



NEWSLETTER



ST. CATHERINE'S N.S.



CLOSING OUT TERM ONE WITH A BANG! 🎉

On Tuesday, 16th December, we held our annual Christmas Concert in the school hall at St. Catherine's. This is always one of our favourite times of the year, as it gives our families the chance to come in and enjoy some wonderful musical performances from our students.

For several weeks leading up to the concert, each class has been busy preparing an array of songs, dances, dramatic performances, and musical pieces to showcase on this special day. It was fantastic to see the hard work and creativity of our students come to life, and it was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all the amazing talents within our school.

The concert not only allowed the children to perform in front of an audience but also provided a valuable chance to build their confidence and share the joy of the season with their families.

A huge well done to everyone involved—your performances were truly memorable!



HISTORY IN ROOM 10

Viking Attack



Mr. McGrath's 3rd Class in Room 10 have been diving deep into the fascinating world of the Vikings as part of their history curriculum. Over the past few weeks, they've used a variety of engaging learning techniques and resources, including iPad research, book work, and even incorporating art to bring their studies to life.

To wrap up their Viking studies, the students were tasked with creating a hands-on project that would showcase everything they had learned. They were given the option to create a Viking shield, a sword, or a Viking ship. Each student poured their creativity and newfound knowledge into their projects, producing some truly impressive work.

A huge well done to all the students in Room 10 for their enthusiasm and effort in studying the Vikings. Their hard work and creativity have truly paid off, and it's clear that they have gained a great understanding of this fascinating part of history!

ROOM 16 PERFORMANCE

Thank you for the music

Mr. Hegarty's 6th Class has been working exceptionally hard over the past few months, developing their musical talents. They've had the opportunity to experiment with a wide range of instruments, including keyboards, drums, and ukuleles.

Mr. Hegarty has skillfully put together several songs, incorporating the unique talents of each student, with a different group of children taking the lead on each piece. It was wonderful to see the creativity and teamwork that went into the music, and the children were eager to showcase what they had learned.

Room 16 held their very own in-class concert, where they proudly performed the songs they had worked on during the first term of 6th class.

Parents were invited to join in the celebration and enjoy a morning of song, where the students truly shone.

A huge well done to everyone involved for their dedication and effort—it was a fantastic display of musical growth and talent! 🎵☀️



CHRISTMAS ART

Take a stroll around our corridors

December is always such a magical month to stroll through the corridors of St. Catherine's. As you walk around, you're greeted by an array of fantastic artwork that showcases the incredible talent of our students. Each corridor is beautifully lined with pieces that reflect the creativity and hard work of every child in the school.

The artwork spans a wide range of mediums, from chalk pastels and collages to vibrant paintings, each display capturing a unique sense of imagination. The diversity of the pieces is truly inspiring, and it's a wonderful way for students to express themselves, while also creating a rich, festive atmosphere throughout the school. These displays not only give us plenty of inspiration but also help to get everyone into the holiday spirit. It's a perfect reflection of the creativity and festive energy that fills St. Catherine's this time of year.



VALUABLE CONNECTIONS WITH OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Mr. McGrath's 3rd Class enjoyed a very special trip this December. Unlike their usual visits to the library, this time the class had the exciting opportunity to attend an art exhibition. The exhibition featured the work of local artist Jim Kilgariff, whose grandchildren previously attended St. Catherine's.

The children were delighted to view his artwork up close and found it fascinating to hear about his creative process. They asked thoughtful questions and gained valuable insight into what it means to be a working artist.

It was a fantastic experience for the class and a wonderful way to connect learning with our local community.

ANSEO

Spotlight on Attendance

At St. Catherine's, we are extremely concerned about our school's attendance levels.

To address this, we are taking part in the ANSEO Attendance Programme, in partnership with Tusla Education Support Service (TESS) and the Department of Education and Youth (DEY). We hope this initiative will support and improve attendance across our school community.

We have begun identifying patterns of absenteeism at student, class, and whole-school levels. By carefully reviewing our attendance data, we are now able to plan and implement targeted interventions to support all students.

