



# Christian Brothers School

Mountgarrett, New Ross, Co. Wexford

## September 2025 Newsletter



Iontaobhas Scoileanna Éamainn Rís  
Edmund Rice Schools Trust





Kennedy Summer School Trip 2025



First Years enjoying the views on their bonding trip



Meitheal Leaders Back Row: Angel, Hannchen, Cayley, Ms Rowe, Ellie Jo, Laura, Hazel  
Front Row: Noah, Luke, Jamie, Ionut

## Contents

<b>Welcome to the September Edition of our CBS Newsletter</b> .....	3
<b>Small Moments, Big Difference – Life as an SNA</b> .....	4
<b>CBS School Walk</b> .....	5
<b>Celebrating the Amber Flag at CBS</b> .....	6
<b>1st and 2nd Year Camogie Blitz at SET Carlow</b> .....	7
<b>Friendlink Returns at CBS</b> .....	8
<b>Girls’ Rugby at CBS</b> .....	9
<b>Opening of School Year Mass – A Celebration of Kindness and Community</b> .....	10
<b>First Year Bonding Trip to Slieve Coillte</b> .....	11
<b>Parents’ Association in CBS New Ross</b> .....	12
<b>Kennedy Summer School Stem Talk</b> .....	12
<b>Comic Book Club</b> .....	13
<b>Science Club</b> .....	13
<b>Art Club</b> .....	14
<b>Choir</b> .....	15
<b>County HSCL Cluster Meeting at CBS New Ross</b> .....	15
<b>The 2025 International Eightball Pool Championships with CBS Student representing Ireland</b> .....	16
<b>Celebrating Our School Community in the Spirit of Edmund Rice</b> .....	17

### **Welcome to the September Edition of our CBS Newsletter**

It is always a joy to bring together the many stories and activities that make up life in CBS New Ross. This edition of our school newsletter is a wonderful reflection of the energy and spirit of our school community.

From sport to faith celebrations, from wellbeing initiatives to creative projects, it is exciting to see so much happening within the one newsletter.

Each article showcases the enthusiasm, talent and kindness of our students and we are immensely proud of the way they represent themselves, their families and our school. In doing so, our students live out the values of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter, while also embodying the everyday expectations of **responsibility, respect and kindness** that guide all we do.



Head of School, Eimear

## **Small Moments, Big Difference – Life as an SNA**

Beginning my journey in 2018 as an SNA at CBS, no two days were ever the same and that still stands nearly seven years later - which is what I enjoy most about it. While the centre of my role involves supporting individual students with additional needs, in everyday life I interact with everyone within every corner of the school community. This job is about people. It's about making connections, building positive relationships and being a constant presence which can make a student's day easier. Whether I'm in the classroom supporting a student's learning, helping them with lockers and organisation or just being nearby to help them feel comfortable and safe - sometimes it's the little things that matter.

A big part of making my job amazing is the everyday interactions I have with students. A quick chat in the corridor or just asking "how is your day going?" It's these conversations where I learn the most about students and all their interests, values or even their worries. This is what I cherish as every student comes with a different tale to tell.

Working alongside great staff at CBS who have made me feel extremely welcome from day one and also work tirelessly to build an environment which is made with kindness, respect and care are some of the key factors that give CBS such a great sense of community.

Being a SNA is more than a job to me. It's a daily opportunity to make a difference no matter how small. It's about navigating students through the ups and downs and making their journey through this chapter of their lives a little easier. I've built relationships that will last a lifetime. I have seen progress from students which may be small to some but huge to others. I've shared laughter and moments of trust. This is why I am so proud to be part of their journey and also being part of the CBS community.



*Pictured on SNA Appreciation Day: SNA Rachel, SNA Sarah and SNA Jess (who penned this article).*

## CBS School Walk



Our annual School Walk, a highlight of the wellbeing calendar, was initially planned for 19th September this year but due to weather conditions we had to postpone it to the following Friday which turned out to be a lovely bright sunny Autumn morning. It was an ideal morning for the whole school community of students and staff to take part in this event.

TY students distributed high-vis vests in the basketball courts, and soon staff and students from every year group were on their way. Leading the 8 km route were the eager First Years, taking part in their first CBS walk.



The walk offers a wonderful chance for students to chat with friends and teachers while enjoying fresh air and exercise. Teachers are at junctions to help students cross carefully at areas such as Manion's roundabout and O'Hanrahan Bridge to name but a few.

In the past few years our route has changed to encompass part of our local Greenway. A welcome pit stop at the Gala Shop—complete with ice creams supported by Gala—helped everyone recharge before the return leg over O'Hanrahan Bridge and up the refurbished Goat Hill steps.



