



NEWSLETTER



ST. CATHERINE'S NS



PARENTS' ASSOCIATION HOST ST. CATHERINE'S MULTICULTURAL DAY

To mark UNESCO's World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, the Parents' Association collaborated with the school to organise our third Multi-Cultural Day on Friday 22nd May. This event has run previously in 2018 and 2024 and this year's event brought new countries and cultures to the school hall. We would like to thank the parents who volunteered to have a stand. The following countries were represented: Australia, Brazil, Central African Republic, Congo, France, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Mauritius, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

Hundreds of people came into the school hall to sample the sights, sounds and tastes of the various countries and cultures. It was great to see children and their parents from around the town including past pupils and their parents. The atmosphere in the hall was wonderful, helped in no small part by musical accompaniment from CeltAfrik, a musical quartet that performs a fusion of African and Irish music. Well done to everyone involved.

GARDA VISITS

Our Community Links



On the 14th of May, many of the classes in St. Catherine's NS were delighted to welcome members of our local Community Gardaí to the school. The Gardaí delivered informative and engaging talks on a range of important topics, including internet safety and staying safe in our local community.

During the visit, pupils watched a variety of videos that demonstrated different online safety scenarios. These videos helped the children to better understand how to stay safe while using the internet and how to make responsible choices online. The Gardaí also spoke about the impact of vandalism in the community and discussed ways in which young people can help to care for and respect their local area.

The talks were both educational and interactive, giving pupils the opportunity to ask questions and learn valuable safety tips. We are very fortunate in St. Catherine's NS to have such strong links with our local services, including the Gardaí and the Fire Brigade. These partnerships help to enrich our pupils' learning and strengthen the connection between our school and the wider community.

We would like to thank the Community Gardaí for taking the time to visit our school and for sharing such important information with our students.

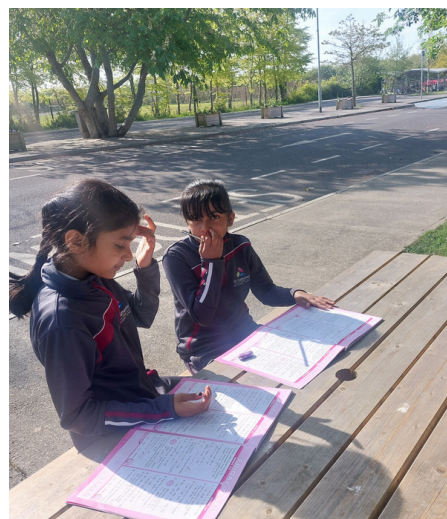
TAKING OUR LESSONS OUTSIDE IN THE SUN

Outdoor Learning

We were very fortunate to enjoy a spell of beautiful weather over the past few weeks.

Many classes took advantage of the sunshine by bringing their lessons outdoors while continuing their teaching and learning activities.

Our new benches and outdoor learning space proved to be a wonderful addition to the school, providing pupils and teachers with a comfortable and engaging environment in which to learn. The opportunity to work outside in the fresh air was greatly enjoyed by all and helped to make learning even more enjoyable.



CRICKET

Collaborating with our local Cricket Club

For the past couple of months, our 5th and 6th class pupils have been fortunate to take part in cricket coaching sessions delivered by members of Rush Cricket Club. These lessons are always a highlight for the students, as cricket is a relatively new sport for many of them. Throughout the programme, the children learned about the key skills and rules of the game, including batting, bowling, fielding, and the role of the wickets. The sessions provided a fun and engaging way for pupils to develop important fundamental movement skills such as throwing, catching, running, agility, and coordination.

The students showed great enthusiasm and made excellent progress over the course of the coaching programme. After several weeks of practice and skill development, a team was selected to represent St. Catherine's NS in the annual cricket match against Rush National School. This much-anticipated fixture is always a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to showcase their skills, demonstrate teamwork and sportsmanship, and experience the excitement of representing their school. We would like to thank the coaches from Rush Cricket Club for sharing their expertise and helping to make the sessions so enjoyable for all involved.



