

GOOD SHEPHERD NS NEWSLETTER

December 2025

From Ms Veale

Dear Parents/ Guardians,
On behalf of all the staff at Good Shepherd National School, we extend a sincere go raibh mile maith agaibh for the incredible support and engagement you have shown throughout this Term. Your partnership is invaluable and appreciated.

As 2025 draws to a close, it's a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the hard work and numerous achievements across our school. We are so proud of the effort, curiosity, and kindness displayed by all our pupils. From our youngest students to our 6th class leaders, the atmosphere of learning and fun has been truly fantastic this year.

We would like to give a special thank you to Ms. Keane's 6th Class who have worked diligently to put together our Christmas Newsletter. They have done an outstanding job of capturing the voice of the children here in Good Shepherd, sharing our school news and celebrating the rich Christmas traditions from various countries, which beautifully reflects the diverse community that attends our school.

Inside this newsletter, they have worked hard to give you all a snapshot of the many highlights and opportunities for creativity and learning that took place in every classroom during Term 1.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the New Year for an exciting second term, filled with new challenges and achievements.

From all of us at Good Shepherd National School, we wish you and your family a very happy, peaceful, and safe Christmas. Nollaig shona daoibh go leir.

Ms. Veale

Internet Safety

On Friday the 14th November a very nice lady, called Aoife came in to talk to 5th and 6th class. She spoke to us about how to stay safe on the internet.

First, Aoife explained what we should do if we are being cyberbullied. She taught us to either tell a parent, tell a teacher, or tell someone we trust.

Next, we watched an interesting video explaining the danger of comparing our lives to what we see on social media. I thought that this video was really eye-opening. We learnt that it is very important to be careful about who and what we trust online.

Overall, I think that this was a very important topic for us to learn about
Hannah

Peace Proms 2026

The choir is practicing after school on Wednesday and during choir time for the Peace Proms Show. Third Class and Senior Language are practicing hard every day in their classrooms. We are looking forward to the Peace Proms Show on Sunday 8th February in the RDS.

The children will be performing songs such as APT, Roar, Espresso and a musical medley with songs from Wicked, Frozen and more. It will be a fantastic performance!

Freya & Hannah

Slán agus Beannacht

After almost 30 years teaching in GSNS, Ms Jackson has decided to retire. She was inspired to become a teacher after working with children who were deaf. Over the years, Ms Jackson has taught almost every class grade possible in this school. Ms Jackson is especially proud of the achievements of the Green Schools' Project. She told us that she is really going to miss all of our smiles and the sense of family she feels in our school. However, she has lots of exciting plans for her retirement including radio broadcasting!!!!!!



Ms Jackson, all the pupils in GSNS, past and present, want to thank you for all your hard work. And finally.... HUGE congratulations on your retirement. We will all miss you!
Keegan & Sara

Halloween Dress Up

The day before Halloween break, we had a dress up party. Everyone dressed up in silly and scary costumes. During the day, we had a Halloween disco where we all sang our favourite songs. At the end of the day, our teacher, Ms. Keane, gave us all sweets and treats. It was an amazing day, and we all had fun.
Olivia



Science Week

This year we had a really fun and busy Science Week. Every class in our school participated in Science Week. We asked teachers and students to share with us their favourite parts of Science Week with us.

The infant classes carried out lots of experiments with Maggy. Some include the lava lamp experiment, testing which objects sink and float and exploring static energy with balloons.



Every class in the school got to visit the Space Dome and to take part in a Lego workshop.



1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes did science stations in the hall with TY students from De La Salle, the stations explored concepts such as magnetism, floating and sinking, electricity and gravity. Fifth and Sixth Class had a visit from three scientists who work in UCD. They showed us old dirty water and taught us how they clean it in the lab. We thought this talk was interesting and helpful.

This was our favourite Science Week yet!!

Si Yao & Blaise

Maths Week

Maths Week took place in the GSNS from Monday the 13th to Friday the 17 of October.

There was lots of fun maths activities every day in every class including:

Junior Infants: Halloween counting and action song, shape sorting with 4th Class and building 2D shapes.

Senior Infants: Lots of fun maths games including Jelly Number Hunt, Shape Hunt and Smarties data!!!

First Class: learnt about Tetrominoes and enjoyed a Maths Challenge with 6th Class.

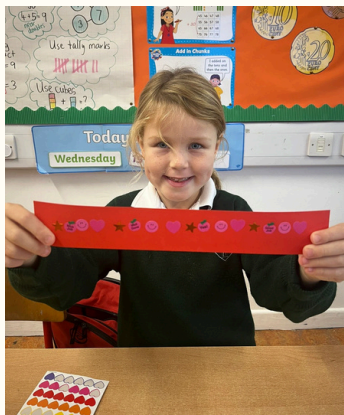
Second Class: Who am I? , Special Maths homework and different maths games.