We are very thankful to our student body who collected sponsorship in the 2 weeks beforehand. All funds raised will go directly back into school projects for the coming academic year.

All in all it was a very vibrant day of community spirit, healthy activity and fun - one that left everyone energised and proud as they returned to school for well-earned refreshments.



## Celebrating the Amber Flag at CBS



On 29th September 2025, CBS proudly raised the Amber Flag for the very first time. This achievement was the culmination of a year of hard work, dedication, and collaboration by our Amber Flag Committee, supported by staff coordinators Ms. Butler, Ms. Owens and Ms. Sinnott. Together, they have helped place positive mental health and inclusivity at the centre of school life.

So, what exactly is the Amber Flag? As the Committee themselves explain: *“The Amber Flag is all about Mental Health. We are here to support our community, encourage positive mental health, overcome challenges, build resilience and spread awareness. We are here to help you realise that you are not alone. We wish to create a healthy, inclusive environment here in our school.”*

Throughout the year, the Committee, with guidance from Ms. Butler, Ms. Owens, and Ms. Sinnott, organised a wide range of initiatives to raise awareness and foster belonging. These included Mental Health Week, Stand-Up Week, Autism Awareness Month, Anti-Bullying Week, Friendlink and participation in Darkness into Light. Each event provided opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations, celebrate diversity and support one another.

Earning the Amber Flag required commitment and creativity. Among the many projects undertaken were:

- Research into autism-friendly practices through visits to local supermarkets, inviting guest speakers and exploring supports available for neurodivergent individuals.
- Fundraising efforts for Darkness into Light, alongside charity events such as the Stand-Up Week bake sale and Jersey Day.
- Creative awareness activities such as puzzle-piece artwork, poster competitions and information boards displayed throughout the school.

In the words of Chairperson Zofia Kopaniarz and Vice Chairperson Natalia Ferbes: *“We managed to complete all of the goals we set for ourselves. We will continue to strive towards creating a safe environment in our school community where everyone spreads kindness and accepts each other.”*



The first raising of the Amber Flag was a proud moment for the entire school community and a recognition of the commitment shown by the Committee. With new initiatives planned, members are determined to build on this success and ensure that positive mental health remains at the heart of school life.

The Amber Flag now flies as a visible reminder of the school's ongoing commitment to wellbeing, inclusivity and resilience.

It symbolises not only what has been achieved but also what lies ahead – a community where every student and staff member is supported, valued and encouraged to thrive.

## 1st and 2nd Year Camogie Blitz at SET Carlow

Our 1st and 2nd year camogie team had a fantastic day out at the Camogie Blitz held in SET Carlow on September 30th. Under the expert guidance of teachers Ms Míde Delaney and Ms Erica Owens, our young players took to the pitch with enthusiasm and determination. The team was also supported by two transition year students, Emma and Órla, who helped mentor the younger players throughout the day.



The day saw our team compete in four exciting matches against other schools. We kicked off with a victory against St Peter's, showing great teamwork and skill. Our second match against St Pauls proved more challenging, resulting in a loss, but the girls showed tremendous resilience. The team bounced back brilliantly in game three with another win against Glenart, before facing a tough final match against Scoil Mhuire. Special mention must go to 2nd year Shannon and 1st year Joanna who both found the back of the net with some excellent scores throughout the day.



While the results were mixed, the true success of the day lay in its purpose. This blitz was specifically organised for schools with smaller, developing teams, with the aim of encouraging young girls to continue playing camogie. Events like these provide invaluable experience and help build confidence in emerging players.



We extend our thanks to Sabrina Larkin from the Leinster Participation and Growth Association for organising such a wonderful opportunity. These development days are crucial in nurturing the next generation of camogie players and ensuring that girls have the chance to participate and grow in the sport.

Well done to all our players who represented the school with pride and determination. We look forward to seeing you all continue your camogie journey!

**Friendlink Returns at CBS**

The Friendlink initiative, developed and run by the Amber Flag Committee, is back up and running at CBS. The first session of the year was a great success, with over 30 First Years and Second Year students taking part.

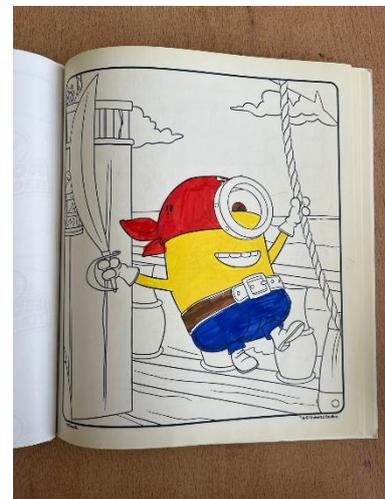
Friendlink takes place every Thursday at lunchtime in Room 9 and provides a welcoming space where students can relax, socialise and take part in a wide range of activities. These include Lego, jigsaws, play dough, colouring, quizzes, sports skills and knitting, to name just a few.