LANGUAGE MEETUPS

Throughout the month of May, Ms. O'Grady, our EAL teacher, continued her popular Friday Language Meet-Ups. These sessions provide students with a wonderful opportunity to celebrate their languages, cultures, and backgrounds in a fun and relaxed setting.

Pictured here are some of our students whose families are from Brazil. During their meet-up, the children enjoyed playing games and chatting together in Portuguese. These gatherings help students to maintain and develop their home languages while also fostering a strong sense of belonging and pride in their cultural heritage.

The Friday Language Meet-Ups have become a valued part of school life, allowing students to connect with others who share a common language and to celebrate the rich diversity within our school community.

A MONTH OF HARDWORK

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 May, our Wellbeing Team lead our focus on the Core Value of **Hardworking** with a particular focus on the character traits associated with being hardworking like **Persistence**.

Some of our 1st Class pupils proudly shared their recent success at a dance competition. Their achievements were the result of many hours of practice, dedication, and perseverance. It was wonderful to celebrate their hard work and hear about their accomplishments.

We also recognised a group of helpful 3rd Class students who volunteered their time during yard breaks to assist Mary with various gardening tasks around the school grounds. Their willingness to help, work as a team, and take pride in their school environment was greatly appreciated.

These examples remind us that hard work and persistence can be shown in many different ways. Whether through sport, dance, helping others, or learning in the classroom, we are proud of the effort and commitment shown by our students every day.

As always, our Wellbeing Team runs a special initiative where students who demonstrate the Core Value of the month get their names added to our **Core Value Wall**. All children who were spotted being hardworking this month were entered into a raffle, and winners were announced at assembly last Friday. Well done to everyone for all their hard work.

CELAFRİK

Ag seinm ceoil le chéile

We were delighted to welcome CeltAfrik to our school for a wonderful musical performance and collaboration with our students. This four-member ensemble combines the rich rhythms of African music with the beautiful melodies of Irish traditional music, creating a unique and engaging musical experience. The group is made up of Dr. John Nutekpor from Ghana and Darren Roggers, Teresa Connolly, and Joe Sheehan from Ireland.

As part of this special event, we were also delighted to welcome students and staff from our neighbouring schools, Rush National School, Gaelscoil Ros Eó, St. Brendan's NS, Loughshinny, and Transition Year students from St. Joseph's Secondary School.

Throughout the day, pupils participated in musical workshops and had the opportunity to share songs and performances with one another. Members of CeltAfrik joined in with the various school performances, showcasing their musical talents and encouraging collaboration among all participants.

The highlight of the day was a final performance featuring all of the schools alongside CeltAfrik, followed by a special performance by the ensemble themselves. They performed a variety of songs and tunes inspired by both African and Irish traditions.

Using instruments such as the djembe, guitar, mandolin, and tin whistle, they showcased the richness of both musical cultures through rhythm, harmony, and storytelling.

The celebrations continued with our Multicultural Day after school, which was a wonderful way to conclude this memorable occasion. The entire event was both entertaining and educational, highlighting how music can bring people together and build connections between different cultures.

Our students thoroughly enjoyed this lively and interactive experience and gained a greater appreciation of the power of music to unite people from different backgrounds.



LÁ AR AN TRÁ

The start of the beach trips

With the beautiful sunshine we enjoyed throughout May, many of our classes took the opportunity to visit the beach for a day of outdoor learning and fun. We are very fortunate that our school is located so close to the beach, which provides a wonderful resource for our students to enjoy and explore.

Ms. Dennis's and Ms. Archer's classes recently spent a fantastic day at the beach taking part in a variety of activities. The children enjoyed sand sculpting competitions, games of volleyball, and plenty of time outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to socialise, be active, and make lasting memories with their classmates. A great day was had by all!



