

# ROBERTSTOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL PARENT'S ASSOCIATION

## Newsletter AUTUMN 2013 ISSUE 4

### In this issue

- Parent's Questions & Concerns
- Aistear Program
- Parent's Association AGM
- Our Teachers
- Calendar
- Halloween, Photos & November Coppers
- Word From The BOM

EMAIL YOUR ASSOCIATION  
RNSPARENTSASSOCIATION@GMAIL.COM

## PA NEWS FOR THE MIDTERM BREAK

### Halloween



On Friday, October 25<sup>th</sup> all children are invited to dress up in their Hallowe'en costumes and walk to school.

We will meet at the hotel in Robertstown village at 8:30am and walk to school together. 2 Euro per child please. The money raised will go towards the cost of putting on the Christmas plays.

Hallowe'en is celebrated each year on the eve of the Christian feast of All Hallows (All Saints). DID YOU KNOW that in the ancient Celtic version of the Hallowe'en feast, turnips were carved out and lit up to look like eerie glowing faces. However, when the North American's first learned the Celtic tradition they did not have turnips to work with and so used Pumpkins, which are in season at the same time of year.

Now, it is us modern Celts who imitate the American practice each year lighting up what has now become known as the Jack O'Lantern. This year why not return to tradition and use a turnip?

### Parent's Questions & Concerns

At the recent Parent's Association Annual General Meeting on Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, it was important for us to raise Parent's questions. Here are the questions that have come up, and the school's response:

- There were a number of parents who raised concerns over the diaries that came home. We spoke to the school and these were temporary diaries leftover from last year. The supplier of the new diaries had some issues with the printing of these causing a delay in their delivery. The new diaries arrived in the school at the end of last week and you should all have received your new diaries by now. If you have not, please let us know.
- Parents also told us that they had paid for the text-a-parent service and not received any texts. Parents who do not use email or Facebook regularly felt they were not getting all the school updates.

The school and the Parent's Association are working together to improve communications and based on complaints about notes coming home in bags last year and feedback from the parental communications survey, most parents wanted updates to go out by email, on the website, and on Facebook. The text-a-parent service is used for urgent short school updates rather than longer notifications about upcoming events or general updates. The following reasons are when the teachers might need to use the text service throughout the year:

- ✓ When a child has no lunch, sports gear etc.
- ✓ When a child is sick
- ✓ In emergencies
- ✓ Class texts
- ✓ Important reminders
- ✓ Changes to normal routine
- ✓ Changes to training or matches
- ✓ To inform parents of important email or web post

The school has agreed that if there are text units left over at the end of any year a smaller charge will be asked for in the following year.

### RNS PARENTS' ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MISSION

In line with the education act 1998 the Robertstown N.S. Parent's Association shall promote the interests of its pupils in co-operation with the board, principal, teachers and students. We will devise a program of activities, which will promote the involvement of parents in the operation of the school, in consultation with the principal. The act states that membership of the association is open to all parents of the students of the school.

**Event Calendar 2013/2014****October 2013**Friday October 25<sup>th</sup>Halloween Costume Walk to school  
8:30am meet at Hotel in RobertstownWednesday October 23<sup>rd</sup>Start of Year School Mass  
10:45am (parents/guardians welcome)Monday October 28<sup>th</sup> – Friday November 1<sup>st</sup>  
Midterm Break**November 2013**

School Photos

Week November 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

Month of November

November Coppers

**December 2013**Christmas plays will be held during the week  
December 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>. (Date to be confirmed)Monday December 23<sup>rd</sup> - Friday January 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Christmas Holidays**January 2014****February 2014**Thursday Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> - Friday Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>  
Mid-Term/School Closure**March 2014**Monday March 17<sup>th</sup>

St. Patrick's Day-School Closure

**April 2014**Monday April 14<sup>th</sup> - Friday April 25<sup>th</sup>  
Easter Break**May 2014**May (Date to be confirmed)  
Confirmation**June 2014**June (Date to be confirmed)  
School Fun Day**Parent's Questions & Concerns  
Cont'd**

- Some parents also believed that the writing and maths copies sold by the school were more expensive than those available in the shops. Most of these copies are "special" or project copies and were offered free to the school as a fundraising scheme. The school has committed to reviewing the prices of these to make sure that they are charging the same or less than what is being charged in the shops.
- The other issue raised by parents before the last PA meeting was about the Student Council. The parents who contacted us felt that more children would have an opportunity to take part if children were limited to how often they could be elected to office. The children drew up their own Constitution for the Council when it was started in 2011. They agreed that children could only serve for two consecutive years. As a result, the two elected children who have already completed their two years have agreed to remain on the council as advisors only and will have no voting rights for this year. The student council suggested that another vote be held in these two classes to decide replacement voting members.

