



Scoil Mhuire Réalt na Mara
Christmas Newsletter 2025
Nuachtlitir na Nollag



Dear Parents,

As we approach the joyful season of Christmas, we complete another term full of learning, creativity, kindness and faith. This term saw a wide range of special events and initiatives. We marked Bí Cineálta (Anti-Bullying Week), reinforcing the importance of kindness, respect and inclusion. Science Week was another highlight, with hands-on experiments and investigations that sparked curiosity and excitement across all classes.

The senior children greatly enjoyed visits from special guests. We welcomed a Moroccan storyteller, whose visit broadened the pupils' understanding of different cultures through the power of storytelling. We also had an inspiring visit from author Richie Conroy, who encouraged creativity and a love of reading and writing.

Sport and physical activity were well represented, with our pupils participating in athletics in Avondale, enjoying the fresh air and the opportunity to challenge themselves and the workshop with Charlie Tector - Irish Rugby Union player. Outdoor learning continued through our winter garden classes and a pond clean, during which the children were thrilled to spot frogs in the pond.

We were proud to work with Wicklow County Council and Coill na nÓg on tree planting initiatives, through which the children learned about caring for the environment and taking responsibility.

A special focus this term was on caring for others. The children put great thought and effort into making Christmas cards and gifts for local elderly members of our community, beautifully reflecting the true spirit of Christmas and the values of compassion at the heart of our ethos.

We were also delighted to welcome a number of our past pupils to our school on student placements. We thank them for their enthusiasm, and positive contribution to school life. Wicklow Fire Brigade visited 2nd and 3rd class, which was both educational and exciting for the pupils.

As we prepare for Christmas, we take time to remember the true meaning of this holy season - the birth of Jesus Christ, a time of hope, love and peace. We were reminded of this by the children at our carol service on Wednesday. Wasn't it simply memorable?

On behalf of all the staff, I wish you and your families a holy, happy and peaceful Christmas, and every good wish for the New Year. We thank you sincerely for your continued support. Tá súil agam go mbainfidh sibh tairbhe agus taitneamh as laethanta saoire na Nollag.

Is mise le meas,
Úna Gallinagh
Príomhoide

Dates for Calendar

School re-opening

The school will re-open on Monday 5th January 2026

Enrolment Applications

Admissions for Junior Infants September 2026 will open on January 5th and close on January 26th 2026. If you know anyone who has a child starting school here in September, please make them aware of our admissions opening/closing dates.

Bank Holiday

School Closed Monday 2nd February 2026

Spring Mid-term

The school will be closed Thursday 19th and Friday 20th February 2026

In-service Curriculum Day for Staff

School Closed Friday 27th February 2026

Bank Holiday

School Closed Tuesday 17th March 2026

First Confession

Wednesday 11th March 2026 – 3:00pm

Confirmation

Sunday 22nd March 2026 - 12 noon

Easter Holidays

School will close at 11.30am on Friday 27th March and will reopen on Monday 13th April 2026

School Attendance - Reminder

High attendance is proven best practice for success at school. ***All holidays should be planned outside of the school year.*** New data published by Tusla Education Support Services (TESS) shows that one in five children are missing a month (20 days) or more in their school year. A new campaign "Every School Day is a New Day" highlights the social and educational benefits of attendance. See link for further information.

<https://www.tusla.ie/tess/national-school-attendance-campaign/>

Please be on time in the mornings.



News from the Rooms

Room 1 – Junior and Senior Infants (Naíonáin Shóisearacha agus Naíonáin Shinsearacha)

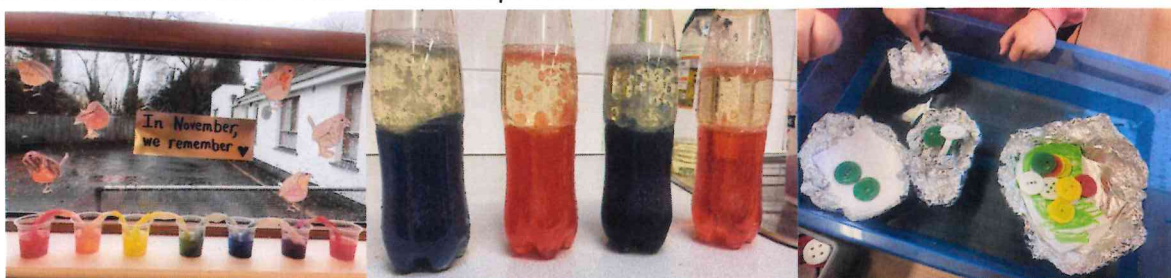
It has been another very busy term for junior and senior infants, with lots of learning, play and excitement!

