



Scoil Mhuire Réalt na Mara Easter Newsletter 2026 Nuachtlitir na Cásca



Dear Parents,

As we come to the end of a busy and rewarding term, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the many wonderful activities and achievements that have taken place across our school community in recent weeks.

Our pupils have been very active on the sporting front. We were delighted with their enthusiastic participation in the Wicklow FAI football competition, where they represented the school with great pride and teamwork. Rugby and GAA coaching sessions have also been a fantastic addition to our timetable, with the children thoroughly enjoying the fun games and skills development.

With the arrival of Spring, our gardening classes with Wendy Narin have started. We were thrilled to see frog spawn in our pond. It has been a joy to see the children engaging with nature, planting, learning, and taking responsibility for their environment. This ties in beautifully with our recent success in achieving first place in the Wicklow Schools Biodiversity Competition — a wonderful accomplishment that reflects the commitment of both pupils and staff.

We are also very proud of the wide range of learning experiences taking place in the arts. The senior children are greatly enjoying their Irish Sign Language classes, while Music Generation sessions continue to be a highlight, particularly the use of rhythm instruments which has brought so much energy and creativity into the classrooms.

Seachtain na Gaeilge was celebrated with great enthusiasm throughout the school, culminating in a fantastic céilí mór out on the basketball court. It was wonderful to see everyone taking part and embracing our culture and language.

Our pupils also took part in the Arklow Music Festival, where they performed Irish and English verse speaking pieces. They received excellent praise from adjudicators, which is a testament to their hard work and confidence.

We were delighted to welcome a number of visitors to the school this term. Reuben Evans spoke to the children about social media awareness in an engaging and informative way, while author Alan Nolan inspired our budding writers during his visit, supporting our current work on creative writing. We also enjoyed a fascinating visit from the aquarium team from Marine Ireland, which gave pupils a hands-on learning experience about marine life, beach workshops and Garda Niall Kennedy visited the junior rooms.

Engineers Week provided plenty of excitement, with classes engaging in a variety of creative engineering experiments and challenges alongside a visit from Pulse Engineering, Dun Laoghaire. We marked many special occasions including St. Patrick's Day with a wonderful green celebration, World Book Day with a strong focus on reading for pleasure, and of course, our much-anticipated Easter Egg Hunt, which brought great fun to all.

We were also delighted to be able to improve our school digital hardware with three new whiteboards for our classrooms and four new laptops.

We extend our warmest congratulations to our 6th Class pupils who made their Confirmation on Sunday, 22nd March with Bishop Donal Roche, and to our 2nd Class pupils who recently celebrated their First Confession with Fr. Aquinas. These are very important milestones, and we are very proud of them all.

We would also like to acknowledge our past pupils, Liam Scales and Thomas Clarkson, who continue to make us proud with their achievements on the international sporting fields. A great achievement from one small rural school.

As we approach the Easter break, I would like to thank all members of our school community for their continued support and involvement. It is through this strong partnership that our school continues to thrive.

Wishing you all the blessings of Easter — a time of peace, renewal, and hope.

Úna Gallinagh

(Principal)

Diary Dates

Easter Holidays/Summer Holidays

School will close at 11.30am on Friday 27th March and will reopen on Monday 13th April
School will close at 11:30am on Friday 19th June for Summer Holidays.

Bank Holiday

School closed Monday 4th May 2026

First Holy Communion ~ Sunday 17th May 2026 at 12.00

School Closed Department In-Service Seminar for Staff

Friday May 22nd 2026

Annual School Tour Dates (Further details to follow)

Room 3 & 5 ~ Tuesday 26th May 2026

Room 1 & 2 ~ Thursday 28th May 2026

Room 7 & 8 ~ Thursday 4th June 2026

Bank Holiday

School closed Monday 1st June 2026

Garden Day ~ Wednesday 10th June 2026 (weather permitting)

Morning time (Children) 9:00am to 12:30pm

Afternoon time (Parents/Public) 1:00pm to 2:30pm

6th Class Graduation ~ Tuesday 16th June 2026 8:50am to 11:00am

Music Generation Summer Concert ~ Wednesday 17th June 2026

1.00pm – 1.30pm - Room 1 Ms. Lancaster and Room 2 Mr. Byrne

1.30pm – 2.00pm - Room 3 Mr. Furlong and Room 5 Ms. Skelly

2.00pm – 2.30pm - Room 7 Mrs. Burke and Room 8 Mr. Clune

(This may be subject to change)

Easter Egg Hunt - Dunnes Stores

Dunnes Stores sponsored our Easter Egg Hunt this year. We thank them sincerely for their kind donation of an Easter Egg for every child. Please support Dunnes Stores as they have kindly supported us!