The initiative is designed especially for younger students as they adjust to life in secondary school. For many First Years, settling in and making new friends can feel daunting after the move from primary school. Friendlink provides a fun, informal environment to help students connect with others in their year group. Second Year students are also encouraged to attend, particularly those who would like to broaden their friendship circles.

More than just a lunchtime activity, Friendlink represents a valuable opportunity for students to build friendships, strengthen social skills and support positive wellbeing. Its success reflects the ongoing commitment of the Amber Flag Committee to create an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community.

With a strong start to the year, Friendlink looks set to become a highlight of the week for many CBS students.



## Girls' Rugby at CBS

Girls' rugby at CBS continues to go from strength to strength, with training taking place every Thursday lunchtime from 1.20 to 1.50.



The sessions are open to all, from beginners to experienced players, and we are delighted to have the support of Leinster CCRO Katie Meeks (NRRFC), who brings her expertise and energy to every session.

One of the great strengths of rugby at CBS is the involvement of our own students in the coaching setup. Dara, Roan and Oisín play an important role as student coaches, supporting Ms. Amanda Butler in delivering sessions, helping with skill development and assisting on match days.

Their leadership and enthusiasm make a real difference, providing excellent role models for younger players.

This year we are fielding teams across all age groups:

- First Year Girls' Touch Rugby – a fun, non-contact introduction to the game where students can learn the basics, build confidence and enjoy taking part in blitzes throughout the year.
- Junior Girls' Rugby (2nd and 3rd Year) – our developing squads, building skills and teamwork while representing CBS in matches and tournament
- Senior Girls' Rugby (Transition Year to 6th Year) – a strong and committed group who combine experience with passion, and who are eager to build on last year's successes.

Last year proved to be an excellent season for CBS girls' rugby, with plenty of memorable matches, strong performances, and real progress across all teams. We are excited to continue that momentum into the year ahead, and we look forward to seeing even more players taking part.



## Opening of School Year Mass – A Celebration of Kindness and Community

The CBS New Ross community gathered together to celebrate the Opening of the School Year Mass, marking a joyful beginning to the academic year. The theme of this year’s celebration was “*Kindness*” — a value that lies at the heart of our school community and reflects the spirit of our founder, Blessed Edmund Rice.



We were delighted to welcome our new chaplain, Fr. Odhrán Furlong, who celebrated the Mass, beautifully organised by Ms. Sinnott and the Religious Education Department. During the ceremony, all First Year students stood to receive a special blessing from Fr. Odhrán, symbolising their welcome into the CBS family.

Our Head of School, Eimear, led the Prayer of Welcome, inviting God’s blessing on our students, teachers and families and reminding us that kindness, compassion and respect are the true foundations of our school community.

A particularly meaningful moment came when Sixth Year student, Ella, lit the school candle, representing the light of God’s love and the kindness that guides us through the school year.

Many students contributed to the ceremony in a variety of ways, helping to make it a warm and inclusive celebration. Special thanks to Eimear, Ella, Jack, Filip, Logan, Dara, Kian, Paige, Lucy, Mya, Alex, Lisa-Marie, Ruth, Kelsi, Olivia, Marcin, Katie and Kelsey for their readings, prayers and participation throughout the Mass.

Music and song added a beautiful atmosphere to the celebration, thanks to our music teacher Ms Oakley for all her hard work and our talented school choir, whose members included: Olivia, Niall, Tesia, Filip, Leah, Ruth, Emma, Luke, Giovanna, Ellie-Rose, Sam, Caitlin, Claudia, Summer, Jake, Zara, Grace, Lucy, Caroline, George, Precious, Will, Julia, Romina, Abbie, Aoife, Annagh, Melaniia, Olivia, Illomusa, Josh and Eve.

The church was set up by Ms Rowe and our International Students Victoria and Eugenia and our Meitheal Leaders Angel, Hannchen, Cayley, Ellie Jo, Laura, Hazel, Noah, Luke, Jamie, Ionut.

We were also addressed by our Principal, Ms. Rice, who spoke warmly about the importance of our school community and the responsibility we all share in creating an environment where every student feels valued and supported. She encouraged everyone to carry the message of kindness into everyday life (including digital life) and school life — to look out for one another, to show respect and to help make CBS New Ross a place where everyone can flourish both academically and personally.

