



Learn to Love, Love to Learn

# SMOTHtalk

CHRISTMAS 2024

It is with great pleasure that we bring you the Christmas edition of SMOTH Talk. Our children have been involved in a wide variety of activities and learning opportunities throughout this first term and this is thanks to the wonderful work of our dedicated staff. If you would like to see more of the life of our school, please go to our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StMarysOnTheHillPS/>

As we move through the Advent season and look forward to the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, it is an important time to prepare for His coming. Our school community has strong bonds and we work hard to ensure everyone in our community is looked after. I would like to thank you all for supporting our fundraising for the Development World Group. The money raised will help the children of Zambia, as decided by our School Council.

***On behalf of pupils, staff and governors, I would like to wish everyone in our school community a Happy and Holy Christmas.***

### Christmas Around the World - Spain

This term we have been learning about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. I was born in Northern Ireland, but my family is from Venezuela. In Spanish tradition they celebrate Christmas by eating special foods, putting up decorations and gathering with all my family in one place. My favourite tradition is getting presents. My favourite thing about Christmas in Ireland is having the whole family together enjoying a Christmas dinner and watching movies. **By Aleph Jimenez-Dorta P4RT**



### Christmas Around the World - Italy

This term we have been learning about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. I was born in Northern Ireland, but my family is from Italy. In Italy they celebrate Christmas by gathering all together in one home and eating special foods such as Panettone. My favourite tradition is spending time with my family. My favourite thing about Christmas in Ireland is getting presents.



**By Salvatore Mancuso P4RT**

### Christmas Around the World - Philippines

This term we have been learning about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. I am from the Philippines and my family are from the Philippines. In the Philippines they celebrate Christmas by celebrating for as long as they can. My favourite tradition is spending time with my family. My favourite thing about Christmas in Ireland is being in school and learning about new traditions. **By Zian Nabusan P4MMA**



### Christmas Around the World - Pakistan

This term we have been learning about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. My family and I are from Pakistan. In Pakistan we celebrate Christmas by decorating our homes and wearing Christmas clothing. My favourite tradition is visiting my friends and relatives. My favourite thing about Christmas in Ireland is playing in the snow to make snowmen. **By Anaya Abubakar P4MMA**



### Christmas Around the World - Lithuania

This term we have been learning about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. I was born in Lithuania and my family now live in Northern Ireland. In Lithuania, they celebrate Christmas by eating a big meal together on Christmas Eve. We normally eat 12 dishes, each one stands for one of Jesus' apostles. My favourite tradition is putting up the Christmas tree. My favourite thing about Christmas in Ireland is seeing what my elf does every morning, she is very naughty! **By Olivia Jablonskaite**





### P7 Visit Edmund Rice College

On the 6th of December, P7JK and P7MOB went to Edmund Rice College to experience what a day in secondary school would be like. It was such a fun day for both classes as we did a variety of lessons including Home Economics, PE, Science and Technology. In Home Economics we made pizzas. They were delicious. In PE, we played football and volleyball, which some of us had never played before so it was a great chance to play a new sport. In Science, we did the hydrogen pop test. How it works is you put magnesium in hydrogen peroxide and hold your thumb over the tube.

Then, you light a stick and put the stick in the tube and it makes a huge pop sound. Technology was the final class we visited and it was our favourite! We all got a block of wood, we used a machine to drill holes into the block and then we used a sander to curve the edges to make it smooth. It turned out to be a pencil holder that we can now use on our desks! We had a lot of fun and it really gave us an insight into what secondary school will be like.

### My Forest School Recount

First we set up a boundary by using tall sticks. Next we explored for bugs. We looked in the trees, we looked in the wet leaves, and we looked in the long grass. We found some wriggly worms. Then we collected green and brown leaves and sticks to make a wreath. The teacher gave us some fake red berries to put on top. My favorite part was sliding in the mud. It was fun and I didn't get dirty because I had my blue wellies on. I learned how to have fun outdoors.

**By Jay McKay P5MD**

### FOREST SCHOOL

On Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2024, this fun activity called Forest School took place. Two P5 classes were walked to Lilian Bland Park to take part in our outdoor activity. To begin our session, we walked to Lilian Bland Park sensibly and then started our activity. When we got there, we looked for bugs and that was my favourite part.

Next, we built advent wreaths with sticks, leaves and berries. Later on we chose if we liked Forest School. I went to the 'enjoyed' face. We packed up like we were never there and we walked sensibly back to school. My favourite part was looking for bugs because I think bugs are really fascinating but sadly I didn't find any bugs. I learned that nature is not about what you do in nature but it is about what you see and how you feel in nature. I loved that I could be with my friends. Next time I would like to play stuck in the mud because there is A LOT OF MUD!!! I would also like to look for bugs again. **By Fiadh Turley**



Primary 2 had a fantastic time during their Forest School lesson, discussing fire safety and learning how to create a fire. They took turns using flint and steel and had so much fun making S'mores with Mrs Ross.



The children have been getting into the festive spirit by writing their letters to Father Christmas and sharing what they are most excited about for Christmas Day. Next week, they are looking forward to walking to the post box to post their letters. Ho Ho Ho!

### P3 Buddy Up!

P3 classes have had so much fun this year taking part in the Buddy Up programme with our Shared Education partners and friends in Carnmoney PS. We worked with Gerard from CRIS (Community Relations in Schools) and each child got a buddy from our neighbouring school. We met together, played games and shared stories. We learned that it's great to be different and that we have lots of things in common with our buddies. Gerard taught us the meaning of big words like 'diversity' and 'empathy', and we sang songs together. We can't wait to meet up with our buddies again in the new year!

