

# ACE Schools Programme Newsletter for parents



Happy Easter to all the schools in the *ACE Schools Programme*! Schools have been very busy doing lots of healthy activities since Christmas.

**St Gabriel's NS, Kilconnell, Co Galway** are gearing up to do their annual 7km Fun Run on the 12th April. We hope the whole school community has a wonderful day out and that the sun shines! There's more healthy activity in the **Sacred Heart NS, Granard, Co Longford**, with the school holding an Active School Week in February in preparation for their Active School Flag.

On top of all this exercise, pupils have been busy doing some healthy cooking in schools such as **Kilcleagh NS (Westmeath)**, **Streamstown NS (Westmeath)** and **Ballyboy NS (Offaly)**. Well done to all the pupils taking part!

Read our *News* section to find out what other schools in the programme have been doing to promote health!

Please remember that the Community Nutrition and Dietetic Service is available to help if you have any concerns about your child's health. Please feel free to contact the service on 044 939 5518.

Wishing you a very happy Easter,

## Beautiful smiles!

There will be a lot of chocolate going around during Easter, and it's important to remember to keep our teeth nice and clean.

Here are some top tips on making sure your smile stays lovely:

- Brush twice a day—in the morning and before bed
- A pea-sized amount of toothpaste is all that's needed
- Brush for 2 minutes
- Do not rinse your mouth with water after spitting out toothpaste! Keeping the fluoride in the mouth helps make your teeth stronger
- Floss after brushing for healthier gums
- Change your toothbrush every 3 months
- Children under the age of 7 years should be supervised when brushing
- Drink 1.5 litres of water every day—water helps protect our teeth from acid attacks during the day.

### Keeping active over the holidays

During the Easter break, why not check out your local nature walks or landmarks. Try to get out in the fresh air and relax for a few hours! Visit [www.discoverireland.ie](http://www.discoverireland.ie) to see what's on in your area. You can also visit [www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie) for lots of tips on keeping active!

### Chocolate, chocolate, everywhere!

We all expect that we will probably eat more chocolate over Easter. A good tip is to eat chocolate *after* your meals and snacks, so that you still eat healthier foods first. This way, your stomach will be a little fuller so you might not eat as many treats!

### **Sacred Heart NS in Granard, Co Longford**

Ms Drake and the ACE Team in the Sacred Heart NS are continuing to work towards their Active School Flag this year. In February they held a very successful and fun-filled Active School Week. During the week, pupils were encouraged to take part in activities such as Gaelic football, soccer, rugby, Zumba dancing, Irish dancing and traditional playground games. All pupils and teachers had great fun taking part in all the different events, especially the Zumba, since most people had not tried it before! Brilliant work!

### **St Gabriel's NS, in Kilconnell, Co Galway**

St Gabriel's have been busy promoting positive mental health amongst their pupils this year. World Book Day was on the 5<sup>th</sup> March and to celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils did a 'paired shared reading' activity with the pupils in Junior & Senior Infants. All pupils got the opportunity to work with someone that they had not previously spent time with and enjoyed it very much. The 3rd class pupils have also just completed their Friend's for Life programme with Ms. Slattery, to help promote well-being and positive mental development.

The school also organised a 'March-a-thon' for the month of March. For this, the pupils walk around the pitch during lunchtime; 210 laps of the pitch is equal to a marathon. The teachers have also provided the 'pocket planners' from the Irish Heart Foundation to pupils to help them to record the amount of activity they do for each day of March. We hope this is going well for everyone! Well done on all this brilliant work!

### **Kilcleagh NS in Kilcleagh, Co Westmeath**

Kilcleagh NS have been very busy helping their community to become healthier. The pupils have been doing lots of extra physical activities, such as yoga and dance, on top of all their usual sports. The pupils have also been learning to cook healthier meals. They took part in the Cool Dude Food cookery course for 5 weeks and learned lots of healthy tips and recipes. A great report from one 6th class pupil on their experience of the course is below.

*For the last five weeks, sixth class have been going down to the old school for cookery classes. We made delicious, healthy dishes that were easy but fun to make at home.*

*My honest opinion is that I loved the whole experience, learning how to peel potatoes and using forks and knives properly and I'm happy that the fifth class now will have their chance next year to try what we did. My class was the first class to ever try this so it's good we all behaved but still having fun at the same time.*

*My favourite dish we made was the Shepherd's Pie. It was absolutely delicious. I also loved the burgers and wedges and the farmhouse vegetable soup.*

*On Sunday 7th December I made the wedges at home and I put everything we did on them. They are very simple to make, all you need is potatoes, oil and paprika. I made them and my mam said "They are better than the ones you would buy," which is true, they are lovely.*

*I loved the experience. Fingers crossed we can do something like this again. Thanks teachers!!*



(Left) 6th class pupils from Kilcleagh NS getting their certificates for taking part in the Cool Dude Food cookery course. Well done to everyone involved!