



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

## NEWSLETTER, MAY 2024

Dear Parents,

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

### **Sacraments of Confirmation & First Holy Communion**

We congratulate our 6th class pupils who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on April 18<sup>th</sup>. A special word of thanks to the 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> class pupils who sang and played their tin whistles so beautifully on the day! 2<sup>nd</sup> class will celebrate the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on May 11<sup>th</sup> in Ss Peter & Paul's Church, Athlone @11am. At present they are very busy putting the final preparations in place.

It is very important that all children are in their seats by 10.45am. Each family will be assigned a seat that will be labelled with their name. First Communion Child must be seated at the edge of the seat at the middle aisle.

Please do not take any photos during the Mass as there will be an opportunity to do this when the Mass has ended. You are then free to photograph. 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> classes will provide the choir on the day. I would be very grateful if as many choir members as possible could attend.

The Parents Association invite you after Mass for refreshments in the school hall. This is always a memorable event for the children and their families.

### **Hot Lunches for Schools /Healthy Eating Policy**

As you are aware Cloonakilla NS will be participating in the Free Hot Lunch Scheme and we are pleased to announce that the launch date for the new hot meal service is May 24<sup>th</sup> and start date is May 28<sup>th</sup>. On the launch date a member of the Lunch Bag Company will attend each class and distribute an activation code letter for each child. This code will be home in your child's bag on the 24<sup>th</sup> May. This will contain all the information you need to order. Parents have until midnight 36 hours ahead of service day to order their meal. A default meal will be sent for your child in the event you forget to place an order. We would ask you to encourage children to taste new foods and change their orders regularly to avoid menu fatigue. It is important the Healthy Eating Policy must be adhered to. A small treat is permitted on Fridays only. Please do not include a treat at any other time. Children attending after school activities in the school must also abide by the Healthy Eating Policy.

### **School Tours**

School tours have been organized as follows:

Junior Infants: Glendeer Pet Farm & Jump for Joy on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> June

Senior Infants: Glendeer Pet Farm & Jump for Joy on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> June

1st Class: Turoe Pet Farm on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> June

2nd Class: Let's Go, TUS, Athlone on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May

3rd Class: Let's Go, TUS, Athlone on Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May

4th Class: Bay Sports, Athlone on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> June

5th & 6th Classes: Wildlands, Moycullen, Co Galway, on Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> June

Class teachers will provide you with exact details closer to the time. Children with medical needs will be accompanied by a staff member who is responsible for the administration of medicines.

### **Dates for your Diary**

First Communion: Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am

School Tours as above

June Bank Holiday: School closed Monday June 3<sup>rd</sup> & Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup>.

Election day closure: Friday June 7<sup>th</sup>

Summer holidays: School closes on Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon

### **Teaching & Learning**

From mid-May onwards we will administer standardised spelling, reading and maths tests. Test results will be analysed by the Special Education Needs (S.E.N.) team in conjunction with class teachers and myself to inform curriculum planning and adjustments to our School Improvement Plan 2023-2026. Once standardised test results have been imputed teachers will finalise school reports. School Reports will be issued on June 12<sup>th</sup> via Aladdin Connect.

A Wellbeing Programme “Mind you, Mind Me” has been trialled in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> classes as part of the SPHE Curriculum. This is a resilience-developing wellbeing programme designed by Pieta for use in all primary school classrooms. The children have become familiar with how to develop resilience, prevent bullying and how to take steps and use their own tools to increase their wellbeing, both physical and mental. Feedback from teachers and pupils has been very positive and this programme will be implemented in all classes from September onwards.

Junior & Senior Infants have used the Heggerty Programme this year. This programme enhances phonemic and phonetic awareness which aims to improve reading and listening skills. Infant teachers will evaluate this programme in June.

### **School Self Evaluation**

As part of School Self Evaluation we have focused on Spellings and Literacy in Music. Spellings for Me Programme has been used this year in 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> classes. We will analyse spelling test results and children’s free writing to evaluate this programme and to make any necessary adjustments/improvements to the programme for 24/25. Despite the fact that there is no longer a Friday spelling test it is very important that children continue to learn and revise their spellings each night.

In order to develop musical literacy we have used the Folen’s Music Programme. This is a very user friendly interactive programme. All pupils should understand the 9 Musical concepts and be able to perform rhythmic and pitch patterns appropriate to their class level.

### **Summer Programme 2024**

Once again we are offering a school based Summer Provision Programme commencing June 27<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>h</sup> July for students with complex and special educational needs and those at risk of educational disadvantage. Ms Kelly has been appointed as Organiser. A letter pertaining to this programme has been sent to eligible students. It is important that parents who have received this letter respond whether their children wish to take part or not as places in the programme are limited. The theme of the programme continues to be “Building Confidence and Connections” and will build upon the children’s work with their school support teachers during the school year.