CONFIRMATION

Important faith milestone

Our 5th and 6th Class students recently celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation after a year of preparation with their teachers and in partnership with our local parish, St. Maur's. The students worked hard throughout the year to learn about the sacrament and to prepare for this important milestone in their faith journey. We were delighted to see them celebrate their special day with their families, sponsors, and the wider parish community.

On the Monday following the Confirmation weekend, the students returned to school dressed in their Confirmation outfits for a special day of celebration and photographs. It was wonderful to see everyone looking so smart and proud as they marked this memorable occasion.

A special word of thanks to our Parents' Association for organising County Photos to capture this important milestone. We are grateful for their continued support in helping to create lasting memories for our students and families.

LIFE SKILLS

Shopping and Smoothie making

The students in Ms. Koelstra's Room 7 have been taking part in a series of practical life skills lessons over the past few weeks. As part of their learning, the class focused on healthy eating and learned how to plan and prepare nutritious smoothies.

To begin the project, the students took a trip to Tesco where they used a shopping list to purchase all of the ingredients they needed. They carefully checked their list and worked together to ensure they bought the correct items and enough ingredients for the whole class.

Back at school, the students followed step-by-step instructions to prepare and make their smoothies.

They practised important life skills such as planning, shopping, following directions, working as a team, and making healthy food choices.

After all their hard work, the students were delighted to enjoy their refreshing smoothies. It was a fun and rewarding experience that combined learning with practical everyday skills.



DRAMA

in Room 9

Students from Ms. Farrell's Second Class took on a very special project during the months of March and April. While many of their classmates were preparing for their First Holy Communion, this group of students embarked on an exciting journey to create and perform a play.

The students worked tirelessly to bring *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* to life. They spent many weeks reading and rehearsing the script, practising their acting skills, and exploring the different characters and roles. Following auditions, each student was assigned a part and worked hard to learn their lines by heart.

The preparation did not stop there! The students also gathered costumes and took responsibility for designing, creating, and painting their own props and stage backdrop. Their creativity, teamwork, and dedication were evident throughout the entire process.

After weeks of hard work and rehearsal, the students proudly performed their play for a number of classes throughout the school. Their performance was a great success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. We are incredibly proud of the effort, confidence, and enthusiasm shown by everyone involved.

LE CHÉILE DÉ HAOINE

Capturing the Magic of Our Friday Assemblies



Each Friday throughout May, we continued our weekly school assemblies. These gatherings provide a valuable opportunity for our school community to come together, share important notices, and celebrate the many achievements of our students.

A highlight of each assembly is our ongoing ANSEO Attendance Programme. The announcement of the weekly attendance raffle winners is always eagerly anticipated, with the lucky recipients receiving cinema tickets as a reward for their excellent attendance.

During the month, Ms. Dunne also took the opportunity to remind students about our school uniform policy at both the junior and senior assemblies. It was great to see some students proudly wearing our new St. Catherine's school shorts, which can be worn during the warmer months.

We were also treated to a very special performance by the students in Room 7. Alongside their teacher and SNA, they performed a poem with actions before leading the entire school in an energetic movement break. The students confidently demonstrated the dance moves and encouraged everyone to join in. The song featured greetings and ways to say "hello" in a variety of different languages, celebrating the diversity within our school community. The performance was thoroughly enjoyed by students and staff alike and left everyone smiling, energised, and ready for the rest of the day.

FOOTBALL

As we approach the end of another exciting sporting season in St. Catherine's, we would like to celebrate the achievements of both our girls' and boys' soccer teams.

Our girls' team narrowly missed out on a victory in their final league match. The progress the girls have made over the past few months has been fantastic to see. Through regular training sessions and valuable match-day experience, they have developed their skills, confidence, and understanding of the game. We are extremely proud of their commitment, teamwork, and positive attitude throughout the season. A huge thank you to Derek Carthy, who dedicated his time each Monday afternoon to coaching the girls and supporting their development throughout the year.

