



Cloonakilla N.S. Bealnamulla | Athlone | Co. Roscommon

February Newsletter 2024

Dear Parents,

Please find below details of forthcoming events in our school and events we took part in.

Catholic Schools Week

We celebrated Catholic Schools Week from Jan 22nd-26th. I began the week with a prayer service for 3rd-6th classes and Ms Kelly introduced the programme each morning with a thought for the day. All classes partook in various activities which focused on the Catholic ethos which permeates our school. Children were afforded an opportunity to reflect on the theme for this week which was "Communities of Service".



As part of Catholic Schools Week 5th & 6th classes celebrated Grandparents Day. Grandparents were invited to visit the classes and share their faith and life experiences with the children. The children in turn had an opportunity to show their love and appreciation for their grandparents. Afterwards everyone enjoyed refreshments some entertainment and a chat in the school hall.

Dates for your Diary

First Confessions: Monday, March 11th

Non Uniform Day: Friday, March 15th

The Sacrament of Confirmation: Thursday, April 18th @ 11.00am

First Holy Communion: Saturday, May 11th @11am

School Closures

Midterm break: Thursday & Friday 15th & 16th February

Polling Day: Friday 8th March

St Patricks Day: Monday 18th March

Easter Holidays: Monday, 25th March to Friday, 5th April

Sacramental Preparations

2nd & 6th classes are preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation so we remember them in a special way in our thoughts and prayers this year.

First Confession

First Confessions will be held in the school on Monday, March 11th during the school day. Preparation for First Confessions has commenced. We thank you for your support and participation.

Confirmation

In preparation for Confirmation 6th class pupils will complete a powerpoint presentation explaining the significance of their chosen name.

Fr John Deignan will visit the school on Ash Wednesday to distribute ashes to children from 3rd class to 6th. This will mark the beginning of Lent.

Student Council

The Student Council continue to support and be the voice for all the children in the school and are actively involved in decision making. Their most recent role was to meet and question prospective vendors for the new school lunch scheme. They were very thorough and decisive when it came to questioning the vendors and they also sampled the choice of meals on offer so they could make an informed decision.

The Student Council also worked collaboratively with the Parents' Association to run a competition to design a new sport's singlet for the school. They informed the other children about the rules of the competition and distributed the template to all those who were interested in entering.

Congratulations to Adam Fahey in 6th class who was the overall winner of the competition and he won a voucher for his fantastic effort.

Stay Safe Programme

The Stay Safe Programme is currently being taught in Junior Infants, 1st, 3rd and 5th classes. This is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protective skills by participation in lessons on safe and unsafe situations, bullying, inappropriate touch, secrets and the dangers of communicating with strangers. It is very important to encourage your child to discuss the content of these lessons at home. Parents can learn more about this programme at www.staysafe.ie. Our children's safety both in the real and virtual world is a priority for us all. Please check your child's online activity at regular intervals to ensure their safety.

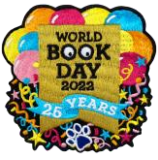
STEAM in Education (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics)
On Friday 12th January 2024, 5th & 6th Class students engaged in a STEM event with



Thermofisher. The students were given the opportunity to make slime! This event was organised by Frances Reilly who is a parent in the school. Frances and her co-workers very kindly gifted every student in 5th & 6th Class with a Science Experiment pack – scientific goggles, notebook, lab coat and gloves. Thermofisher also supplied all the resources for the slime experiment. We would like to thank Frances Reilly and her co-workers for this wonderful event and for their generous contributions to learning at Cloonakilla NS.

SEN

The SEN team are working with class teachers and pupils to support literacy and numeracy throughout the school through a number of initiatives. Guided Reading is supported from 1st class to 6th class. Literacy Lift Off has been completed in 1st Class. It has commenced in Senior Infants (Mrs Martin) and will run for the next 8 weeks. Parents need to support their child by reading the familiar book they have in their folder every night. The Reading Recovery Programme is also offered to children with emergent literacy needs. Mrs McCabe is our Reading Recovery Teacher. The SEN Team also respond to and support children with social, emotional and behavioural needs with transient to long term interventions. We appreciate the ongoing support of parents which adds to the success of all these initiatives. We are currently without the service of and National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) psychologist and awaiting appointment of same.



School Meals Programme

Cloonakilla NS has been chosen to avail of the Hot School Meals Programme from April 2024. We have completed the tender process and our chosen supplier will be The Lunch Bag Company. Some of you are familiar with the workings of this company already as they provided cold lunches to our school pre-Covid. We hope to have the scheme up and running during April. Essentially it means that each child will be eligible for a hot meal of their choice every day. Further details will be provided in March.

Credit Union Schools' Quiz

Cloonakilla NS entered two teams into the Credit Union Regional Quiz on Sunday 28th January T.U.S (Technical University of the Shannon). Both teams secured an admirable Top 10 finish on the day, ending on 60 points each. Unfortunately, this was not enough to advance to the Provincial Round. Senan Moran, Josh Daly, Edie Mullally, Ava Cooney, Georgia May Harney, Melissa Alves Passos, Kate Lynam and Nicole Daly represented our school on the day.