## **RSE**

4th/5th/6<sup>th</sup> classes attended a "Growing Up" talk presented virtually by Ms Kiely on week beginning April 22nd. The talk dealt with the sensitive areas of the RSE Programme. Class teachers have all covered the relevant sections of the RSE Programme dealing with body names/changes/ growing up etc. Parents are always notified in advance of these classes so that you have an opportunity to address those issues at home with your child or withdraw your child from the class if you wish.

## **SEN: Special Educational Needs**

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 commenced in Senior Infants (Ms Sexton's class) 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 still without the service of the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) psychologist and awaiting appointment of same.

Children who receive a diagnosis during the school year are monitored and placed on the Continuum of support at a level which best meets their needs - be that Classroom Support, School Support or School Support Plus.

## **Sport:**

### **Sports Day**

Sports Day will be held over 2 days in the next few weeks when the weather is suitable. You will be informed of an exact date nearer the time.

### **Gaelic Football**

The boys' and girls' Gaelic football teams will be back training this week now that the pitches have re-opened. They will be competing in the upcoming Cumann na mBunscol blitz later this month. The date for this blitz still has to be finalised. Both teams will be competing against Summerhill NS, Cornafulla NS and Ballybay NS. We wish them the very best of luck. 4th classes and junior infant classes are currently enjoying developing their Gaelic skills with Alan Fitzpatrick every Wednesday.

### **Basketball**

Both the girls' and boys' basketball teams competed in the first round of the annual Roscommon Primary Blitz which was held in The Hub, Castlerea. The boys performed very well in each of their games but unfortunately did not progress to the next stage of the competition. The girls played exceptionally well and progressed to the quarter finals which were held in Roscommon town. The girls played very well in the quarter final but did not progress to the semi-finals. Well done to both teams! Sincere thanks to Specsavers and KO Financial who sponsored the new singlets as seen in the picture below.



### Active Schools Week

Our school reinforces the message that children require 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. We have just completed Active School's Week April 22nd- 26th. Various activities were planned for the children each day. The children enjoyed a skipathon, penalty shootout, basketball knockout, table tennis and some yoga to name just a few. All children participated in a whole school final on Thursday April 25th. We also had a teacher vs student game of basketball knockout and the students were victorious!



Local facilitators and coaches visited our school to promote physical activity. The children enjoyed lessons from Charlene (Roscommon Sports Partnership), Lauren (Rinka), Martin Ward (Na Fianna) Olly McGrath, Kevin Murray, Derek Cooney and Luke Geever from St. Joseph's Football Club. A special word of thanks to each of these coaches who volunteered to share their time and expertise with the students. All students thoroughly enjoyed these experiences.

Active style homework was assigned to all pupils throughout Active Week. This was monitored and recorded by each child to emphasise their daily activity during the week.

### Soccer

5th and 6th class boys and girls travelled to Boyle Celtic FC to compete in the FAI Primary School 5's competition. They played four games and had three great wins. Unfortunately, they lost narrowly against Cornafulla in their last game. They played some great soccer and made us all proud.

The girls played very well and progressed to the Roscommon County Final Blitz after winning 2-0 in a thrilling playoff with Cornafulla.

Lecarrow hosted the County Final for Roscommon on Tuesday 23rd April. The girls had two great wins against Roxboro NS and Coothall NS but were unsuccessful in qualifying for Connacht. They were a credit to the school and represented Cloonakilla brilliantly over the last few weeks.

## Green Schools

Marine Week 2024:

We celebrated Marine Week 2024 on the 15th – 19th of April. Marine Week raised awareness about how we can protect our seas and reduce plastic pollution. It also celebrates the wonderful wildlife and habitats that can be found in our seas. The Green Schools Committee held a whole school zoom to inform all classes about Marine Week. All classes engaged with online webinars, activities and videos from the [www.greenschoolsirelandmarine-week-2024](http://www.greenschoolsirelandmarine-week-2024) website. The most popular webinar was with Ken O Sullivan, (underwater film maker) and all classes enjoyed “Draw with Rob”. 5th classes created some beautiful, imaginative, aquarium art to celebrate Marine Week. Please see below.



As part of Marine Week, 2nd class went on a tour of the River Shannon on the Viking Boat. They learnt all about the River Shannon and all its flora, fauna, bird and fish life. The children had a wonderful afternoon and saw Athlone’s new cycling bridge by boat which proved to be very exciting!



The Green Schools Committee and 5th Classes travelled to Galway Atlantaquaria and took part in a guided beach workshop on Salthill beach for Marine Week. They learnt about all kinds of varied species of fish and their habitats. The beach workshop inspired them to play their part in protecting our Marine Environment.



