



NEWSLETTER



ST. CATHERINE'S N.S.



INTRODUCING ST. CATHERINE'S STUDENT COUNCIL 2025-2026

This month, St. Catherine's held its annual Student Council Elections—an important event that gives our pupils a meaningful voice in school life. The elections took place just after our classes completed their learning on the Irish Presidential Election, making it a perfect opportunity to put their knowledge into action.

Each class selected two new representatives. We were delighted to see so many enthusiastic nominees this year. Candidates designed eye-catching posters and delivered thoughtful speeches outlining why they would make strong representatives for their classmates and the school community.

To make the experience even more authentic, our school hall was transformed into a polling station, where students cast their votes through a private ballot. The excitement was palpable as the whole school gathered for assembly to hear the results. We extend our congratulations to our newly elected student councillors and wish them every success in the year ahead.

LIGHTING THE TREE 2025

Ukulele Band Spreads Festive Cheer



On the 29th of November, our school ukulele band and choir proudly took part in the annual Lighting the Tree celebrations in Rush. This event has become a cherished tradition for our school's musical groups, and once again they represented St. Catherine's beautifully.

Mr. McGrath, Mr. Hegarty, and Mr. O'Brien, together with our talented students, past pupils, and supportive parents, performed a festive medley of Christmas songs for the local community. Their wonderful performance created a warm, joyful atmosphere and truly captured the spirit of the season.

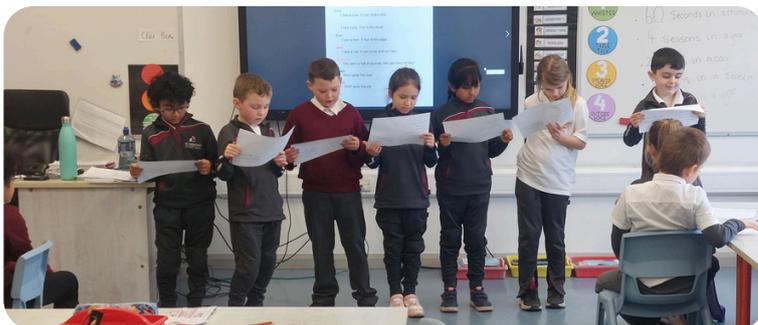
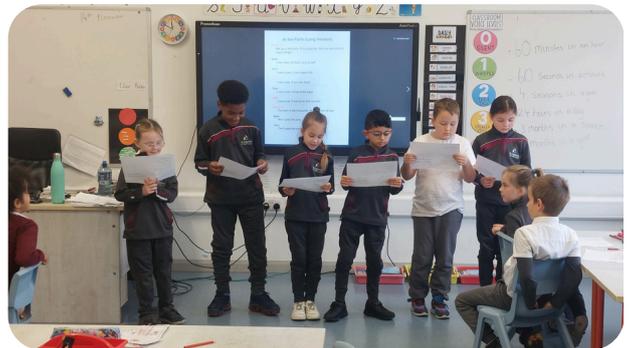
It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening and a lovely way to begin the countdown to Christmas.

READER'S THEATRE

Reading Takes Center Stage in Room 9

Ms. Farrell's 2nd Class have been working very hard on their reading this year. Throughout the month of November, the children took part in a series of Reader's Theatre lessons. Working in groups, they read from play scripts to help develop their fluency, expression, and confidence when reading aloud.

The pupils especially enjoyed bringing their scripts to life by performing their group plays for the class. It has been a fun, engaging, and rewarding way to strengthen their reading skills.



ROOM 12 OUTING

Creative Writing at Fighting Words

This month, Ms. Kavanagh's 4th Class visited Fighting Words for an exciting creative writing workshop.

The students' engagement and enthusiasm was fantastic, and they fully embraced the opportunity to develop their storytelling skills.

By the end of the session, each pupil proudly brought home a copy of their published group story, *Chillidog Disaster*.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable and inspiring day for everyone involved.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to the parents who generously volunteered their time to accompany the class.