In literacy, junior infants have made excellent progress learning their new sounds, using them to read and write simple words and sentences. Senior infants have also made great progress with their phonics, reading and writing. They have been focusing on the procedural writing genre this term and they have written lots of instructions on how to do things, such as how to make a cup of hot chocolate and how to send a catch to an elf! We have read lots of lovely story books this term based upon the themes we have covered. Story time each day always lends to many interesting questions and exposes children to lots of new vocabulary.

In maths, we have been exploring the topics of data, number and shapes. Children collected data about different things and made simple graphs to show this information in a clear way. We continued to work on number formation, where the children practice their numbers in various ways, including with playdough, mini whiteboards and ipads.

In Gaeilge, we covered the themes of 'Bia', 'Caitheamh Aimsire' and 'An Nollaig'. The children love learning the new vocabulary and enjoy the interactive games on the whiteboard.

For SESE in November, our theme was 'Homes' so we looked at the work of builders, we created our own houses based on the Three Little Pigs story, we identified differences between old and new homes and we looked at sources of electricity within our homes. In December, our theme was 'Winter' so we looked at the seasonal changes that occur in winter, we learned about the explorer Tom Crean and we discovered lots of interesting information about Antarctica. We also celebrated Science Week in November, where we got to do different science activities and experiments.



The children painted Paul Cézanne inspired fruit bowls in art, which complemented the restaurant that we had in our role-play area. In December, the children have been busy with their Christmas art, making beautiful clay decorations, Nativity scenes and Rudolf paintings.



Finally, a massive well done to all of the children for their performance in the carol service, they practiced very hard and enjoyed performing to an audience!
Nollaig shona daoibh go léir!



Room 2 – Senior Infants and 1st Class (Naíonáin Shinsearacha agus Rang I)

It has been a busy few weeks since Halloween and who can believe that we are already getting ready for Christmas. We have been putting in lots of practice preparing for the Christmas Carol Service and the children have made great strides in all their curriculum areas.

In literacy the children in first class have focused on report writing. They have produced some lovely pieces of writing across both genres. It has been great to see how far they have progressed since the start of the year. All the children have been putting a really big focus on their handwriting and it is showing true in their work. They also have been engaging very well with the UFLI programme and have made great strides with their phonological awareness which shows within their writing.



In maths we focused on a number of different topic areas. The children were learning about 2D shapes and their characteristics. The children explored, combined, matched and compared the shapes. They also explored the topic of time using clocks. We also learned rhymes to remember the days of the week and the months of the year. First class have been recently learning about halves. We folded shapes and found the half of numbers using counters. Senior infants have counted and explored numbers up as far as eight and compared larger and smaller numbers.

Within SESE the children learned about the season of winter and the many things we associate with this time of year. The children also learned about the different types of homes in Ireland and how they have changed over the years. We explored and compared various different Christmas traditions both new and old from Ireland and from other countries around the world.

In art we looked at different concepts and mediums. The children produced some lovely pieces of art for example their own chalk lights and building their own homes using blocks and paper.

We hope that everyone has a lovely Christmas and enjoys themselves!

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir!



Room 3 – 2nd and 3rd Class (Rang II agus Rang III)

What a busy and exciting time we have had in 2nd and 3rd class! The children have been working so hard and I am very proud of all they have achieved.

We were very lucky to welcome firefighters from Wicklow fire station to our classroom. The children learned all about fire safety, the important job firefighters do, and the equipment they use. There were lots of excellent questions asked and everyone listened very carefully.



In the lead-up to Christmas, we put a huge amount of effort into preparing for our Christmas Carol Service. From learning lines and songs to practising actions and stage positions, we showed great teamwork and enthusiasm. All our hard work really paid off and we were very proud of our performance.

We also spent time learning about Advent, discussing its meaning and importance. This inspired some beautiful Christmas art, with the classroom filling up with colour, creativity and festive cheer.



In History, we enjoyed learning about Ogham Stones and the ancient alphabet used long ago in Ireland. The children then made their own Ogham Stones using clay, carefully carving their names or messages. They turned out fantastic. This activity required great patience and skill.



During Science Week, the class took part in a fun and challenging ball run activity. Working in groups, the children designed and built ramps to help a ball travel from start to finish. This encouraged problem-solving, teamwork and lots of trial and improvement.

Well done to all the boys and girls for their hard work. Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir.