### **WOW Days:**

We are currently planning for our WOW days which will take place on the 15th, 22nd and 29th of May. This is part of our Green Schools and Active Schools Programme. Walking to school reduces the amount of cars on the roads which reduces emissions and this in turn helps our environment. Walking is also part of your daily physical activity, it improves your wellbeing, the exercise helps with your concentration in class and it is a great positive way to start the day! We will meet at The Mill car park at 8:50am and walk to school. Everyone will cross at the pedestrian crossing at the school. Teachers will supervise along the way. Please wear a hi-vis jacket for our WOW days.

### **Green Schools Flag:**

Last but not least our school was awarded our 8th Green Flag in April. This is a great achievement for our school. Well done to the Green Schools Committee and everyone in our school community for all their hard work over the past two years in working towards our Green Flag.

### **Debating**

As has been our tradition over the past number of years, our 6<sup>th</sup> class students will be invited to take part in debating in their final term. Children are encouraged to put themselves forward for this public-speaking opportunity. Mrs. Cronolly and Mrs. Muldoon's class will first debate against Mr. O'hÓgain's class and the winning team will go forward to debate against another local school. It is always an enjoyable event and we look forward to hearing the children's formal arguments.

### **Wellbeing**

The Amber Flag Committee held an Easter Raffle in April. The proceeds raised will go towards equipping the PE hall with table tennis sets, along with providing each classroom with a selection of board games and activities for use during wet break-times. Well done to the Amber Flag Committee for their hard work, and a special thanks to the local businesses and sponsors who provided prizes and donations for the raffle, and of course to the children and families who bought raffle tickets. Your support is much appreciated. Our Amber Flag Committee have worked so hard to promote wellbeing in our school and have been awarded our 3rd Amber Flag which we hope to raise in June.

### **Irish Sign Language Programme in 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Classes**

The children in 5th and 6th classes have completed an eight-week Irish Sign Language (ISL) taster programme funded by the Department of Education Primary Languages Initiative. Tutor Louise Deane, who is herself a deaf person who relies on ISL to communicate, taught the children basic phrases to enable them to communicate through ISL. It was a very worthwhile learning experience for all involved.

### **Student Council**

Over the next few weeks the Student Council will patrol the playground to ensure our school playground is a “Bully Free Zone” and to ensure no child is isolated or excluded from games. They will wear special t-shirts so they are easily identified should any pupil need to speak with them. They have also volunteered to help at the new Junior Infant Enrolment afternoons later this month. During this school year they have represented the student voice in a very mature and progressive manner and Ms Kelly and I are very appreciative of their contribution.

### **Free Book Scheme.**

The Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme announced by Minister of Education Norma Foley last year will continue for the coming year. Parents will not be required to purchase schoolbooks, workbooks or copies. You are required to buy stationery and you will be furnished with that in June. Cost of Arts & Crafts will remain at €25. Please give the money to the class teacher in an envelope clearly marked with your child’s name on it in September.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Class Graduation**

6<sup>th</sup> class graduation ceremony will be held in the school on Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup> @ 1.15am. Parents will be invited to attend. I am very aware that our time with 6<sup>th</sup> class is coming to an end and I hope that these last few weeks will be a happy and contented period for them. Transition is never easy and often we do not appreciate this. Please continue to support them as they navigate this next phase in their lives. I would like to commend our 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils for their good behaviour all year. They have proved worthy role models for the rest of our pupils.

### **New Junior Infant Enrolment**

Our Junior Infant Enrolment afternoons will be held on May 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. An information video detailing all relevant school information will be emailed in advance and parents will be informed of their exact day/time. We look forward to welcoming them to our school.

### **Parents Association**

The PA would like to thank all parents who helped and contributed to the flag day they held recently in SuperValu. Our next fundraising event will be a Family Walk and will take place on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June. Please see details below. Please support.

Regards,  
Mary O’Rourke,  
Principal

Cloonakilla NS to The Mill  
Bar and Loop back to  
School (track also  
suitable for buggies)

4km

**CLOONAKILLA  
PARENTS  
ASSOCIATION**



# COMMUNITY WALK

**Saturday 15th June 2024**

**Registration at**

**Cloonakilla NS @ 11.30am**

everyone must register for insurance purposes

**Walk commences @12.00pm**

**€5 Entry OR €10 per family (extended family  
members are also welcome)**

**CASH ONLY**

**RAFFLE on the day  
€2 a strip/€5 for 3 strips**

**Tea/Coffee &  
Refreshments  
served afterwards**

**ICE - CREAM  
Van for the children!**

