

*Scoil Iosaif Naofa  
Bothair an Chlochair  
Cinn Mhara  
Co. Na Gaillimhe*



*St. Joseph's N.S  
Convent Road  
Kinvara  
Co. Galway*

### **Newsletter December 2015**



*Wishing you all a holy and peaceful Christmas, and every blessing and best wishes for the year 2016.*

Dear Parents,

[Nollaig faoi shó go raibh agaibh. Rath agus bláth na hathbhlíana oraibh go léi](#)

Happy Christmas to you all! May 2016 bring you all the peace and happiness you could wish for!

I'd like to start by thanking all the parents who have supported the school and the work of the Parents Association Committee so far this school year. Without the committed, kind and caring parents, guardians, teachers & school staff who are so consistent with their support, our school would look and feel very different.

Your work and co-operation is much appreciated.

We had a fantastic response to the Santa Shop and the Christmas Hamper Appeal.

With your kind generosity, some needy families will hopefully have a happier Christmas. A lot of work goes into gathering, sorting and wrapping hampers. This is quite an onerous task which takes much time to plan and deliver.

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I'd like to thank Santa Claus and his helpers for taking time out to visit our school last week. The grotto looked stunning. Thanks to the parents association who organised all this.

I would also like to thank all of the parents who assisted in Santa's Shop. It was a long day for all of the "Traders" and "Wrappers". Once again there was a fantastic welcoming atmosphere for all. Great success!

I would like to congratulate Ms Smith, Ms Meere, Ms Ryan And Ms Shalloo for their wonderful presentation of The Nativity. All of the pupils were a credit to you their parents. Most enjoyable!

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The **Christmas Eve Children's Mass:** will take place in St. Joseph's Church at **5pm on Thursday 24th December**. As in previous years, children from 3rd to 6th class are invited to participate in singing and playing Christmas carols during the mass. Children taking part in the mass should be seated in the gallery in the church by **4 45pm**. Children playing fiddles, viola and guitars are asked to be in the church earlier at **4 30pm** as their instruments will require tuning. Looking forward to seeing everyone there.

### **6th Class meet up with their friends from the Dolmen Centre for a Christmas Get Together**

On Wednesday 9th of December 6th class headed to the Merriman Hotel with their instruments for a Christmas Get Together with their friends from the Dolmen Centre. Ms O'Keeffe's class had lots of seasonal carols ready for the occasion and they played their hearts out joined by many of the singers and musicians from the Dolmen Centre including Teresa who joined in on fiddle. A highlight for everyone was when three TY work experience students from Seamount, John, Meadhbh and Caoimhe, sang some of the songs from their recent hit musical 'Back to the Eighties'. The gathering was also joined by singers and musicians from the Orchard Centre and we were delighted to hear past pupil Hilary Murray singing Christmas Carols with everyone joining in. It was a most enjoyable event and 6th class are looking forward to many further collaborations with the Dolmen Centre in 2016.

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**Christmas Swim:** You are all invited to attend the Christmas Day Swim in Traught at 1p.m. (note new time this year). If you would like to fill in a sponsorship card I have attached one for you to print out. You can return completed cards to the collectors on Christmas Day. Please read the Irish Water Safety document also attached re '**Full Moon brings Hazard to Swimmers this Christmas**'.

Registration for the New Term will be held on Wednesday 6th January from 8 p.m. - 9 p.m. in the Community Centre.

Wishing you all a safe and peaceful Christmas and best wishes for the New Year from all in Kinvara Swimming Club.

IRISH WATER SAFETY  
PRESS RELEASE  
17 Dec 2015

#### **Full Moon brings extra hazard to Swimmers this Christmas**

The Christmas season is a time when thousands of people around the country will take to our waters to support sponsored swims for charitable causes. This year we have a full moon on Christmas day which is the first time we have experienced this since 1977 and the next time will be in 2034. This will cause strong tidal streams around our coast and cause rip currents to increase in strength and speed. Christmas day charity swimmers occasionally take chances beyond what is acceptably safe, finding themselves left without sufficient strength to climb out of the water due to the cold.

Cold winter waters can cause "cold shock" and hypothermia can set in within a short period, especially if there is a high wind chill overwhelming the fittest of swimmers. If sea conditions deteriorate, then the charity swim should be postponed or cancelled. If you see a person in difficulties do not attempt a rescue for which you are not trained. Make use of any nearby public rescue equipment such as a ring buoy and in the event of an emergency call the emergency services on 112. No alcohol should be taken before the swim and remember to Get in, Get out and warm up.