World Book Day

World Book Day will be celebrated on Thursday, March 7th. Special activities will be held in all classes to mark this event and to promote further interest in reading. Some classes may opt to dress up as their favourite book character. This is entirely at the discretion of the class teacher. Please take a few minutes out of your busy schedules at home to mark this occasion with your children. Book tokens will be distributed to all classes so this is an opportunity for the children to purchase a book of their own choosing.

Spelling Bee

The Eason's Spelling Bee county final is due to take place on April 25th. Venue to be confirmed. Following an in-school competition, Bobby Ryan from Mrs Cronolly/Ms Muldoon's 6th class emerged as our school representative. We wish Bobby the best of luck in the competition.

I.C.T.

Here at Cloonakilla NS we have our very own "Tech Team". The following pupils are members of our "Tech Team".

Keelin Harney, Luke Corless, Felix Bonislawski, Sophie Walsh, Christopher Keleghan, Emily Dolan, Conor Keegan, Sarah Noone, Cian Nugent, Eleanor Neary, Ellen Curley, Taylor Kelly, Edie Mullally, Ryan Hajioussi, Aoife Ryan & Alisha Dolan. They are very helpful and assist in the day-to-day management and distribution of our devices. They also ensure that devices are stored and charged correctly within classrooms and report back when procedures are not being followed!



All classes from 2nd upwards use the Spellings for Me Programme for testing on a monthly basis. The Lexia Programme is another online programme that pupils use on a daily basis in our school. 5th and 6th classes have been using their I.C.T. skills recently to compile SESE projects through the use of Powerpoint and Google Slides. They have also used Microsoft Word to type narratives. Classes also regularly participate in online zoom calls run in conjunction with Education Centres in Ireland. Workshops can vary in topic from meeting a zoologist to perhaps online maths quizzes. They provide an opportunity to communicate with other schools in a safe forum and within the safety of our classrooms. A huge thank you to 6th class pupils; Ruth Byrne, Georgia May Harney & Edie Mullally who presented two very successful and worthwhile Christmas Kahoot Quizzes through the platform of Zoom to both 5th & 6th classes and 3rd & 4th classes. They were most impressive hosts and navigated their way through the use of multiple technologies with ease. Well done girls!



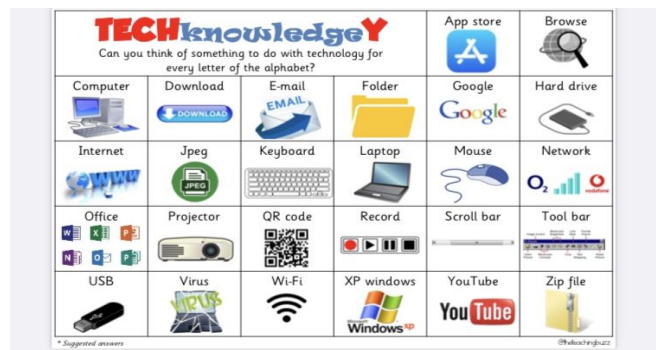
On Tuesday February 7th we participated in Safer Internet Day (SID). This is an EU wide initiative to promote a safer internet for all users, especially young people. We learned about various online dangers, how to deal with them and changes we can make to ensure a safer internet environment for all. We would encourage you as parents to monitor and restrict your child's usage of the online world.

We are currently in the process of upgrading interactive white boards in the junior end of our school. These IWBs will help us develop our skills further in the ever changing world of technology.

Monies raised from sales during our recent Art Exhibition will be put towards the purchase of new tablets for downstairs. Do you know of any companies who may be upgrading laptops and would like to donate them to our school?

Do you have any ICT knowledge that you feel would be of benefit to our school community and would like to share with us?

Please contact Ms.Cunniffe at her class email: cloonakillans5th@gmail.com



Sport

Soccer:

Our school has registered for the Spar FAI Primary School 5's Programme. We will enter one boys 'and one girls' team and will choose a panel from 5th - 6th classes in the coming weeks.

Gaelic:

GAA coaching continues each Wednesday with Alan Fitzpatrick from Clann na nGael. Alan is currently coaching Senior Infants and 1st classes. Other classes will receive coaching in the coming weeks.

Cloonakilla NS have an upcoming Gaelic blitz in Johnstown on February 22nd. The school will be represented by pupils from both 5th and 6th classes. Trials for the school gaelic team will be held next week.

Tag Rugby:

Darin Classen (Buccaneers Rugby Club) has been coaching tag rugby in 2nd class for the last 4 weeks. He will return to complete a taster session for younger classes after the mid-term break.

Active Schools:

The children of Cloonakilla NS are very excited to participate in the Run Around Europe running challenge that is due to commence on Monday February 26th. Senior classes will be paired with junior classes in a competition to see how many European cities each of the class pairings can run to during the 4 week block. There will be a prize for the class grouping that manages to run the furthest.