To conclude this special celebration, all First Year students joined together in song for the final hymn, filling the church with joy and energy as they began their CBS journey.

It was a truly uplifting start to the year — one that reminded us all of the power of kindness, the strength of community and the light that shines when we work and grow together at CBS New Ross.



## First Year Bonding Trip to Slieve Coillte

The sun shone brightly for our recent First Year bonding trip on Friday, 5th September, setting the perfect tone for a day filled with fresh air, friendship and fun. With spirits high and backpacks packed, the First Year students took a short trip out to the beautiful Slieve Coillte.

Accompanied by their Meitheal leaders, the students made their way to the top of the mountain where they were greeted by panoramic views and perfect picnic weather. The highlight of the day was a relaxed and cheerful picnic lunch at the summit, allowing everyone to enjoy not only the surroundings but each other's company.

The trip was also supported by staff members Mr Kavanagh, Ms Wilson, Ms Delaney, Ms Kiely, Ms Rowe and SNA Rachel, who all helped make the day a smooth and enjoyable experience.

It was a memorable day of bonding, laughter and making new connections – the perfect start to the First Years' journey in their new school community.



## Parents' Association in CBS New Ross

For 2025 - 2026 the following are the officers of our Parents' Association:



Chairperson Carel Van De Merwe



Secretary Jagienka Borecka



Treasurer George Delaney.

The officers and the Parents' Association committee members kindly welcome anyone interested in joining the Parents' Association.

Our Parents' Association has a rich history of supporting students, teachers and families in the school community. Over the years, we have worked together to enhance the educational experience and create a positive environment for everyone connected with CBS New Ross.

Some benefits of joining the Parents' Association include:

- Building relationships with other parents and teachers.
- Contributing to school events and activities.
- Having a voice in school decisions.
- Supporting student wellbeing and achievement.

If you are interested in joining or learning more about our history and activities, please let us know! We would love to have you on board. The principal can put you in touch with members of the Parents' Association if you are interested in joining.

## Kennedy Summer School Stem Talk

The CBS was well represented again this year at the Kennedy Summer School Stem talk held in the JFK Arboretum on 28th August.

For most of the students it was only their second day back in school but that did not hinder their engagement and their perceptive questioning. Forty-five students, drawn from the higher Maths and Physics classes, spent the two hours discovering how vast the area of space research is and how closely Irish researchers are to cutting edge developments in the field.



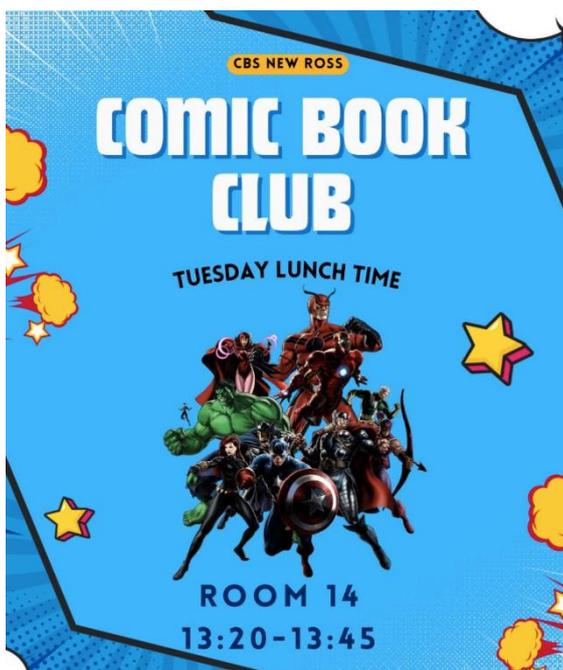
Presentations were delivered on the latest research and discoveries in the area of space exploration. This overlapped with the many developments now taking place with AI.

The role of a full rounded education was also emphasised to students, highlighting the importance of the arts and humanities even in this area.

We are very thankful to the invitation extended to us from the Kennedy Summer School.

### Comic Book Club

Our Comic Book Club meets weekly each Tuesday from 1:20pm to 1:50pm where students enjoy reading a wide range of comics, discussing storylines, debating art styles and comparing heroes and villains. New members are always welcome!



### Science Club

After-School Science Club (Monday from 4:15pm to 5:15pm) is open to all students and lets them explore hands-on experiments and dive into the world of discovery. From building simple circuits to experimenting with chemical reactions, club members have been learning how science connects to everyday life. The club not only gives students a chance to extend their classroom learning but also encourages teamwork, problem-solving, and creativity.



Students can also take part in Scifest competition both here in school and regionally in SETU arena. It includes developing a hypothesis & investigation plan and creating project display.