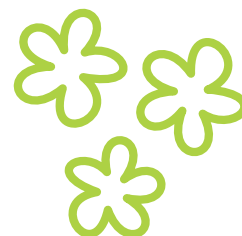
Our boys' team enjoyed a highly successful league campaign, finishing top of their division in the FAI Schools League. This achievement earned them a place in the league semi-final against Glencullen, which took place at Wayside FC. The boys delivered an outstanding performance, demonstrating excellent teamwork and footballing ability to secure an impressive 11-2 victory. The win sees the team progress to the league final, where they will face Scoil Aonghusa on June 18th in the AUL Complex. Kick-off is at 12.30pm, and all are welcome to come along and support the team on this special occasion.

A very special thank you must also go to Vicky Watson, who has trained and coached the boys throughout the year. Her dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment have played a huge role in the team's success and development. As this is Vicky's final year as a parent in St. Catherine's, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude for everything she has done for our students and school community over the years. Her contribution has been greatly appreciated, and we wish her all the very best for the future.



AN INTERVIEW WITH MS. DUNNE

By Karolina and Zoe – Room 12



1. What is your favourite colour and why?

I love green and all the autumn colours. I also like green because I love plants and it is a very calming colour.

2. Why did you want to become a principal?

When I came here as a teacher in 2006, I felt happy as soon as I walked in the door. It felt like a family and a community with many cultures. It felt warm and caring, Ms Wynne, the principal at the time was so caring of everyone and a very calm and principled person. I really liked the children, the parents and all the staff. I wanted to work hard to lead such a lovely school into the next stage of its development.

3. What is your favourite part of your job?

My favourite part of my job is talking to the children, seeing their work and talents everyday and greeting everybody at the gate in the morning.

4. What is your least favourite part of your job?

My least favourite part of my job is worrying about money for the school, where to find the money to pay the water bill, the electricity bill, the heating bill, the cleaning bill, the bill when the gate has to be fixed or windows need to be replaced - all the bills! I'm sure many of your parents feel the same at home.

5. Did you ever have any other jobs?

Yes. I was a teacher in different countries, I worked as an administrator for a while, and I was an academic in UCD. My field of study and lecturing was Applied Linguistics. An applied linguist is like a 'language detective' who uses clues about words to fix everyday problems, like how to teach and learn languages, how to help people with speech and language difficulties and how communication takes place across cultures. For example, in some cultures it is polite to look at someone in the eye when you are talking to them but in other cultures that is rude.

6. What is your favourite food and why?

I love sushi because I love fish and I ate lots of sushi when I lived in Japan.



7. Do you have a pet?

No, we used to have a cat named Gummy, she was my daughters' childhood pet. Sadly, she was killed by a truck in 2023. We had her for 16 years, she was a tabby. I have not gotten another cat since she died.

8. What is your favourite subject?

My favourite subjects are Irish and Spanish. I love languages.

9. What hobbies do you have?

My hobbies are hill walking and swimming in the sea all year round.

10. Have you lived in any other countries?

I have lived in Spain, Sweden, Japan and the United States of America.



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.

A Message from our Parents' Association

Djembe Drums

The Parents' Association has recently donated €800 to the school for the purchase of six Djembe African drums. These will enable many children at the school to learn how to drum and will continue the learning that many children have been enjoying with visiting music teacher Dr John Nutekpor. This was only possible due to the support from parents and pupils who attended recent fund raising events run by the Parents' Association.

**Parents' Association Meeting**

The final meeting of the parents' association for 2026/27 will take place on Thursday 4th June at 7pm. If you would like to join, please look out for details on your class WhatsApp group. The next meeting after that will be the Annual General Meeting in September. If you are interested in finding out more about the parents' association, please contact the chair (chairpersonPA@stcatherinesns.ie) or the secretary (secretaryPA@stcatherinesns.ie).

End of Year Disco

Previously, we had planned to have an end-of-term disco in June. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we will not be running a disco as previously planned. Please accept our apologies for any disappointment caused.

CANCELLED