If you have any questions please do send them into your Committee at [rnsparentsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:rnsparentsassociation@gmail.com)  
Remember other parents may have similar questions and it will be helpful to share.

**Parent's Association Annual  
General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting was held at the school on September 25<sup>th</sup>. Parents received a detailed Chairperson's report from Caroline Whyte, in which she laid out the 2012-2013 PA Committee achievements for the past academic year. Sharon Kelly, Treasurer, presented a Treasurer report in which the 2012-2013 financials were explained. Thanks to parent's support through out the year the PA were able to make a donation toward the purchase of 2 white board projectors for the school.

Aidan Watson, BOM Chairperson, attended the AGM and spoke with parents on behalf of the school. Parents who could not make the AGM are very welcome to view a copy of meeting minutes, Chair's and Treasurer's reports in Mona's office at the school.

The 2012-2013 PA Committee resigned at the AGM. New elections took place and the new committee for 2013-2014 is as follows:

Caroline Whyte as Chairperson  
Delia Lynch as Secretary  
Sharon Kelly as Treasurer  
Frances Whelan as Vice Treasurer  
Suzanne Dodson for Communication

The Committee is happy to welcome Adeline Barbour to the newly formed Committee.

The Committee meets on a regular monthly basis. If any parents would like to join us for these meetings, please do drop us an email and we will let you know about our next meeting.

## Aistear

### (the Irish word for 'journey')

We are looking for parents help. The junior and senior infant classes are looking for donations of clothing, toys and goods appropriate to the Aistear curriculum themes currently being followed in their classes:

October: The Bakery  
November: The Dentist/The Doctor  
December: The Post Office.

All donations can be dropped into the school. We will let you know of further themes coming up.

Aistear is the new curriculum framework for young children in Ireland. The framework is for children from birth to six years and was devised by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

The framework provides information to help teachers to plan for and provide enjoyable and appropriately challenging learning experiences for our children. This helps the children in the infant classes grow and develop as competent and confident learners.

## National Parent Council Upcoming Events

Wednesday November 6<sup>th</sup> 7pm  
Anti Bullying Training Session, Kildare Education Ctr. Friary Rd., Kildare Town

Thursday November 28<sup>th</sup>, 8pm. Parenting - The Challenges & Rewards with guest speaker John Lonergan (former Governor former Governor of Mountjoy Jail) Springfield Hotel, Leixlip

For further information and registration please visit [www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie)

## Getting To Know Our Teachers

We've been getting to know our wonderful teachers a little better by asking them some fun and interesting questions on your behalf:



*Ms. Magrane teaches first class*

*Q. What is your favourite colour?*

A. Yellow

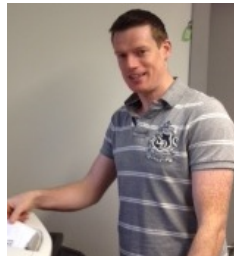
*Q. What is your favorite book?*

A. Angels and Demons

*Q. What is your favourite television show?*

A. Greys Anatomy

*Mr. O'Donoghue teaches second class*



*Q. What sport do you like best?*

A. GAA

*Q. What is your favourite cereal?*

A. Coco Pops

*Q. What do you want to be when you grow up?*

A. A professional soccer player



*Mr. Fitzgerald teaches third class*

*Q. What is your favourite colour?*

A. Green

*Q. What sport do you like best?*

A. Hurling

*Q. What is your favourite cereal?*

A. Porridge

## November Coppers

Have you got any coppers lying around? You may want to have a clean out... We can take them off your hands and put your coppers to good use. Children might like to ask their grandparents for their unwanted coppers.

November Coppers will be a fun fundraiser for the Parent's Association and the school. A bucket will be placed in each classroom and the children will be asked to bring in any coppers from home for donation. The class that collects the most coppers will receive a homework pass.

## School Photos

We are planning to take the school photos the week of November 4<sup>th</sup>. Forms will be coming home before the midterm break.

## Word From The BOM

The DES has recently published the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2013 which the Board is required to put into practice by the end of April 2014. To support this, the DES have provided funding to the NPC to operate free anti-bullying workshops to parents. There is a workshop for parents on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 in Kildare Education Centre, Friary Road, Kildare Town at 7pm. Parents wishing to attend must register online at <http://www.npc.ie/training-book.aspx?contentid=1128>

Based on a number of parental complaints the BOM has reviewed the cleaning contract for the school and employed a new cleaning company who come highly recommended by other schools and who agreed a very competitive price, saving money which the school can use elsewhere for the benefit of our children.

Thank you to Father Moore for all his hard work, dedication and guidance over the many years he spent as a member of the Board of Management. We wish him the very best for his well-deserved retirement after 50 years of spiritual ministry.