## Art Club



The After-School Art Club on Thursday's from 4pm to 6pm offers students a creative and enjoyable space to explore their imagination while developing skills in Visual Art. Open to all budding young artists, the club provides an opportunity to work beyond the classroom in a relaxed and supportive environment.

Students are encouraged to experiment with a wide variety of materials and techniques, from drawing and painting to mixed media, lino printing, sculpture, murals and various art competitions. Whether they are refining their existing skills or trying something new for the first time, the club allows each student to progress at their own pace.

The focus is not only on producing finished artworks, but also on enjoying the process of making, learning and expressing ideas visually. Collaboration, inspiration and creativity are at the heart of the sessions, ensuring that students feel free to explore their individuality as well as share ideas with others.

Above all, the After-School Art Club is a space for creativity, fun and growth. It creates an opportunity for every student to develop their artistic flair and build confidence in their abilities.

We are fortunate that our students are using their talents to create murals throughout the school, leaving a lasting mark that brightens our corridors and classrooms and inspires our whole community.



## Choir

The school choir is a vibrant group of students who, each Monday at lunch time, share their love of music through song.

With mixed voices from all years, the choir brings music to life at many school occasions. So far this year the Choir has participated at the Opening Mass for the School Year. Alongside developing musical skills, students build lasting friendships, grow in confidence and share the joy of singing together.



## County HSCL Cluster Meeting at CBS New Ross

On Thursday 18 September, CBS New Ross hosted the first County HSCL (Home School Community Liaison) Cluster Meeting of the school year, bringing together HSCL coordinators from across the region. The meeting was chaired by Margaret Rowe, HSCL Coordinator at CBS New Ross, who warmly welcomed attendees and facilitated a purposeful and engaging discussion focused on enhancing supports for students and families.



Billy, Jack, Eugenia and Victoria greeted HSCL coordinators attending the county cluster meeting.

Attendees noted the warm and welcoming atmosphere of CBS New Ross throughout the morning, reflecting the school's strong sense of community and commitment to partnership. The hospitality and collegial spirit created an open space for collaboration and meaningful discussion.



### *Key Topics on the Agenda*

The agenda for the County HSCL Cluster Meeting focused on three key areas central to the HSCL role: **Transitions**, with an emphasis on supporting students moving between school levels (into primary school and secondary school); **Home Visits**, reaffirming their value in building strong school-family relationships; and **Attendance**, including discussion around current challenges and the rollout of the new national attendance campaign led by TESS.

### *Nationwide Attendance Campaign Launched by TESS*

The cluster meeting discussed the new multimedia national attendance campaign, recently launched by Minister for Education and Youth, Helen McEntee, in collaboration with TESS. The campaign seeks to promote regular school attendance across Ireland and raise awareness among parents, students and the wider community about the long-term impact of school absenteeism.

The campaign follows the release of concerning statistics from TESS showing that more than one in five children and young people at both primary and post-primary level are missing over 20 days of school per year. This level of absenteeism has a significant effect on students' educational outcomes, wellbeing and future opportunities.

The new campaign will use a variety of platforms—TV, radio, digital media and schools—to spread key messages about the importance of attending school every day.

CBS was delighted to host this County Home School Community Liaison Cluster Meeting.

### **The 2025 International Eightball Pool Championships with CBS Student representing Ireland**



This year's World Eightball Pool Championships was in Ennis, from 25<sup>th</sup> August to 5<sup>th</sup> September with players from 15 nations competing across a packed schedule of categories.

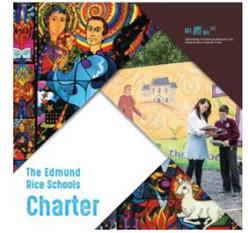
Congratulations to our 6<sup>th</sup> Year Student Ben who competed at the event representing Ireland.

Ben continues to train with the Irish team and we wish him the best of luck for the remainder of the year.

## **Celebrating Our School Community in the Spirit of Edmund Rice**

As we look back on a busy and uplifting start to the school year, it is clear that the wide range of activities featured in this newsletter reflect the five key elements of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter which are:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership
- Excelling in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership.



This Charter serves as a guiding framework for our ethos, which underpins every decision and initiative undertaken within the school, ensuring that our school community remains committed to the tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice.

We sincerely thank our staff for their continued commitment to providing these rich opportunities, which allow our students to grow, flourish and benefit in so many ways.

If your son/daughter's school activity has not been included in this edition, we warmly invite you to submit an article or photograph for our October Newsletter so that we can celebrate the many talents and achievements of our CBS New Ross students together.