Room 5 – 4th Class (Rang IV)

Fourth Class have had a busy and exciting few months. Here is a snapshot of our many enjoyable learning experiences:

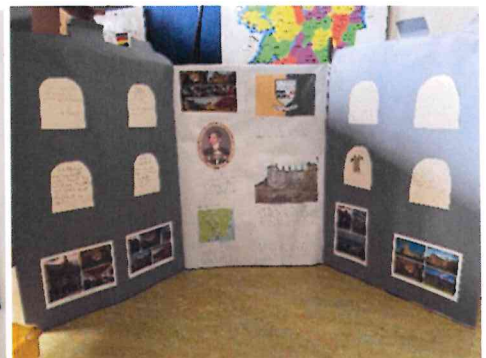
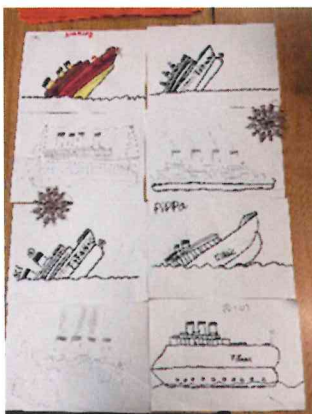
We have been delving into the class novel *The Lost Whale* by Hannah Gold and are really enjoying exploring the characters, themes, storyline and discussions.

The workshop with the author Richie Conroy was very enjoyable. He helped to inspire our creative and writing skills.

We loved learning about the Celts, exploring their way of life and sculpting clay roundhouse structures.

We explored life in the trenches during World War 1, learning about the daily experiences of soldiers.

We studied the Titanic, its journey and tragic sinking, and illustrated our own amazing versions of the event.



We completed and presented our projects on the Counties of Ireland, learning a great deal about their locations and natural features.

As part of Science Week, we took part in a range of hands-on STEM activities: designing and making balloon-powered cars, taking part in a paper tower challenge which focused on stability and structure, the Rocket Mice activity to explore forces and motion and designing aluminium boats to investigate how shape and design effect flotation.

We participated in a Rugby Workshop with Charlie Tector and learned many fun skills and drills.

In November, we proudly took part in the WIA 3K Run in Avondale with 1300 other students.

We helped to plant trees on the school grounds, purchased with the help of Wicklow County Council, to promote biodiversity. We claimed the Tulip Tree!

A highlight of our Christmas activities was to create Christmas cards and decorations for the senior citizens of our community.



We recently said a sad 'adios' to Ibon Gonzalez who returned to his school and family in Madrid.

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh!

Room 7 – 5th Class (Rang V)

Festive Sparkle and Busy Bees – Fifth Class Christmas Newsletter! 🌟🌟

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir!

It is hard to believe that the first term is already over. It has been an incredibly busy, exciting and productive few months in Fifth Class. The classroom has been buzzing with energy, learning and, more recently, plenty of festive glitter!

Before we break up for a well-deserved rest, we wanted to share some highlights from our packed autumn/winter schedule.

Science Week was a huge hit; we loved getting hands-on with messy experiments and were very proud of the individual Science Projects we completed. We kept the momentum going with STEM challenges, testing our engineering skills.



We explored the world through our Geography projects and discovered that numbers can be enjoyable during our Maths fun and exploration sessions.

🏃 Getting Active and Meeting Mentors

We've had some fantastic experiences outside the classroom walls. We tested our stamina running in Avondale and we learned new skills during a high-energy Rugby workshop.



We were also very lucky to welcome some inspiring visitors. Author Richie Conroy visited our class to share his top writing tips, and we were transported to North Africa by the wonderful tales of a storyteller from Morocco.

🎨 Creativity and Culture. Our creative juices have been flowing all term. We have been busy writing our own poems and stories, inspired by our visitors and our reading. In Music, we created "music magic," combining energetic percussion with beautiful singing.



Bhíomar ag cleachtadh ár gcuid Gaeilge freisin! The class worked brilliantly in groups to write and perform short Irish dramas based on "Ali Baba agus na Gadaithe" (Ali Baba and the Thieves). We also created our class drama "An Chéad Nollaig". You can see the results on Google Classroom.

🎄 The Christmas Countdown! December has, of course, been dominated by festive cheer. We've enjoyed opening our class Advent Calendar daily.

Most importantly, we wanted to spread kindness this season. The children worked so hard making beautiful Christmas cards and they created lovely decorations for the community, which we hope will brighten their Christmas.



Finally, preparing for the Christmas Carol Service has been the perfect way to end the term on a high note.

We are so proud of all the hard work and enthusiasm Fifth Class has shown this term. We hope you all have a wonderful, restful Christmas break and a very Happy New Year.

Beannachtaí na Nollag oraibh go léir.

Go dtí 2026!



Room 8 – 6th Class (Rang VI)

Bhí leath-téarma gnóthach againn anseo i rang a sé arís. Bhí go leor déanta agus bainte amach againn ón mbriseadh na Samhna.

Trail run

As a school and class we ran a 3km trail run in Avondale. We ran alongside other schools. Two of our pupils came in the top 10 for their respective groups. Well done Eoghan and Georgia. Everyone ran the whole race and were rewarded with a medal at the finish line.