Third Class: Maths quizzes every day and lots of Maths games.

Fourth Class: Maths hunt, games and fun quizzes.

Fifth Class: Figure me out with Senior Infants and Maths Zoom.

Sixth Class: Figure Me Out, math quiz, a maths presentation to 1st class and Maths Zoom.



Junior and Senior Language Classes enjoyed Figure Me Out and lots and lots of maths games.

Ms O'Donoghue's Class played Uno No Mercy, learnt about tessellations and completed a Figure Me Out poster. What a fantastic Maths Week all round!!!

Freya & Sara

Nutgrove SC Lights

On Wednesday the 18th of November 1st, 2nd, 3rd and the Senior Language class went over to Nutgrove Shopping Centre to turn on the Christmas Tree lights.



Everyone was in the Christmas spirit and the choir came to sing Christmas carols while we turned the lights on. Some of the children even got their photo in the local newspapers!

Overall, it was excellent fun, and we all had a great time!!

Freya & Hannah

Trip to St Tiernan's

On September 23rd , 6th class visited St. Tiernan's Community School. On arrival we were escorted to the science lab where we met the science teacher Mr. Curry. We put on coats and goggles, and he turned on the safety video.

The experiment was to check if a softball, when heated, gets bouncier? First, we measured the softball's height at room temperature. It was less than ten centimetres. Next, we measured the height of the softball from 20-100° using the Bunsen burners. We headed to the cafeteria then, where we got a snack.

Finally, we played sports on the Astro Pitch outside. A great day was had by all.

Isabelle

Christmas Traditions in Good Shepherd NS

In Ireland, we celebrate Christmas by going to mass on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Santa Claus comes on Christmas Eve to deliver our presents while we sleep, and we celebrate on Christmas Day with a feast of turkey and ham.

In our school we have families from all over the world who have many different traditions to celebrate Christmas. We learnt about these traditions so we could share them with you.

Alex in 6th class tells us about Christmas in Poland: 'In Poland, Christmas is celebrated on December 24th. We eat our main meal at dinner time but without meat. It is tradition in Poland to always lay out an extra place setting and leave an extra seat for an unexpected guest.

After dinner, we get to open the presents.' Marina explains that in Russia, Ded Moroz (Russian Santa Claus) and his granddaughter, give the children gifts at Christmas. Traditionally lots of different types of salads are eaten 'We eat salads such as olive and crab salad, and we also eat another salad named herring under a fur coat which is a popular layered salad'

Blaise in 6th class tells us about Christmas in Estonia: 'In Estonia Christmas is celebrated on Christmas Eve. After dinner is eaten, everyone waits for Santa to arrive, and parents and children must do a talent in order to receive presents. Dinner consists of roast pork, sauerkraut and blood sausage. Slippers are also left on the windowsills for the Elves to place treats inside.'

Hannah explains how Christmas in India is different from other traditions around the world. 'Where I am from, Kerala, we go to midnight mass and when we come home, we place Baby Jesus in his manger to symbolize his birth. Traditional Christmas food is eaten on Christmas Day and for us, this includes roast beef, pork fry, roast duck, appam, kappa and biriyani.'

Nina explains that in Moldova, Christmas is not celebrated on December 25th but on January 7th. 'The traditional Christmas food is sarmale wrapped in cabbage leaves with rice and beef inside. We also eat mamaliga which is polenta made from corn and racitura which is meat jelly. Christmas isn't a huge celebration in Moldova, but we still mark the occasion.

It is wonderful to see how all the children from different countries in Good Shepherd National School celebrate in their own way with their families.

Alex, Marina, Blaise, Hannah & Nina

Green School Committee

In our school's Green School committee, we are constantly working together to make the world a better place.

On the 29th of September, we went to Seapoint beach along with various Green School committees across Ireland to pick litter off the beach and do fun activities. We also learned that the ocean is unique and home to so many different creatures and resources! It was a huge learning opportunity for us.

We hope to discover the importance the marine environment plays in all our lives and learn about ways we can help to protect it.

A major way we can help is to recycle our waste and watch out for windy days when plastics can end up in our rivers and then are brought to our sea. This can majorly affect the quality of our water and the living conditions for the animals who live there.