Cycle Right Programme

6th class pupils will participate in a cycling safety programme commencing 21st February which is organised by Roscommon Sports Partnership. They will learn essential safety and competency skills such as bike handling, correct use of helmets, bike safety checks and how to navigate in various road environments. They will get the opportunity to practise their new skills in the school environment.

Funky Fridays

Funky Fridays are making a return to Cloonakilla NS. Every Friday music will be played during lunch time to promote dancing, fun and most importantly movement! Everyone is very excited to show off their dance moves!

Amber Flag

The Amber Flag Committee are currently approaching local businesses requesting prizes and contributions for our Easter Raffle. This raffle will raise funds for board games and activities for all classes to use during wet breaks and Golden Time.

Any parent who would like to contribute a raffle prize (brand new items only please) or make a donation is greatly encouraged to do so. Tickets for the Amber Flag Easter Raffle will be on sale after the midterm break and the raffle will take place immediately before the Easter holidays. It's always a fun event and we thank you for your support.

Green Schools

Greener Spaces Award: Our school won a "Greener Spaces Environmental Award" recently from Roscommon County Council. The Greener Spaces competition is a new environmental competition. It acknowledges the contribution of community groups, schools and volunteers, in enhancing their local environment and using resources sustainably.

Our school was awarded "Best First Impressions Award" for our yard, gardens and surrounding areas of our school. Members of the Green Schools Committee attended the award ceremony in the Roscommon Arts Centre. This is a significant achievement for our school and well done to everyone involved.

Green Flag Renewal Visit: Jonathon Jones (Roscommon Co Co) will be visiting our school in March to review our Green Schools Programme, meet with the Green Schools Committee, view the green schools programme in operation and speak to some classes. The Green Schools Committee are currently working on a PowerPoint to present to all classes this month. This will review our work over the last two years and remind everyone about our theme **Marine Environment**. Marine Environment Week is on the 15th to the 19th of April. The GSC are currently planning activities for this week.

As part of this theme 2nd Classes have taken part in the The Sea Keepers Project:

This project is an initiative of the Green Schools Global Citizenship and Marine Environment theme. Both 2nd classes will engage in an interactive marine lesson once a month relating to Irish marine species.

National Spring Clean: NSC will take place on the 7th of March for 3rd and 4th classes.

Litter, Waste & Amp; Saving Energy: 2nd class are doing a fantastic job keeping our yard litter free every lunch time! The Green Schools Committee



encourage and remind all pupils to bring rubbish home from their lunches to keep our waste in our school at a minimum. All classes are encouraged to be mindful about recycling, reducing waste and saving energy not only in school but at home too.



Green Schools' Committee

Non-Uniform Day

A non-uniform day will be held on Thursday, March 16th. Children will be encouraged to wear green on this day as it marks Green Schools Awareness Day and it also coincides with the end of Seachtain na Gaeilge.

Irish Sign Language Programme in 5th & 6th Classes

5th and 6th classes have commenced an Irish Sign Language Programme (I.S.L.) with tutor Louise Deane. These classes and accompanying resources have been funded by the Department of Education through the Primary Languages Sampler initiative. The classes take place every Monday and will continue until Easter.

I.S.L. is the first language of 5000 deaf people in Ireland and approximately 40,000 people in general will communicate using I.S.L. (family, friends, colleagues, etc

Local history tour/History

1st Class will visit Derryglad Museum, Brideswell on Wednesday, 8th of March as part of their history programme. Here they will have an opportunity to enjoy many artefacts from the past and get a glimpse of what life was like long ago. Teachers will furnish you with details nearer the time.

Junior Infant Enrolment

Our Junior Infant Enrolment for September 2024 is complete.

School Photographs

County Photos visited the school on Thursday, Feb 1st. The sample cards have been distributed. We request that you order online by Friday, 1st of March. Orders must be made by scanning the QR code on the back of proof card or by following the instructions. **LATE ORDERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** The photographer will revisit the school on Friday, 19th April for Confirmation photograph for 6th class.

Remembering

Please remember in your prayers Denise and Gerry Collins (parents of Mia 5th class and Jay 4th class) who both continue to battle serious illness. They are all in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time. Sincere thanks to the entire school community who gave so generously to the idonate fund.

<https://www.idonate.ie/crowdfunder/SupportDeniseGerryCollins#:~:text=https%3A//www.idonate.ie/crowdfunder/SupportDeniseGerryCollins>

Parents Association

The Parents Association would like to thank all parents/guardians for their contributions over the year. We have recently run a competition to design a singlet for the schools' basketball and cross country teams in conjunction with the student council. The children were

so talented with their designs and the overall winner was Adam Fahey. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our two sponsors who have generously sponsored a set of singlets each; **KO Financial and Specsavers Athlone.**

Save the dates:

Flag Day, Supervalu Monksland – 23rd & 24th February.

Family Walk – Saturday 15th June.

Your help and support for these events would be greatly appreciated.

We will be seeking volunteers to help with the Flag Day, if you can spare an hour or two; we will be sending out a message soon with further details or drop us an email to

pa.cloonakillans@gmail.com

I would like to wish you all a very enjoyable midterm break.

Kind regards,

Mary O'Rourke, Principal