Homework timing experiment

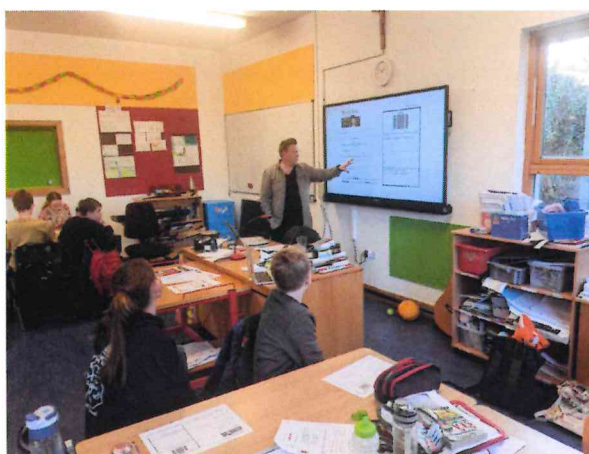
After our break we decided on a topic for an experiment. The topic chosen was “Is it faster to do homework in the early afternoon or later?” The way we did this was we would write down or keep a mental note of start and finish times. We are currently doing the early afternoon homework.

Church choir

We have been practicing for our annual church choir performance in the past weeks. We did incredible songs, actions and sign language. With the help of Ms. Leslie, we learned the songs and the actions to go along with it. But you might be thinking how did we learn such incredible sign language? Well, we had a very good sign language teacher come in and show us the song, we had so much fun doing it too!

Richie Conroy

For those of you who don't know who Riche Conroy is, he is a very good author who writes stories and movie scripts. He showed us some clips from *Malary towers* which is the current movie script he is writing. He taught us about having a set ending to get to and all about the process of writing. We also learned that to him having good punctuation is very important.



Richie Conroy in with 6th Class

Rugby workshop

The senior classes had a Leinster Rugby player called Charlie Tector come in and show us some rugby skills. We played some games and overall, we had a lot of fun. Then we got to ask him some questions about his lifestyle as a professional sportsman.

Story teller

Our class and some others had a Story teller from Morocco come in and tell us some of her stories that had been passed down orally through the generations. She was a very good story teller and put a lot of drama into her work.

Ezine

With Georgia as our editor, we completed another term with plenty of brilliant stories sent from the pupils of Brittas Bay National School. With stories sent in from all classes ranging from Junior Infants all the way to Sixth class and lovely prizes to be won. Everyone had a great time.

One Pagers

We have been hard at work developing our one-pager skills. This is where we create a single sheet of information that represents a larger body of work. Using art, pictures, colours and text we fill an A4 sheet with information based on the topic at hand e.g., Native American history or chapter summaries of our class novel, *Run With the Wind*.



Example of our one-pagers

Jump experiment

We are also engaged in a high jump experiment using a randomised trial structure. We measured our jump height and then split the class into two groups. Group one will do no squats and group two will do a range of different squat techniques and in the new year we will see who gained more of an increase in their vertical jump.



Our jump experiment

Bhí téarma an-shásamh againn ach táimid ag tnúth go mór le briseadh na Nollag. Bíodh Nollaig deas agaibh go léir.

Parents' Association newsletter – Christmas 2025

Dear Parents,

Christmas is coming and the bearded man in the red suit is double checking his naughty and nice lists. I know that the children are all very excited for the festive season, despite the stormy weather we've been having. They have been practising and preparing for their Christmas Songs and Carol Service on Wednesday. Thank you to all the teachers and staff for their hard work and we look forward to the kids stellar Christmas performances.

This week you will have noticed PA committee members selling raffle tickets to raise funds for the school. Lucky winners will collect a prize from a wonderful selection of themed hampers from each room. Thanks to all who donated generously and make sure you get your tickets as soon as possible to be in for a chance to win!

Also, we had another successful uptake of Christmas cards designed by our very own Picassos. Well done to all the kids who drew their masterpieces.

In November we restarted our coffee mornings in Jack Whites. It's a great way for parents to get together and chat, and to welcome new families to the area. Keep your eyes posted on the WhatsApp group messages for upcoming dates and come join us.

The PA will be planning more fundraising events in 2026 and would greatly appreciate your continued support. Also, we would invite parents to join in and participate in our wonderful school community. Your involvement plays a significant role in the success of the school and helps create a supportive environment for all of our children.

You will need to be garda vetted to assist with school activities. The form is however very straightforward and available from any member of the PA or Ann in the school. Help is always needed, in particular in the school garden which is a such a wonderful school amenity.

As the year comes to a close, may your home be filled with laughter, love and joy. We hope you all have a wonderful and merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Kind regards,

Tha PA Committee.