up

Big thumbs up to Heather McDonald, who has made great efforts in the kitchen during Covid 19. Heather has been busy at home making a range of dishes and sent evidence using very creatively formed video clips.

Those pancakes looked particularly yummy!

Well done Heather.



PP2 have been cooking  
up a storm since the  
school closed in  
March, getting to eat  
freshly baked breads,  
cakes and biscuits.





# PP4 being Independent and Active

PP4 has been doing lots of work over the last few months but we've focused on two main areas, being independent and being active. We've been trying to think of some ways that we can all work on and be more mature and practice being independent. The class has been sharing photos with their classmates of the extra jobs they're doing. We've been really impressed with all the jobs students are doing,

Abi's cooking meals for her family, Conor made rice crispy buns, Sinead's doing the laundry and checking the weather forecast each day, Kieran's making breakfast and baking, YiLing's making loads of smoothies and baking, Hazel's sweeping, cooking, cleaning and gardening, Ryan shared a picture of his chocolate brownies and Cameron's been making burgers, cupcakes and even cleaning up after his dog, Indy.





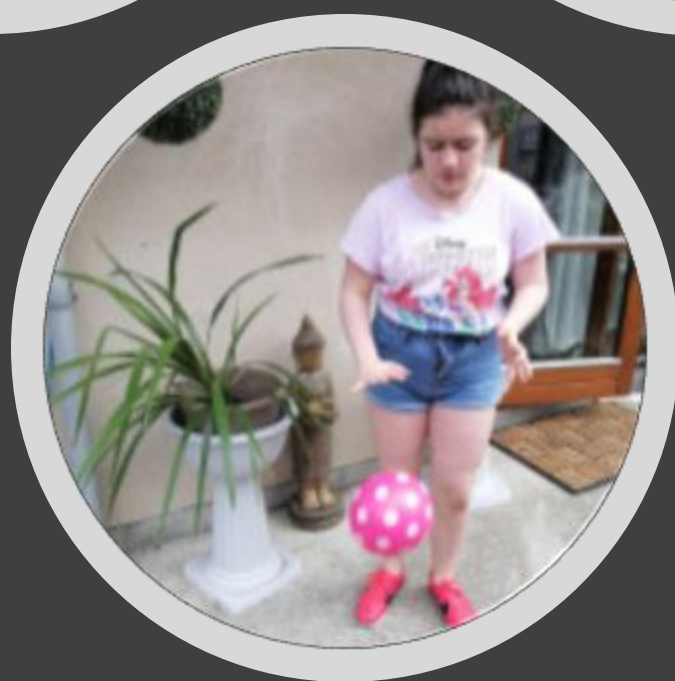


Students have also been working on getting more physically active. They've been sharing photos of riding their bikes, going for walks, runs, playing tennis, Frisbee and trying to get out for exercise every day. Cameron's been learning to paddleboard, Kieran's working on his football skills when he isn't on the bouncy castle. Abi's riding her bike, YiLing's doing exercise classes and Hazel's got a Fitbit and increased her daily walk to over 4km a day! We've been really impressed with how the students have been over the last few months. They've all worked really hard at being more independent and it's great seeing how they're all growing and maturing. We'll have to have a party when we're all back at school.





We have been getting out and staying active, going for cycles, hikes and sports week challenges. We have all really enjoyed our zoom catch ups and staying connected in the different ways that we can. Milly even appeared in the news to honour our frontline workers.







# PRIMARY 6

Seán made a piñata. Wow!

Lana doing the heel to toe challenge.

Well done Lana!

Benjamin cooked  
chocolate brownies...

Yummy!

Martha learned to cycle her bike.

Well done Martha!





**Ben did lots of cycling.**

**Well done Ben!**

**Isabel painted the steps of her  
garden deck.**

**Super job!**

**Georgina doing work on  
parts of a Plant.**

**Super!**