#### **Charity Swim guidelines:**

- People organising these swims on Christmas Day, St. Stephen's Day or New Year's Day should ensure that they provide comprehensive details of each event to the Irish Coast Guard and local Gardai.
- Each event should have a Safety Officer appointed, who will advise those concerned on safety and have the ultimate responsibility for making decisions in relation to the swim being on or off on the day.
- If the seas are rough and weather deteriorates, they should defer the event to a more suitable day without question - if in doubt do not take a chance on running the event.
- Many participants will not have swum since the summer and the temperature of the water has now dropped considerably. It is a fallacy that alcohol will keep you warm when entering the water; in fact it has the reverse effect and could kill you. Irish Water Safety strongly recommends that no alcohol be taken either before the swim or after the swim and also remind people that they may be in breach of the drink driving laws when driving to or from the event.
- Cold water can cause cold shock and hypothermia in minutes, because the temperature of the water at this time of year will be below 7° Celsius in Fresh Water and 12° Celsius in Seawater.
- Ensure that you have safe access and egress with appropriate shallow shelving

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beaches, steps, slipway or ladders as appropriate. Elderly people should be mindful that steps leading into the water might be dangerous due to the increased growth of algae in wintertime. Organisers must ensure that they have had the access and egress cleaned in advance of the swim to avoid slips and falls.

- Fancy dress outfits can seriously impair your ability to float - please do not wear when swimming.
- Swimmers' remaining in the water for extended periods in a gesture of bravado is not acceptable and leads to hypothermia. Our message is "Get In, Get Out and Warm Up".

Thousands of people are at risk when taking walks by rivers, lakes and shorelines and even more are lulled into a false sense of security when visiting relatives living close to water hazards such as slurry pits, ponds, exposed drains and canals. Irish Water Safety has compiled this Christmas survival guide to staying safe around water over the holiday period.

#### **LIFESAVING WATER SAFETY POINTS THIS CHRISTMAS:**

1. Supervise children at all times, but especially if you are on holidays abroad this Christmas.
  2. Never swim alone in a pool unprotected by lifeguards; in fact one should always ensure that there are lifeguards on duty within the pool area.
  3. Do not engage in any water-based activities after the consumption of alcohol.
  4. Alcohol should not be consumed before your water safety activity
  5. Always wear a lifejacket when boating or participating in other aquatic sports.
  6. In a Marine Emergency call 999 or 112 and ask for the Coast Guard.
3. Avoid cold shock and hypothermia on Christmas and New Year Charity Swims. 7. Stay away from the edge when fishing from rocks or on the banks of rivers, or lakes.

- **Flooding:**

Avoid flooded areas as fast running water and submerged hazards pose a serious threat. Rising waters, fast flowing currents and dangerous hidden hazards are all present with rising and receding flood waters. Move to higher ground immediately using alternative routes to avoid becoming trapped and respect the power of fast rising waters and the dangers of exposed drains and submerged objects. No driver or pedestrian should take a chance passing through flooded roadways. Parents should caution children that floodwaters hide the true depth and that manhole covers may be open and that small streams when swollen are very fast and deeper than normal. Knowing what to do when surprised by localised flash flooding will help avoid property damage, injury and drowning.

What should I do when I hear a Flood Warning?

1. Listen to the national and local radio for met eireann updates.
2. Check on neighbours particularly if they are elderly, infirmed or families with young children.
3. Move your vehicles to higher ground.
4. Move animal stock to higher ground.
5. Check your small craft to ensure they are well secured or moored.
6. Make sure you have warm clothes, food, drink, a torch and radio.
7. Block doorways and airbricks with sandbags or plastic bags filled with earth.

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Floodgate products will work effectively also.

8. Switch off gas and electricity supplies if flooding is imminent.
9. Check the time of High Water in the Newspaper, radio or online.

### **Personal Safety**

1. Avoid flood waters at all times.
2. Carry a mobile phone at all times in case you need to call for help - call 112 or 999 in emergency.
3. Wear suitable protective clothing & a Lifejacket in on or around water.
4. Never try to swim through fast flowing water.
5. Never put your feet down if swept away.
6. Flooding on roads will be deeper at dips and around bridges.
7. Stay away from sea and flood defences.
8. When walking or driving, be aware of manhole covers and gratings that may have been moved due to the heavy flow of water.
9. Take care when using electric appliances in damp or flood conditions.
10. Remember that during the hours of darkness the dangers are multiplied.

#### **• Tides**

As you walk shorelines, keep a close eye on new moon tidal advances and carry your mobile in case you are cut off.

On Christmas day we shall have a new moon. This is the first time this has happened since 1977 and it won't happen again until 2034, a new moon will increase the range of our tides causing higher and lower tides. This will expose large areas of beach and rocks which we don't see during neap tides. Many people enjoy exploring these new areas of beach and in particular enjoy picking shellfish to eat. The risk of becoming stranded as the tide advances can quickly leave people cut off from the shore which is why people should carry their mobile and call 112 if required. All those swimming, boating, surfing, or diving should be aware of stronger tidal streams around our coast over the Christmas weekend and swimmers need to be aware of risk rip currents will have on our beaches.

#### **• Ice**

Should we experience icy conditions, there are dangers specific to frozen canals, rivers and lakes. Children are especially at risk as they are attracted to playing on ice. Constant supervision is the key to keeping children off the ice as there is no such thing as safe ice. Also at risk are individuals who attempt to rescue others fallen through ice. Ice-related drownings often occur when the rescuer gets into difficulty attempting to rescue another person or a family pet. Playing or fishing on the frozen edges of a river, lake or canal is perilous as ice can be quite thick in one area yet dangerously thin in others.