VALUABLE CONNECTIONS WITH OUR LOCAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

This month, we were delighted to welcome a group of Transition Year students from St. Joseph's Secondary School for their work experience placement. They quickly became a wonderful addition to our school community, working hard in classrooms and bringing great energy to the yard. The children especially enjoyed the fun yard games the TY students organised each day.

Later in the month, our 5th Classes from Rooms 13 and 14 were invited to St. Joseph's to attend their TY musical performance of High School Musical. The pupils had a fantastic time singing and dancing along to the familiar songs, and there was great excitement as they spotted past pupils and family members performing on stage. It was an enjoyable and memorable experience for everyone involved.



ANSEO

Spotlight on Attendance

We in St. Catherine's are extremely concerned about our school's attendance. Please see the bar chart which sets out the situation in the last school year. Sadly, more children in our school are chronic poor attenders (39.6%) than regular attenders (31.3%). This has been happening across schools nationally and internationally since Covid, and it is affecting children's academic attainment and social and emotional well-being. St Catherine's has been accepted as one of only 60 schools to the Anseo Programme, with Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) to try to improve the situation in our school.

We ask you as a parent to check your own child's attendance on the Aladdin app. Do this by clicking on your child's name, then click on 'student menu', then click the 'attendance' button. How many days has your child missed so far this year?

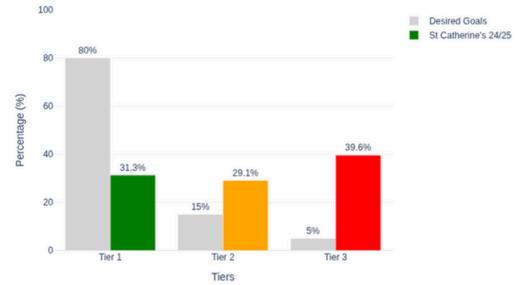
- Satisfactory Attendance:** Misses less than 9 days in a year
- At Risk of chronic absenteeism:** Misses between 9-18 days per year
- Chronic Absenteeism:** Misses more than 18 days per year

Consider how your child is doing. Which attendance tier is he/she in? Is your child missing days unnecessarily? If so, why do you think this might be? What does he/she do at home when not at school?

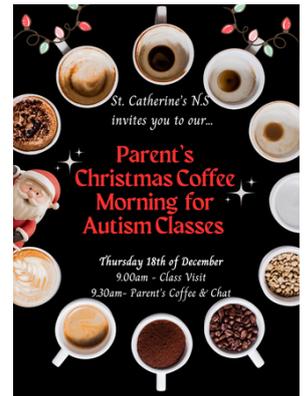
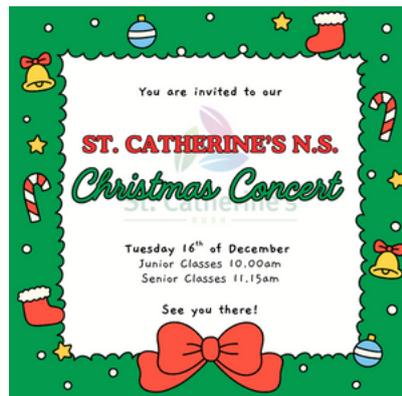
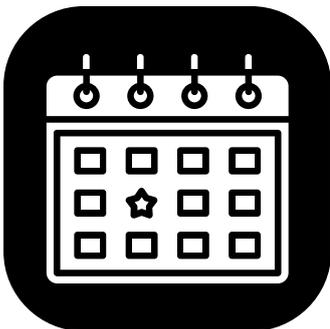
- Some of the reasons we have been learning about include:
- 1.Children know a parent is working from home and can persuade them to take days off here and there
 - 2.Days off for Christmas shopping, birthdays, 'duvet days' etc which add up
 - 3.Lack of sleep, children staying up late or on devices and too tired to get up in the morning
 - 4.Children going on holidays during the school year
 - 5.Housing, financial, employment or health pressures on families
 - 6.Anxiety

We will be in touch again soon to try to understand what is happening for families and children with regard to attendance and how we might try to improve this together. We will also be running initiatives within school to encourage children to attend regularly and understand how important it is for their well-being, friendships and education..

