



Scoil Mhuire, Clontibret

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19th February 2024

Friendship February 2024 Newsletter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of our Wellbeing Framework of Practice, we are currently actively partaking in “**Friendship February**” which has been organised by Special Olympics Ireland.

There are a number of exciting initiatives taking place to promote friendship in our school throughout the month of February.

These initiatives include:

- **Friendship Assembly**

The February Assembly which was held last Wednesday was led by Senior Infants and was on the theme of Friendship.

- **Whole School Song**

The pupils in all classes have learned the song “Circle of Friends” which was sung by all at our assembly. It is our intention that all classes will learn a number of songs which can be sung when we gather together as a school.

- **Whole School Competition:**

Throughout the month of February, the children will be taught about the qualities of a good friend. On the yard, staff will be looking out for pupils who demonstrate these qualities. When a child is identified for being a good friend, they will earn a petal for their class flower. The classes will be competing to see which class will fill their flower first!

- **Homework:**

During the week beginning the 19th February, the pupils will have no written homework. Instead, we will be asking the children to focus on doing two acts of friendship every day.

- **‘Feel Good Friday’**

We are currently trialing Music on the yard on Fridays throughout the month of February. It was a great success on Friday 9th Feb where there were many dance moves to be witnessed and applauded. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us again this Friday.

- **Fundraiser**

We have decided to hold a fundraiser this Friday, 23rd February. The proceeds will be split between Special Olympics Ireland and Pieta House.

Special Olympics Ireland have organised the Friendship February initiative to promote the importance of kindness and friendship for the athletes of Special Olympics Ireland. Through clubs and competitions, these athletes make life-long friends and learn to include and support one another. All funds raised for Special Olympics Ireland during Friendship February will go towards supporting children and adults with an intellectual disability who are enjoying all of the benefits of being part of a Special Olympics Club across the country.

We are also fundraising for Pieta House as part of our Amber Flag initiative which our Wellbeing Committee are currently working towards. Pieta House is a national mental health charity which provides free counselling, support and therapeutic services.

As our fundraiser, we have decided on an '**Inside Out Day**' where we would ask everyone to wear an item of clothing inside out. This would reflect that what you see on the outside is not always what is happening on the inside, and also to promote how important it is to not keep your feelings inside and to share these with someone you trust.

We kindly ask everyone to bring in a small donation on Friday 23rd February and the funds raised will be divided between Special Olympics Ireland and Pieta House.

- **Compliments**

The children will be engaging in compliment circles or other activities which involve complimenting their classmates in their classrooms.

- **Friendship display:** Our wellbeing display board will be updated to reflect our focus on friendship.
- **Other activities:** The pupils may participate in additional games and activities based on friendship throughout the month of February.

We hope that the pupils will thoroughly enjoy and benefit greatly from the activities and fun of Friendship February.

I thank you kindly for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,
Elizabeth Moorehead
Principal