To raise awareness of ANSEO and create excitement around improving attendance, the ANSEO team will award extra Golden Time each month to the class with the most improved attendance. Winners will be announced at both junior and senior assemblies.

This month, second place for Most Improved Attendance was awarded to Ms. Archer's 4th and 5th Class in Room 13.

The overall winners of this month's competition were Mr. O'Brien's 6th Class in Room 15.

Well done to all classes for their continued efforts to improve attendance—we are very proud of your commitment! 🌟

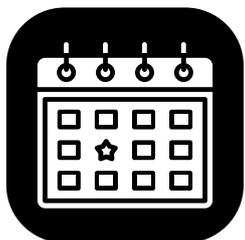


Most improved Class

2nd Place

Most improved Class

1st Place



School Reopens after Christmas

5th of January 2026

Admissions Deadline

25th of January 2026

Parent Teacher Meetings

21st & 22nd January 2026

PJ DAY

In time for the Late Late Toy Show

On the day of the Late Late Toy Show, St. Catherine's held our much-loved PJ Day, marking the official start of the Christmas celebrations in our school. There was great excitement throughout the building as children and staff arrived dressed in their cosy pyjamas, bringing a real sense of fun and festivity to the day.

PJ Day was especially welcome as the winter weather began to set in, making it the perfect opportunity to stay warm and snug while enjoying a normal school day with a festive twist. The classrooms were full of colourful pyjamas, slippers, and smiling faces, creating a lovely atmosphere across the school.

It was a wonderful way to kick off the Christmas season in St. Catherine's and added to the sense of anticipation and joy that builds in the weeks leading up to the holidays. The children thoroughly enjoyed the day, and it set a cheerful tone for all the festive activities that followed.



AN POST

Room 7 becomes a Post Office

Room 7 were learning all about the Post Office as part of their Aistear Play Integrated Learning. At the end of the month, Room 7 enjoyed a trip to the Post Office to buy a stamp & post their letters.

The weather was so cold that we had to stop for a hot chocolate on our way.

At the post office, we got to meet our local postmen, Martin & Ray who explained how busy they were in the lead up to Christmas.

We had a fantastic day & lots of lovely memories were made. WE even made a display board of our trip outside our class for everyone to see.

LE CHÉILE DÉ HAoine

Capturing the Magic of Our Friday Assemblies



In December, we continued our weekly tradition of holding an assembly every Friday. We were treated to wonderful performances from Ms. Farrell's 2nd Class, Mr. O'Brien's 5th Class, Ms. Dennis' 5th Class, and Ms. Bates' Junior Infants. One of our assembly Fridays coincided with PJ Day, so we all cosied up in our pyjamas to enjoy the performances together. Assembly is a lovely way to end a busy week and come together as a whole school community.

This month, we also welcomed a new addition to our assembly programme. Our EAL (English as an Additional Language) teacher, Ms. O'Grady, has been working hard with her EAL students to prepare bilingual readings for assembly. In December, the featured language was Polish, with two stories read by students in both English and their native language. We are really looking forward to discovering which language will be featured next. Ms. O'Grady has also been running language groups each Friday, giving children who share the same native language an opportunity to come together for conversation, games, and to practise and celebrate their home language.

Alongside the performances, we have continued our focus on mindfulness, with a special emphasis on gratitude. We took time to reflect on the things we are thankful for, and Ms. Dunne shared that she is always grateful for the smiles and friendly greetings at the school gate each morning—a reminder of the warmth of our school community.

AN CHÉAD NOLLAIG

First Christmas at St. Catherine's for our Junior Infants



SANTA VISIT

Daidí na Nollaig ag cuairt ar ár scoil

The long-anticipated Santa visit for Christmas 2025 finally arrived on Thursday, 18th December, just before we closed for the Christmas holidays. Excitement filled the school as all the children waited patiently for our very special visitor.

Santa, along with his helpful elf Ms. O'Neill, visited every classroom to let the children know that they had all made the Nice List this year. He told them he had heard how hard they have been working in class each day and how well they follow our core school values of respect, kindness, hard work, honesty, and safety.