Remember to check our website <https://www.brittasbayns.com/> for upcoming events, dates and to catch up on school activities.

News from the Rooms

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

Spring March 2026

Spring has sprung in Room 1 and what a busy term it has been! We have had lots of celebrations and events, for example: St. Brigid's Day, where we made St. Brigid's Day crosses using different materials, Valentine's Day, where we used our creativity and imagination to make love bugs, World Book Day, where the children dressed up as book characters, Engineers Week, where we did some mini engineering projects, the Arklow Music Festival, where the children performed their poems so well and St. Patrick's Day; where we learned lots of new Irish words and enjoyed the whole school Céilí as part of Seachtain na Gaeilge.



In literacy, both classes have continued to make excellent progress with their reading, writing and oral language skills. Our daily dilemmas have led to many interesting conversations and ideas, while our 'picture of the day' has allowed children to showcase their creativity and critical thinking skills. As always, we have read lots of lovely story books based upon the themes we have covered.

In maths, children have continued to deepen their understanding of the number strand, practicing counting, estimation and addition through various games and activities. Other topics that we have covered this term include time and capacity. We have been using lots of open-ended, hands-on questions and challenges, which promote lots of great maths thinking and maths talk!



In SESE, we talked about the signs of spring, went on a spring nature walk and had lots of fun at our role play area of the 'Garden Centre'. We learned about the life cycles of frogs and did various activities based on this, we even got to see tadpoles in the school garden. We also learned all about Ireland and then compared our country to France. We learned some simple French words and got to taste some French food at our French cafe that we made. In SPHE, we discussed the importance of taking care of our bodies, with the children doing mini group projects about hygiene, healthy eating, staying active and getting enough sleep. In addition to this, we learned about our five senses, a highlight of which was taste testing different sour, sweet, savoury and salty foods!



It has definitely been a fun-filled and active term for the children. They have been busy taking part in a wide range of activities including GAA, rugby, music, and gardening. Some other highlights were having the local Garda come to visit, our trip to Aughrim for a GAA skills event and the fantastic magic show in school!

Beannachtaí na Cásca, bain sult as an sos!

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

It is hard to believe that we are now facing into our final term of the school year. It has been a very busy term filled with many different activities.

It was great to have so many children from our class entering the Arklow music festival for both Irish and English verse speaking. The children all worked so hard and should be so proud of themselves for getting up and saying their poems in front of an audience. The festival provides the children with a great opportunity to develop their skills speaking in front of an audience. Our class was also very fortunate that a number of students from the class earned themselves medals and certificates too, which is always a cherry on top.

In SESE the children have been exploring all things spring and learning about different traditions from long ago. The children went on a nature hunt around the school, looking for different signs of spring. The children have learned about different stories associated with both St Bridget and St Patrick. The children have also learned about traditions associated with these two feast days along with those associated with spring. All these accounts were taken from the dúchais website. The children did not only learn about Irish celebrations but also those to other cultures around the world, such as the Chinese new years, Holi and Carnival.



The children have been making great progress with their reading and phonological awareness. We have been very fortunate as Ms. Skelly's fourth class has been helping us with paired reading. The children's knowledge of sight words and phonic rules has also been a great aid to their written work.

In Maths the children have recently been exploring place value and utilising various different concrete resources to show a given number. Through this the children have also been practicing and learning more about adding, subtracting and the relationships between different numbers. This provides the children the chance to develop their own strategies and develop their number sense.

In Gaeilge the children have been learning vocabulary to discuss Easter and words for around the house. The children are encouraged to use as much Gaeilge throughout the school day as possible. First class have been working on their Gaeilge phonics with special emphasis on all the vowels. We have been practicing spelling and reading cvc words in Gaeilge.



