

STEPASIDE ETNS

MAY 22ND 2026



Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we close out the month of May and the final stretch of the school year, there is a real sense of excitement and energy around the school. Standardised testing has now finished for the majority of our pupils and I would like to extend a huge thank you to our teachers, SET team and SNAs for the incredible support and encouragement they provided to students throughout the testing period. We are very proud of all our children for their efforts and perseverance. It is important to remember that these tests are only one small snapshot of a child's learning journey and do not reflect the full picture of their many talents, strengths and personal growth.

We now look forward to a very busy and enjoyable five weeks ahead, filled with school tours, playground visits, outings and lots of memorable experiences for the children. We are also hoping the sunny weather continues into the weekend and next week! A gentle reminder to please send children wearing or with suncream for school tours and outdoor activities over the coming weeks. Your child's teacher will have sent an email with tour times and arrangements by now, or will do so over the coming week.

Next week we are delighted to welcome our incoming Junior Infants for September as they visit the school to meet their teachers and future classmates. It is always such a special occasion and we look forward to beginning their school journey with us. Wishing everyone a happy and sunny week ahead!

Leona



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **28th May** - Incoming JI Parent Info Session at 3pm
- **29th May** - Welcome visit for incoming JI
Half day for current Junior Infants.
Collection time at 11:30 - please inform minders/afterschools.
- **1st June** - Bank holiday Monday - School closure.
- **8th -12th June** - Sports Week
- **23rd June** - 6th Class Graduation



CHECK IT OUT

LIBRARY NEWS!

A massive thank you to all families who have bought books from the Scholastics Fair and the book clubs. All of these books for classrooms and the library have been bought with the rewards as a result of your purchases. Check out the gorgeous titles below that our pupils can now find in our fabulous library.



DRUMCONDRA TESTING FEEDBACK

The Educational Research Centre (ERC), provider of the "Drumcondra" standardised tests, is inviting parents to complete a short anonymous survey on their knowledge of and views on standardised testing to help inform future developments.

Please note, this feedback is not shared with us directly, but is a chance to comment on this format of testing on a nationwide level.

[Complete the survey here!](#)

To access the survey, you can click the link above or use the QR code provided:



BUTTERFLIES

Third Class B have started another life cycle study following the success of their tadpole study. The class received a tub of caterpillars in the post this week and the children will hopefully observe these caterpillars transforming into butterflies. When the butterflies are ready, the plan is to release them into the wild on school grounds. In preparation for this, Ciara has purchased some butterfly friendly plants to plant on our school grounds.

There is so much learning in this study, with the children developing their understanding of life cycles, habitats, biodiversity and the importance of caring for the environment. The excitement in the classroom has been wonderful to see already, with pupils eagerly checking on the caterpillars each day and making predictions about the changes they will observe over the coming weeks. It is a fantastic opportunity for hands-on, real-life learning and we look forward to sharing updates as the caterpillars continue their amazing transformation journey.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM COMMITTEE

Recently, we held our first Outdoor Classroom Committee meeting with a wonderful group of parents who have generously volunteered their time, ideas and expertise to help shape this exciting project for our school. We were delighted by the enthusiasm, creativity and shared vision that emerged from the discussion.

As a school community, we are incredibly fortunate to have such a talented group involved, including parents with backgrounds and interests in biodiversity, horticulture, wellbeing and nature-based learning. There was great discussion around the many ways outdoor learning can support children's development, independence, wellbeing and engagement across all areas of the curriculum. Ideas explored included creating spaces for pollinators and wildlife, planting native trees and fruiting plants, developing sensory and nature-based learning areas, and creating inviting outdoor spaces where children can learn, explore and connect with nature.

We are also very grateful to have a healthy budget to support the development of this project, which gives us exciting opportunities as we begin planning for the future. Again, this is all due to PAC Fundraising this year and the generosity of the parent body. At this early stage, we have identified staff interest and staff buy-in as a key starting point, and we hope to expand the committee to include staff leads who will help guide the development of a whole-school plan for outdoor learning.

While the project is still very much in the planning stages, it is already clear that there is enormous potential for creating a meaningful and enriching outdoor learning environment for all children in SETNS. We look forward to sharing updates with the wider school community as the project develops over the coming months.



JUNIOR AND SENIOR INFANTS WELCOME ECOLIA FOREST SCHOOL

Junior and Senior Infants welcomed Flavia from Ecolia Forest School, operating in South Dublin to join us on Friday May 22nd. Ecolia Forest School are official members of the Irish Forest School Association.

The aim of Flavia's visit was to allow us to participate in the global Screen-Free campaign, aiming to reduce screen time and promote outdoor learning.

During Flavia's session with the infants, she focused on connecting with nature and learning and about reducing screen time. The session included some gorgeous opportunities for reflection and conversation through the use of story. We are excited to develop these community links with our neighbouring schools as we begin our planning for our Outdoor Classroom project.



STEPPING STONES JUNIOR - ARTWORK

Our Stepping Stones Junior pupils have been busy creating the most gorgeous artwork over the last few weeks. Look at all the new life!



CALLOUT - PARENT AND STUDENT VOLUNTEERS WANTED!



As we approach the end of another school year, we look towards next September with a view to planning for recruitment, classes and teacher allocation. As always, pupil numbers directly impact our school and staffing. If you or your family are planning to relocate or move schools, please inform the office as soon as possible by phone or email (info@stepasideetns.ie)

We would ask parents, if possible, to support us in two ways over the coming weeks. Firstly, please keep an eye on our enrolment posts on Instagram and Facebook and share them with anybody you feel may be interested in joining our school community. Sharing posts within local community groups, WhatsApp groups and among friends and neighbours can make a huge difference and helps us reach families who may not yet know about SETNS.

Secondly, we are excited to begin working on a short promotional video for the school over the next two weeks, showcasing the many wonderful experiences, opportunities and connections that make our school community so special. We are currently looking for parent volunteers who may be willing to give a short testimonial about their family's experience in SETNS. This could be on camera or, for those who would prefer, as a voiceover contribution or in written form.

We also know that many of our students enjoy the opportunity to get involved in creative projects like this. If you feel your child would like to share their thoughts and experiences of attending SETNS as part of the video, please let the office know and provide consent for them to participate.

If you or your child may be interested in being involved, please email the office at info@stepasideetns.ie with a brief indication of your availability over the next two weeks. We hope to have lots of interest and, while we may not be able to involve everyone immediately, we will certainly be in touch with volunteers as filming plans progress. Thank you, as always, for your continued support of our school community.