Ice Safety Tips to stay out of danger

1. Rescuing another person from ice can be dangerous. The safest way to perform a rescue is from shore. Use your Mobile.
2. Call for help at 999 or 112 and ask for the Emergency Services. Give your precise location, the number of people in difficulty and any conspicuous building or landmark



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- nearby.
3. Check if you can reach the person using a Ringbuoy and rope, long pole, items of clothing or branch from shore - if so, lie down and extend the pole to the person.
  4. If you cannot reach them then pass out something that will float e.g. a ringbuoy, empty water proof container e.g. oil, milk containers.
  5. Instruct the casualty to keep still to maintain their heat and energy;
  6. If you go onto ice, wear a PFD and carry a long pole or branch to test the ice in front of you. Bring something to reach or throw to the person (e.g. pole, weighted rope, line or tree branch).
  7. When near the break, lie down to distribute your weight and slowly crawl toward the hole.
  8. Remaining low, extend or throw your emergency rescue device (pole, rope, line or branch) to the person.
  9. Have the person kick while you pull them out.
  10. Move the person to a safe position on shore or where you are sure the ice is thick.
  11. All casualties should be taken to hospital even if they appear to be unaffected by their ordeal as they will be suffering from hypothermia.
  12. Never go out on ice alone and especially at night.

If you get into trouble on ice and you're by yourself

1. Call for help.
2. Resist the immediate urge to climb back out where you fell in. The ice is weak in this area.
3. Use the air trapped in your clothing to get into a floating position on your stomach.
4. Reach forward onto the broken ice without pushing down. Kick your legs to push your torso on to the ice.
5. When you are back on the ice, crawl on your stomach or roll away from the open area with your arms and legs spread out as far as possible to evenly distribute your body weight. Do not stand up! Look for shore and make sure you are going in the right direction.

Ice Rescue Tips:

1. Avoid going out on ice and discourage others from doing so.
2. Carry your mobile - Call for assistance from the emergency services.
3. Do not attempt a rescue by going onto ice, rather use any
4. Instruct the casualty to keep still thereby maintaining their heat and energy.
5. Try to find something close by that will extend your reach such as a ringbuoy, rope, pole, branch or items of clothing. Throw this to the casualty. Then make sure you are stable on the bank by lying down or getting someone to hold onto you and attempt to pull the casualty from the water.
6. If you cannot find something with which to perform a reach or throw rescue, try to find something that will float to throw or push out to them. This will help keep the casualty afloat until assistance arrives.
7. Throughout your rescue KEEP OFF THE ICE, and continue to reassure the casualty, keeping them talking until help arrives.
8. All casualties should be taken to hospital even if they appear to be unaffected by their ordeal as they will be suffering from hypothermia.

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Media Enquiries:

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**Annual 5km fun run/walk:** Have you heard the Annual Family Fundraising 5km fun run/walk is happening from Doorus National School this year on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Registration from the NS at 12 pm, event starts at 1.30 p.m. with a cuppa and some goodies afterwards. Adults €10, free entry for children. Organised by Run Kinvara and Kinvara GAA

**1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Class Carol Service:** The pupils in 1st-6<sup>th</sup> classes performed their Carol Service this on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> of December in the school hall. traditional carols along A special reading featuring a piece written by former teacher Moya MacEoin about Christmas in Kinvara 100 years ago formed the main body of the festive readings while the school musicians delighted everyone with special renditions of Silent Night, There Were Three Ships, Don Oíche Úd I mBeithil and Deck the Halls. We wish all the singers and musicians a very special Nollaig Shona.

**Dates to remember:** Confirmation will take place on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2015 in St. Joseph's Church at 11am and First Holy Communion will take place in St. Joseph's Church on **Saturday May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014 at 12.30pm.**

**Spring Mid-term:** the school will be closed Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> & Friday 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2016.

**School re-opening:** The school will re-open on Wednesday **the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2015.**

**School Website:** Our Twitter feed is available on our home page where you will find regular updates from around the school. Follow us @kinvarans. If you can't see our new website you may need to press Ctrl and F5 to reload the site.

As you can see from the Newsletter December is one of the busiest and most exciting month of the school year. I would like to thank parents, teachers and

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children who give their time generously in support of activities arranged within and outside the school in preparation for Christmas.

We would like to wish all the children, parents, staff and Board of Management of St. Joseph's a very Happy Christmas. We thank you all most sincerely for all your hard work and support this term. The last term has been a very successful term and everybody has earned a well-deserved rest over Christmas. We wish everybody a very enjoyable break.

I hope that you all enjoy a Happy, Holy and Peaceful Christmas and a Prosperous 2016.

Beannachtaí na Nollag oraibh go léir.

**Is mise,**

*Dominic Gallagher (Principal)*