I hope all the children have a lovely well-deserved break over the Easter holidays before we commence our final term.

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

We have had a wonderfully busy and exciting term in 2nd and 3rd Class, filled with learning, creativity, and fun activities!

Our class explored the life and adventures of Tom Crean. The children carried out excellent research and produced fantastic projects showcasing his expeditions. Inspired by this, we also designed and created our own sailing ships using paper and straws—everyone put in a great effort and the results were brilliant.

The students in the class spent several weeks learning and reciting poetry in preparation for the Arklow Music Festival. From the practice I observed in class, it came as no surprise that everyone who took part performed so well. The class showed a tremendous interest in poetry, and many of them became poets themselves, creating a series of wonderful handwritten poems.



We celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge in style with a wide range of activities. The children took part in a table quiz, played the guessing game “Cad é?”, sang songs, and enjoyed a lively céilí. A highlight of the week was our class performance of the haka through Irish for the whole school—an amazing achievement! We also created beautiful Irish brooches as part of our art work.

In keeping with the Easter theme, we completed a weaving activity and made colourful Easter egg baskets. These will be perfect for Easter egg hunts and storing some well-earned chocolate treats!



A special congratulations to the boys and girls in 2nd Class on their preparation for their First Holy Communion. They recently celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation and did a fantastic job representing both themselves and our school.

Well done to everyone for a fantastic term—wishing you all a happy and restful Easter break!

Room 5 – 4th Class (Rang IV)

As we come to the end of a busy and enjoyable Easter term, we would like to share some highlights of what we've been working on. There are also lots of photos on our Google Classroom account!

We were delighted to take part in a range of enriching and educational activities this term: participation in a beach litter clean-up Flossie Beach Cleaners, an engineering workshop with PUNCH Consulting Engineers, Rugby skills with Aidan Kearney and GAA skills with Darren Hayden, Storytelling with Alan Nolan, world book day dress-up and a social media comedy show with Reuben Evans, all of which we approached with great interest and enthusiasm. We were also very proud of our participation in the Arklow Music Festival, where our hard work and enthusiasm were clearly evident. Cathal Duffy has returned to further develop our sign language skills and we are proving to be quite the experts!



In Literacy, we have focused on narrative and explanation and poetry skills, producing some imaginative and well-structured work. We are reading *The Hobbit* (Tolkien) together in class, which has sparked great discussion and imagination. We have also continued to build reading comprehension skills through discussion and shared and paired reading.

Táimid tar éis a bheith ag obair go dian ar ár teanga ó bhéal, léitheoireacht agus scríbhneoireacht. Bhí an-spraoi againn le linn Sheachtain na Gaeilge le cumarsáid idir phiaraí!

In Numeracy, we have been working on fractions, decimals, multiplication, shape and space and problem-solving strategies. We have also made excellent progress with our tables.



Project work featured a lot in SESE. We explored habitats and ecosystems, WWII and the Ancient Egyptians. We were especially interested in the life and legacy of Tutankhamun, and we created some fantastic drawings and paintings inspired by this topic. The Explorers saltwater aquarium, from the Marine Institute, provided an amazing opportunity for us to learn about native seashore species in the classroom and develop a strong connection with animals that can be found on our local seashore. We are delighted to be back in the garden with Wendy for Spring weeding and planting.

In Music, we have continued to work on creative music. Experimenting with rhythm and composition with Lesley Dowdall from Music Generation has been fun and interactive. In SPHE we continued to focus on staying safe, friendship, teamwork, and resilience, contributing to a positive and supportive classroom environment.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the term. It makes a real difference to our learning and development.

Wishing you and your families a very happy Easter break.

Room 7 – 5th Class (Rang V)

Fifth Class News: A Term of Discovery & Adventure

What a whirlwind of activity we have had in Fifth Class! From the halls of Dáil Éireann to the sandy shores of our local beach, the pupils have been busy exploring, creating and learning. Here's a look back at some of our highlights.

Global Citizens & History Makers

Our classroom has been alive with thoughtful discussion as we explored the lives of Civil Rights activists and examined the history of Apartheid. The pupils showed great empathy and maturity while reflecting on themes of equality and justice. This learning came to life during our visit to Dáil Éireann, where we explored the chambers of government and the Seanad, gaining a real insight into how our country is run. In History and Geography, we also travelled back in time to investigate bartering and trading, comparing how people lived before modern currency systems.