Comparison of Desired Attendance Goals vs Actual Attendance (2024/2025)



- Tier 1: Satisfactory/Regular Attendance**
Attending: 95% or more of the time
Goal: At least 80% of students
- Tier 2: At-Risk for Chronic Absenteeism**
Attending: less than 95% but 90% or more of the time
Goal: No more than 15% of students
- Tier 3: Chronic Absenteeism**
Attending: less than 90% of the time
Goal: No more than 5% of students



A MONTH OF RESPECT

Practicing our Core Values



In St. Catherine's NS, we continue to uphold our five Core Values that help make our school a fun, safe, and happy place to learn and grow: **Hardworking, Safe, Respectful, Honest, and Kind.**

These values are at the heart of our Code of Behaviour and our BÍ Cineálta Policy.

The month of November, our Wellbeing Team lead our focus on the Core Value of **Respect** with a particular focus on the character trait of **Open-mindedness.**

During assemblies this month, we explored the Core Value of Respect through stories and real-life examples, helping students understand how they can live out these values in their daily lives, both in school and at home.

Each month, we encourage and celebrate positive behaviour, by running a special initiative where students who demonstrate the Core Value of the month get their names added to our **Core Value Wall.** At the end of the month, all names on the wall are entered into a raffle, and winners are announced at assembly.

Here are our lucky winners for November and well done to everyone for their hard work this month.



MUSIC BRINGING US TOGETHER

Ag Seinn Cheoil Le Chéile

Throughout the month of November, many of our classes came together in song as they prepared for a number of upcoming musical events. It was wonderful to see children of all ages and musical abilities collaborating and sharing their talents under the guidance of Mr. Hegarty, Ms. Kavanagh, Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. McGrath.

The school was filled with energy and harmony as groups rehearsed, supported one another, and built confidence through music. Be sure to keep an eye out for details of our upcoming performances—there's lots to look forward to!



SCHOOL LEAGUES

Ag Imirt Peile ag Am Lóin

Our school football leagues have been in full swing throughout November—whenever the weather allowed!

Both the boys' and girls' leagues are being organised and managed by our 6th Class students, who are doing a fantastic job.

These leagues provide a wonderful opportunity for pupils to develop their football skills, stay active, and learn the importance of teamwork and fair play. The enthusiasm and sportsmanship shown by all involved have been brilliant to see.

Well done to everyone taking part!

Boy's League					Girl's League				
Position	Team	Points	Goal Difference	Games Played	Position	Teams	Points	Goal Difference	Games Played
1	Team 8	13	+10	5	1	Team 5	9	+21	3
2	Team 4	10	+3	5	2	Team 2	9	+2	5
3	Team 7	10	+11	5	3	Team 1	9	+2	5
4	Team 2	9	+4	5	4	Team 3	4	-5	4
5	Team 5	7	-1	5	5	Team 4	1	-21	5
6	Team 6	5	0	5					
7	Team 1	1	-17	5					
8	Team 3	0	-19	5					

St. Columba's
 Girl's League Week 7
 Tue Team 1 vs Team 2
 Thur Team 2 vs Team 5
 St. Columba's
 Boys' League Week 8
 Mon Team 1 vs Team 2
 Wed Team 4 vs Team 2
 Seoirra Range 16
 Classroom 16
 R. 130
 MR HEGARTY



ST. CATHERINE'S OPEN DAYS

Míle chéad fáilte romhaibh chuig ár Lá Oscailte



St. Catherine's
RUSH
NATIONAL SCHOOL

Míle chéad fáilte romhaibh chuig ár Lá Oscailte!

Join Us for a School Tour & Open Day!

Come and take a walk through our bright, modern school building. You'll have the opportunity to:

- See engaging learning activities happening in real-time.
- Meet our dedicated staff: Our passionate teachers, SNAs, and the supportive parents who make up our community.
- Chat with our friendly pupils, who are the heart of St. Catherine's.

Whether your child is a baby, a toddler, or ready to start school next September, we warmly encourage you to pop in and get to know us!