Santa also had a little surprise for each child ahead of his visit to them on Christmas Eve. The children were delighted to meet Santa, and there was a wonderful buzz of excitement throughout the school, making it a truly magical way to end the term. 🎅🎄



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

On Sunday 7th December, the Parents' Association ran the third annual Christmas Fair at the school and this time it was bigger than ever. There were over 20 stalls selling a huge variety of festive gifts and treats, there were six elves working in Santa's Grotto and more children met Santa than in 2024. The school hall was full of festive music and people from the local area and beyond purchasing stocking fillers and tasty goodies.

Also new for the first time this year, we had a 40 second promotional video for the event that was shared on social media. Did you see it? If not, it can be viewed here:
<https://tinyurl.com/SantaRush2025>

The Parents' Association would like to thank everyone involved, including Santa Claus, the elves, the stallholders and everyone who came along in support of the event.

We'd also like to thank Deirdre Roache who worked tirelessly in the café all afternoon, Louise Stewart who helped with the setup and clear down, Ben's Ices who kindly gave the Parents' Association a donation, Aimee Flood who provided the Grinch balloon display, Lewis Mitchell and SuperValu who generously donated the Cadbury's selection boxes and Rush Community Council who loaned the gazebo to us for the day.



POLICY REMINDER

Our School Uniform

Pupils may wear the grey school tracksuit with a white t-shirt each day



OR

Pupils may wear the tracksuit on PE days and the traditional uniform every other day.



- Children may wear runners but not those that have lugs or cleats (shoes designed for football) as these can mark our floors.
- Pupils are permitted to wear stud earrings only.
- Make-up of any kind is not permitted.
- Fake nails, acrylic etc. are not permitted.
- Pupils with long hair **MUST** wear their hair tied up.
- Leggings in place of tracksuit bottoms are not permitted.
- Grey shorts may be worn on hot days from May onwards. Bicycle shorts are not permitted

As we come to the end of the first term of the school year, we would like to remind parents and guardians of our School Uniform Policy. Over the past month, we have noticed some issues arising, particularly in the senior classes.

There has been an increase in students wearing make-up, which is not permitted under our school policy. We have also noticed that some children are not adhering to our hair guidelines. Please ensure that your child's hair is tied up each day when coming to school. This is especially important as we have had several cases of head lice reported throughout the school.

A reminder that the approved school uniform options are pictured here. Jerseys, hoodies, and black flared trousers are not part of the school uniform and should not be worn to school.

Our Uniform Policy was revised a number of years ago following consultation with parents and the wider school community. The shared view was that we wish to protect the childhood of the children in our care and allow them to focus fully on their learning and school life. For this reason, the wearing of make-up, false nails, and non-uniform clothing is not permitted in school.

We appreciate your continued cooperation and support in helping us maintain a positive and inclusive school environment.

NURSING HOME VISIT

Sharing Warm Christmas Cheer

Despite a very busy week in the run-up to Christmas, we always make time for our annual visit to Rush Nursing Home.

Classes from Rooms 10, 15, and 16, along with our school ukulele band, visited the residents to spread some Christmas cheer by performing a medley of festive songs.

Dressed in our Christmas jumpers, the children thoroughly enjoyed sharing music, smiles, and seasonal spirit with the residents. It was a lovely opportunity to connect with the wider community and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas together.

Well done to Mr. McGrath, Mr. Hegarty and Mr. O'Brien for making this happen!





St. Catherine's

RUSH
NATIONAL SCHOOL

Scan QR code
to learn more



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 **01 843 8266** or email secretary@stcatherinesns.ie to

**Tours & Open Days
start at 10.00am on:**

Tuesday, November 25th

Tuesday, December 9th

Tuesday, January 13th

Tuesday, January 27th

Tuesday, February 3rd

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

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

ENROLLING SOON FOR 2026!

Applications for admission to the school for 2026/27 can be submitted between 5th and 25th of January 2026. Apply via the admissions page on the school's website: www.stcatherinesns.ie

ST CATHERINE'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, KENURE, RUSH, K56 TY32