Science, STEM & The Environment: Engineers Week

A huge thank you to Punch Consulting Engineers for inspiring our future designers and problem-solvers. **STEM Challenges:** Our spaghetti tower challenges tested both creativity and resilience—some stood tall, others... not so much! **Meet the Scientist:** We explored “*What’s in our air?*”, learning about air quality and its impact on health and the environment. **Marine Biology:** The squid dissection was a definite highlight—hands-on, fascinating, and a little messy! **Beach Clean with Flossie:** We proudly helped protect our coastline while learning about marine conservation. **Bats Webinar:** We discovered the importance of bats and their role in our ecosystem. **Planting carrots and native trees-** Fifth class planted carrots directly into our school garden and also planted native trees.

Creativity & The Arts

Our creativity has truly shone this term. **Visual Arts:** We experimented with printing techniques and painted beautiful winter scenes. Our Northern Lights artwork was especially vibrant and eye-catching. **Music:** With Leslie, we explored African music, rhythm, and composition—finishing with our own original songs! **Verse Speaking:** A huge *well done* to all who took part in the Arklow Town Music Festival. The confidence and talent on display in both English and Irish were outstanding.



Gaeilge agus Cultúr

Táimid ag obair go hiontach as Gaeilge! **Réamháisnéis na hAimsire:** Pupils created their own weather forecast videos—future broadcasters in the making! **Topaicí:** We have been learning about *Caitheamh Aimsire* (Hobbies), *Bia* (Food), *An Cháisc* and *Na Séasúir* (The Seasons), while preparing for St. Patrick’s Day. **Seachtain na Gaeilge:** Celebrated with a lively céilí—fantastic energy and footwork! **ISL:** We have also been learning Irish Sign Language with Mr. Duffy, developing new and inclusive ways to communicate.



Physical Education & Sport

Rugby: Skills and teamwork have improved greatly thanks to coaching sessions with Aidan.

FAI Tournament: Our boys' and girls' teams represented the school with pride—excellent teamwork and sportsmanship on display. **GAA-**We have begun GAA training and drills to hone our skills of soloing, passing and moving.

Mathematics & Life Skills

We tackled the “Triple Threat” of **fractions, decimals and percentages**, learning how to convert between them and apply these skills to real-life situations like shopping and statistics. We also explored the circle and discovered how π (**pi**) was developed through hands-on investigation. On **Safer Internet Day**, we discussed how to stay safe, smart, and responsible online.

Special Mention

A big thank you to **Ms. Gormley** for her time with us during her teaching practice. We thoroughly enjoyed her lessons and wish her every success in her future career.

Room 8 – 6th Class (Rang V1)

We have had a busy second term in sixth class this year with many activities, sports days and our confirmation along with plenty of hard work in the classroom. Feicfidh tú thíos an méid oibre agus gníomaíochtaí atá ar siúl againn.

Beach Clean

At the beginning of the second term, we had a busy morning cleaning Brittas Bay Beach. We collected a huge amount of rubbish. The lovely sunny morning served to remind us just how beautiful our local beach is and underlined the importance of keeping it as clean and tidy as possible. De réir a chéile a thógtar an chaisleán.



Tree planting with Wendy

Our class planted 14 trees around the border of the forest. We planted lots of different types such as; hazel, elder, hawthorn and crab-apple. We are trying to plant a full native hedge for a wildlife corridor.

Fásann crann an eolais in ithir an amhrais.



The rain gauge

Our class did an interesting project in conjunction with NASA Globe on rainfall measurements. We left a graduated cylinder gauge outside in the sensory garden and checked it daily to record on a centralised website. It wasn't just us though. Loads of other schools also did this too; measuring the rain fall and the PH level of said rain. In our PH test results of said rain it was around level 6.7 on average. This rain info really helped NASA to further understand the impact of rain. We also had loads of fun doing it. It coincided with one of the wettest periods of weather we have had in Ireland. Ní hé lá na báistí lá na bpáistí.