We can't wait to show you why St. Catherine's is the perfect fit for your family and demonstrate the vibrant, high-quality education that our modern school building supports right here in Rush.

Call us 843 8266 or email secretary@stcatheriness.ie

ENROLLING SOON FOR 2026!
Applications for admission to the school for 2026/27 can be submitted between 15th and 20th of January 2026. Apply via the admissions page on the school's website: www.stcatheriness.ie
ST CATHERINE'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, KENURE, RUSH, K56 TY32

Tours & Open Days start at 10.00am on:
Tuesday, November 25th
Tuesday, December 9th
Tuesday, January 13th
Tuesday, January 27th
Tuesday, February 3rd

SMARTY PARTS
Our reception can offer pre-school and after-school facilities, with after-school care and ready to welcome you!

W E L C O M E

In November, we held the first of many School Open Days and Tours for prospective parents ahead of the upcoming admissions cycle. It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase our school and welcome families into our community.

Our newly elected student councillors had their first task of the school year: giving guided tours around the school to visitors. The corridors looked fantastic, showcasing a wide array of vibrant displays and wonderful student artwork. It was a proud moment for our councillors, and they did an excellent job welcoming families and sharing all that makes our school special.

If you have a child starting school in September 2026 or know someone who has, please see the details on the poster for times when you can visit and explore our school. We look forward to welcoming you!



PARENT'S ASSOCIATION UPDATES

The Parents' Association Committee

This is the Parents' Association committee for 2025/26. The committee consists of three elected roles and representatives from each class.

Officers:

Chair: Matthew Semple
 Treasurer: Bryan Moore
 Secretary: Milena Fuzetto

Class Representatives:

Deborah Moore (Junior Infants)
 Elora Byrne (Senior Infants - Ms. Gaughan)
 Erin Cartlidge (1st Class - Mrs. McDermott)
 Lorraine Murphy (2nd Class - Ms. Farrell)
 Leah Kiernan (3rd Class - Mr. McGrath)
 Milena Fuzetto (2nd/3rd class - Ms. Boyd/Ms. Comiskey)
 Tracey Dockrell (4th Class - Ms. Kavanagh)
 Deborah Moore (5th/4th Class - Ms. Archer)
 Elora Byrne (5th Class - Ms. Dennis)
 Nicola Semple (6th Class - Mr. O'Brien)
 Martina Debenc (6th Class - Mr. Hegarty)
 Donna Kennedy (Autism Class)
 Shauna Farrell (Autism Class)

Each class / year has a WhatsApp group to support communication among parents. If you would like to join, please get in touch with your class representative or email the Parents' Association at chairpersonPA@stcatherinesns.ie



All parents are members of the Parents' Association and are most welcome to attend all meetings. You'll get notification on Aladdin and via email of our meetings, and all meetings have the option to join by Zoom.

The Parents' Association works in partnership with the Principal, Staff, and Board of Management for the benefit of your child. When parents and schools work together, children do better.

Christmas Fair and Santa's Grotto



Returning for the third year, the Parents' Association will be running the Christmas Fair at the school on Sunday 7th December from 1pm to 5pm, where you are guaranteed to be met with a warm welcome even if the weather outside is frightful!

Over 20 stalls are already confirmed, including the very popular Ros Eó Soap Company, so this is the place to find fantastic stocking fillers and other gifts. Expect to find candles, soaps, face painting, jewellery, paintings and frames and much more. Also confirmed, Santa Claus will be at the event greeting children (and their parents) in his grotto.

As well as the chance to speak with Santa, you will be able to meet his elves, write a Christmas list and watch a Christmas movie. For just €6 per child, you can visit Santa in his grotto and all children will receive a chocolate selection box. There is no charge for parents or grandparents, and the elves will be on hand to take photos of you with Santa. Slots to meet Santa will be available from the St Catherine's Parents' Association, on sale outside the school in the week before the fair and via their Facebook page.





St. Catherine's

RUSH
NATIONAL SCHOOL

Scan QR code
to learn more



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**SMARTY
PANTS**
MONTESSORI &
AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

Our excellent on-site preschool and after-school facility, will also be open and ready to welcome you!

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