Noé & Helen

GSNS GAA

In our school, Mr O'Gara and Ms Doyle train our GAA team from 2.30 to 3.30 pm every Tuesday. We compete against various schools, and it is always fun and an opportunity to meet new people. To play a match you need a gum shield and football boots.

Recently our school team played against Scoil Mhuire, Whitechurch, at an away match. Unfortunately, we lost by a small margin. Some boys from Third to Sixth class also took part in an exhibition match on the 26th of November. The game was played in very good spirits on the Leicester Celtic Astro pitch.

Both teams really enjoyed getting out to play. There was great sportsmanship and super skills on display. We look forward to playing more exhilarating games after Christmas.

Caitlin & Helen

HSCL Update

It has been a busy term in HSCL since we've come back. We have been delighted with the roll out of the cold lunches and they have been very successful with the children. We have completed the process to procure the hot food, so we hope that will begin early in the New Year. Thank you to the PA for their support with this process.

Thank you to Olena Zubenko and all of the parents who attended her Christmas Floral Workshop. It was a festive morning, everyone made a beautiful and unique centrepiece. Including 6th class who also got creative with Christmas florals!

We are looking forward to welcoming psychotherapist, Dr Richard Hogan, to deliver a talk to parents on Friday January 16th at 9am. Richard's talks are always insightful and relevant for parents, particularly around the areas of anxiety in children and technology.

Wishing you all a peaceful Christmas and a happy and healthy 2026.

Niamh

Cycling Safety Training

All the 6th class kids in the school did a cycle safety training course at the beginning of the year. We had qualified trainers teaching us how to cycle on the roads safely. One of the trainers' names was Peter. Some of the skills he taught us were how to indicate, what the street signs mean, correct starting position, how to wear a helmet correctly, and how to stop safely. The training took place in the school yard on Tuesdays at 1:30pm. We had 8 sessions altogether. We really enjoyed it.



On the second last session Peter took us outside of the school on our bikes. We went on the cycle lanes near De La Salle Secondary School, around some housing estates, and then back to the school. We had fun. Nobody crashed! Thank you, Peter and The Cycling Safety School, for teaching us
Bogdan

Mini Company

Last year the 5th class children were given the task of raising money to buy school equipment. They created a mini company called Christmas in a Box. This company put together a box of Christmas treats for people to buy. Each box had popcorn, a Christmas cracker with sweets, a hot chocolate kit, paper to make a Christmas Wishlist, and a couple of other treats. We made over 400 euro selling these. With the money from the 5th class mini company, we bought lots of PE equipment for the school to share. The variety of equipment included steppingstones, balance cushions, sacks for the sack race, dodgeballs, a giant tic tac toe, three legged race attachments, egg and spoon equipment, a body board, pool noodles, kids scooters, and frisbees. In the end, the mini-company didn't just raise money—it was exciting to see our efforts turn into real equipment that brought more fun and activity for everyone at our school.

Olivia

Festive Jokes

How much does Santa's sleigh cost?
It was on the house.

Which of Santa's reindeer has bad manners?
Rude-olph!

Who hides in a Christmas bakery?
A mince spy!

What do Santa's helpers learn in school?
The elf-abet!

What's green, prickly and flies through the air?
A holly-copter!

Why did the snowman go to the veg market?
He was picking his nose!

What do you get if you cross a snowman and a vampire?
Frostbite!

What do you call someone who's scared of Santa?
Claus-trophobic!

By Brandyn, Kenny, Alex, and Noé

The Cubbie System

We are thrilled to announce that, thanks to a very generous donation from the Matthews/ Tierney family, Good Shepherd National School have purchased the innovative Cubbie System (www.cubbie.info) to support our students with sensory needs.

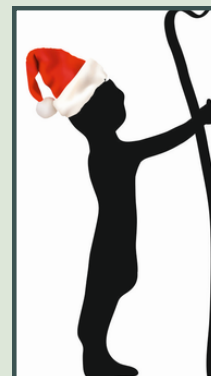
What is the Cubbie?

Many children can struggle to focus in class when their sensory system is overloaded or under-stimulated (leading to difficulty sitting, concentrating, or managing tasks).

The Cubbie is a safe, immersive digital space that provides the specific input a student needs to get their brain calm and organised. Using specialised light, sound, and video, it helps students regulate their senses, so they are ready to learn.

We are excited about how this powerful resource will help our students better focus, manage tasks, and achieve their potential in the classroom. A huge thank you to the Matthews/ Tierney family for purchasing this amazing resource for our school – we would not have been able to acquire this without your help.

Ms Veale



Our Team

This newsletter was researched and edited by all of 6th Class. Thank you to Ms Keane and all of the support teachers.