Storytelling and Comedy workshops

This term, a storyteller and a comedian both came into our school to do workshops for 4th, 5th and 6th class. Comedian Reuben, did a workshop where he talked to us about online, phones and social media. It was an enjoyable show for all students involved and a great way for us to learn while having fun. Writer, illustrator and storyteller Alan Nolan presented a workshop about books he wrote and even added in a small art lesson on how to draw the Irish yeti, a character from one of his many books. He showed his most recent book 'The Grand Central Cinema Club', a book about children and movies back around the 1930s in Ireland. The classes in these workshops enjoyed watching, learning and getting involved in different activities.



FAI 5-a-side Blitz

Girls

We headed off to Lamberton full of expectation and did ourselves and the school proud by trying our hardest and playing some great football. Both of the girls' teams finished in contention and one of the teams marched onto the qualifying final. We now play again in Greystones representing the school with pride on April 16th.

On the bus on the way home, Mr. Clune gave us sweets and overall I'd say the day was great. Níor chaill fear an mhisnigh riamh.

Boys

On the Thursday, two boys teams set off in the hopes of improving their performances from last year. We had two teams in the tournament: the A team and the B team. After some excellent teamwork and many hard fought battles, both teams finished close to the top of their respective tables. Unfortunately, the A team was out because they didn't score enough points but on the other hand the B team qualified for another game. If they won this game they would qualify for the next stage of the tournament. They started the game strong and scored 2 early goals. They kept up the pressure for the rest of the game and ended up winning the game 4-0. This was the perfect way to end off a perfect day. Tús maith leath na hoibre.



Confirmation

On Sunday, sixth class took part in confirmation. All the families were there and many more people came. It was even better that Bishop Donal came to confirm the class. The class had a great time the whole way through the day. After mass, the school had food and a cup of tea for the people who attended.

Even after the mass had ended, the class had separate parties and events. Some of the class stayed at home while others went to places such as the Arklow Bay and The Hungry Monk. It was a great day. Is gaire cabhair Dé ná an doras.



NEWS FROM OUR STUDENTS COMMITTEES

Did you know that our students from infants right through to 6th class, are doing fantastic work as part of our wellbeing committee. Each week, our dedicated committee members take part in litter picking around the school grounds. This initiative helps to prevent a build up of litter and ensures that our outdoor spaces remain clean, safe and enjoyable for everyone at playtime.

This week, committee members from 5th and 6th class organised an easter hunt for our members. It was particularly special to see the older students guiding and supporting the younger students, demonstrating excellent teamwork, leadership, and a strong sense of community across class levels. The committee has also been busy working to organise Easter eggs for the end of the term. This will be given as a well deserved treat for students.



In addition, last week marked National Hydration & Nutrition Week. Our committee members took on the important role of monitoring lunches in their classes, encouraging healthy eating habits and reminding peers to drink plenty of water.

After the easter holidays, our committee members will plant sunflowers in our sensory garden. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, responsibility, and care shown by our wellbeing committee. Their efforts continue to make a positive impact on our school community.

Parents Association update for Easter newsletter 2026

Happy Easter everybody. We've had a busy start to 2026 and a very wet one too. Thankfully, the sun is starting to shine again and fingers crossed it will continue to do so for a bright and sunny Easter.

As you know our 6th class students made their confirmation last weekend. Congratulations to all those who received this sacrament and their families as they celebrate this joyous time. 5th class hosted tea, coffee and some fabulous sweet treats and cake after the confirmation. A huge thank you to all who organised and helped on the day or supplied the delicious home baked goods.

And massive congratulations to all the students who took part in the Arklow Music Festival in early March. Their hard work practicing and talent shone through on the day with many students placing and making it through to the finals. Bualadh bos gach duine!

Our recent fundraisers have done very well. The Christmas raffle that each class coordinated and themed raised €1149. Thank you to all the parents for donating to the class hampers.

And Dicey's Mega Bingo Night and raffle in Jack Whites in February raised €2575! A big thank you to those who organised, who sponsored a bingo game, and the donations of prizes for the raffle and anonymous donations to help make the night such a huge success.

And the school Pyjama Day in January raised €189.60.

Springtime is a busy time in the garden, and the school would welcome and appreciate anyone who can offer some time to help out. If you have some spare time, please consider joining Wendy and the gardening team. Garda vetting forms are available from Ann in the school office.