Term 2 Newsletter, March (2026)

St. Francis Xavier Junior National School

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to our St. Francis Xavier Junior School, Term 2 Newsletter, where you can catch up on many of our recent school activities.

Frozen Heros: We were lucky to have Anthony Galvin visit our school last January. He is a veteran of more than twenty trips to the Arctic, and part of the Global Warrior citizen science project. He is also author of *The Great Polar Fraud*. He is part of a rich heritage of Irish polar explorers, that includes Tom Crean and Ernest Shackleton. The children enjoyed seeing samples of all the specialist clothing used, tales of his adventures as well as the stories of Ireland's most famous explorers.

Wellbeing Week: Wellbeing Week took place in February led by Ms Mulready and her team. This year's theme centred on *Friendship*. The children enjoyed a homework-free, fun-filled week of activities in school, including mindful art, breathing exercises with their favourite teddy, origami, a scavenger hunt and making friendship bracelets. Across all classes, the importance of kindness and being a good friend was explored, with everyone practising our school motto, *'Bí Cineálta'*, meaning *'Be Kind'*.

Cybersafety talk for 2nd classes: Heidi, from Zeeko came and spoke to our 2nd class children recently and offered some essential tips and resources for students to stay safe online.

Engineer's Week: We celebrated a wonderfully engaging engineering week in March, organised by our just as wonderful Ms O' Connor. The highlight of the week was a visit from parents, Neil and Carl, to talk about their jobs as engineers much to the delight of the children. We also welcomed *Formula Trinity*, a Trinity College student-led team that designs, builds, and races formula-style cars in the annual international Formula Student competition at Silverstone. The children also gained insight into how to design and build toy cars.

World Book Day: World Book Day continues to inspire a love of reading among the children. While it was wonderful to see the creativity and effort put into their costumes, it was even more encouraging to see so many children bringing their favourite books into school this year.

Book Fair: Thank you all for your generous support of this year's Book Fair. Thanks to your contributions, we are excited to refresh our classroom libraries and inspire the children to dive into a range of engaging and high-interest books. Thank you also to Ms Cobbe for coordinating and the parents who gave generously of their time to help out.

Seachtain na Gaeilge: Seachtain na Gaeilge took place in recent weeks, led by Ms Corbett. The children enjoyed football (peil) as Gaeilge le Eoin, a ceolchoirm (concert) sa halla, and a session given by Slí Dhala, Comhaltas. They played some tunes for the children, talked and demostrated different instruments. A particular favourite was the harp. Well done to our very own Aaron, Evie and Bobby who took part in the sessions.

Website: Our new school website is up and running and may be a useful point of reference for you throughout the year. It can be found at: https://www.sfxjunior.com/

School Maintenance: Julian painted all of our internal doors and our flowers are blooming at the front entrance. We are currently investigating additional yard markings and activities…watch this space!

Celebrate Minds of All Kinds: We had a colourful celebration of socks this week for World Down Syndrome Day and a '*Footloose'* and fancy free dance for the whole school on Tuesday. We will continue to celebrate Minds of all Kinds on our return to school after the Easter break with some exciting activities prepared by Mr Murphy, Ms O Carroll, Maria and Áine.

Choir: Our 2nd class choir continues to practise each week, and we have thoroughly enjoyed their monthly performances at assemblies. This month, senior infants will have the pleasure of hearing their recital. They also recently performed for our inspectors, who had great praise for their efforts. Thanks Ms Healy and Ms O' Halloran.

Confessions: Our 2nd class confessions continued this week. Well done to Ms Danaher and Ms Creaner/Ms Healy's classes who received their Sacrament of Reconciliation last Thursday and Ms Scannell/Ms Reilly and Ms Nic Clámha's classes who celebrated theirs today. You were all a credit to yourselves, your families and our school.

School Lunches: As you are aware, our school lunches have begun and have been a huge success. Please continue to order early for the following week to ensure delivery and the order may be placed on repeat, if necessary. If you are encountering any issues please conatct customerservice@glanmorefoods.ie or at (01)8976026.

After-school Clubs: Applications for after-school clubs will be sent out after the Easter break. Irish Dancing and Savage Arts may have different arrangements and should be contacted directly.

Wellbeing Evaluation: Last week we had a two-day Wellbeing Evaluation which involved inspectors from the Dept. of Education and Youth come and see how we are doing in the following five areas within our school: Preventing and addressing Bullying, Culture and Environment, Curriculum: Teaching and Learning, Policy and Planning and Relationships and Partnerships. Our evaluation went very well and as always, the real stars of the show were the children. ☆

Lost Property: Lost property will be available to view or collect outside the main door (if dry) on Friday the 27th March, from 8.30 to 11.50am.

School Calendar 2026 2027: Please find attached calendar for the upcoming school year.

Upcoming dates and reminders: All children finish at 11.50am this Friday, 27th March
Monday 13th April: school reopens after Easter break
Monday 4th May, Bank Holiday
Saturday 9th May: First Holy Communion
Friday 22nd May: staff training New Curriculum Framework
Monday 1st - 5th June: School closed
Friday 26th June: School closes for Summer holidays at 11.50am

Wishing you all a restful, safe and happy Easter break. Beannachtaí na Cásca oraibh go léir.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Olivia Barrett

Principal