**What I like about rain**

The pitter and the patter of it.  
The getting soaking wet of it.  
The bright shining drops of it.  
The over flowing rivers of it.  
The getting cosy and warm in it.  
The lovely hot chocolate with it.

**By Aoife Lewis P3SR**

**What I like about rain**

The coldness below our feet of it.  
The pitter and the patter of it.  
The drenching and the splash of it.  
The wetness and the soak of it.  
The coldness and the darkness of it.  
The banging and the soak of it.

**By Aidan McAvinney P3SR**

**What I Like About Rain**

The grey blue mood of it  
The soggy, drippy wet of it  
The heavy lash of it  
The lashing splash of it  
The drip, drop, plop of it  
That's what I like about rain!

**By Annie Prendergast P3MM**

**What I like about the sunshine**

The shine and sparkle of it.  
The glint and feel of it.  
The brightness and the heat of it.

**By Corrin Elliot P3SR**

**What I like about snow**

The cold tingle of it  
The slush and crunch of it.  
The whoosh and shush of it.  
The white and slip of it.  
The fluffy touch of it.

**By Osaicr Milne P3SR**

**What I Like About Sun**

The shining light of it  
The dazzling bright of it  
The blue skies of it  
The yellow rays of it  
The happy days of it  
That's what I like about sun!

**By Ben Maxwell P3MM**

**What I Like About Snow**

The cold crunch of it  
The happy joy of it  
The slip and slide of it  
The Santa's sleigh ride of it  
The nippy crunch of it  
The melting slush of it  
That's what I like about snow!

**By Fintan Beattie P3MM**

**What I Like About Thunder and Lightning**

The crash and flash of it  
The wrecking rage of it  
The electrifying zap of it  
The zapping shock of it  
That's what I like about thunder and lightning!

**By Cillian Campbell P3MM**

**What I Like About Snow**

The shimmery dance of it  
The white delight of it  
The cold crunch of it  
The frosty flakes of it  
That's what I like about snow

**By Sophia O'Neill**

**It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...**



We were so proud of all our P1 children. They told the Christmas story so beautifully!

The children in P1 have been having great fun during Play Based Learning! They have been learning all about Christmas traditions and have had great fun taking on the roles of Santa, Mrs Claus and Rudolph!



**WHOOOPS-A-DAISY ANGEL**

P2 children worked very hard to learn their lines and songs for their Christmas play 'Whoops-A-Daisy Angel'. They spoke so clearly and sang beautifully! The children all looked amazing in their costumes. We are so proud of you all!



### Christmas Activities with class DMCE

Mr McEvoy's class have been very busy over the last few weeks with lots of different activities. These included making bird cakes that we hung around our playground – we saw lots of birds enjoying their treats! On Thursday we are going to have a Christmas Special in our class with lots of singing.

Many thanks to Evie's granny for donating £400 to our class. She crocheted some wonderful pieces and sold them at a Christmas market. We really appreciate this – and have already been putting it to good use purchasing fun resources for the class.



### My Forest School Recount

**Thursday 5th December 2024**

First, we set up the boundary using tall sticks. Then we explored to find bugs. Next, we searched for leaves and sticks in the forest and grass to make a wreath. The teacher gave us some fake red berries to put on top of the wreath to make it look real. My favourite part of forest school was jumping in the muddy puddles like Peppa Pig. I loved walking up and down with my friends. I learned about nature and how to have enjoy the outdoors.

**By Christian McAtamney P5MD**

### P5 Carol Service

Families of P5 children were treated to a beautiful and memorable telling of the Christmas story through music and word in our church this Advent. The children worked extremely hard to learn lines and lyrics and their singing was exceptional. We are so proud of them. This is an important liturgical and community event and the children rose to the occasion and warmed everyone's hearts. Many thanks to the whole P5 team who worked so hard with the classes and instilled confidence in each individual child.



Merry Christmas

### Active Travel

This year we aim to improve active travel within our school community. Our main topic for Eco schools this year is Active Travel and we are working towards our Sustrans Silver award. So far, several workshops have been organised with Sustrans.



On Cycle to School week in October the Eco council Cycle spies left prize tickets on bikes and scooters in the school. P1 and P2 benefitted from a workshop on 'Transport on two wheels' and P3 had a Safe cycling workshop.

On Road Safety week the whole school had an assembly on road safety delivered by Beverly Gaston and the Eco Council. The children learned the importance of being careful on the roads and how important it is to be seen. Alongside this the P1,4 and 7 classes had workshops on 'Be safe Be Seen.' To round off 2024 we had our Christmas jumper dander. Our walking bus was successful and lots of children met at the library and walked to school together. Thank you to everyone who supported our Active travel initiatives, and we look forward to more in the New Year.

### Camogie Tournament

On Tuesday 3rd December, our amazing camogs played in a tournament at St. John's Gaelic Association Club. We played three matches which were extremely close but our girls made it through to the final! We were so proud! The final was on Friday 6th December. The Primary 6 and 7 team played against four different schools. We all played absolutely brilliantly! It was so close that the referee had to put it down as goal difference and the girls placed second overall! We are so pleased with ourselves for the hard work and determination we put in!

**By, Evie Wagstaff and Isla McGarvey P7MOB**

### Forest School Recount

On the 5th of December we arose early to walk to Lillian Bland Park with P5MD to go to a fun place called Forest School. Firstly, we all walked down to the park in partners to go to forest school. It is also known as a fun place where we do different activities from the classroom. Secondly, we explored our boundaries and found some bugs for a few minutes. Later we started with looking for and collecting sticks and leaves to make Advent wreaths! After that we went to a smiley or sad face to show if we enjoyed forest school or not. Finally, we packed up and started normal school again. My favourite bit was getting mucky. Next time I think we should make a manger that Jesus would have laid in.

**By Sonny Briers P5WW**