

Amber Flag for Excellence



We are very proud to share that our school has been awarded the Amber Flag Award in recognition of our ongoing commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.

This achievement reflects the wide range of supports and initiatives available across the school, including Relax Kids sessions, Classroom Mindfulness, Fight to Thrive, the Starfish Project, Roots of Empathy, our Lego-based social skills club, and access to an Art Therapist.

We are extremely proud of our pupils for the positive way they engage with these initiatives and support one another each day. Thank you to our parents and wider school community for your continued encouragement and support in making our school a happy and caring environment for all.



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Relax Kids



St Joseph's has been offering Relax Kids sessions since 2020, supporting children's wellbeing through a structured and engaging approach. Each session follows the 7-step class structure, designed to promote relaxation, confidence, and emotional resilience. This year, sessions have included imaginative fairy tale adventures, as well as themed programmes focused on becoming Wellbeing Warriors and building self-belief through Confidence Bootcamps. The provision has been further enhanced through our coach completing Children's Yoga Teacher Training, enriching sessions with additional skills and techniques to support pupils' overall wellbeing.



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Dots and Paws B



dots

b

The classroom-based mindfulness programme, Paws b, has been a regular feature in P6 over the past few years. The name Paws b reflects a core skill at the heart of the programme: learning to pause, step back from distractions, and simply be. The curriculum is centred around key elements that support children's emotional development and self-awareness. Through a neuroscience approach, pupils gain an understanding of how their brains work, helping them to make sense of their thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. In addition, the programme provides practical techniques, equipping children with simple, accessible strategies they can use in everyday situations to manage challenges and remain calm.



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P6 and P7 pupils completed the Mini Minds Programme with Commonwealth boxer Steven Ward. This engaging, boxing-based programme provided a fun and supportive environment where children could express themselves, build confidence, and develop emotional awareness.

Through the discipline of non-contact boxing, pupils learned valuable skills around self-control, resilience, and understanding their emotions, all while staying active and enjoying the experience.



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Roots of Empathy

Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based classroom programme that has been shown to reduce levels of aggression among school children, while also improving social and emotional competence and increasing empathy. Significantly, it provides an effective approach to reducing the risk factors that cause violence.

At the heart of the programme are a baby and parent from the local community, Claire and baby River visited P6A on a monthly basis throughout the year. Ms McKinney coached the pupils to observe the baby's development and label the baby's feelings. This 'emotional literacy' lays the foundations for more safe and caring classrooms.

Children became more competent in understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others and are less likely to physically, psychologically and emotionally hurt each other through bullying.



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This year, all classroom assistants and a number of teachers were trained to establish Lego-Based Clubs within our school. These clubs are designed to support the development of social and interaction skills in a fun and structured way.



Lego-Based Clubs involve children working together in small groups to build models, following an adult-led structure. Through this process, pupils develop key skills such as listening, joint attention, problem-solving, waiting, turn-taking, and sharing.



We ran numerous Lego groups throughout the year, with children working collaboratively, building strong relationships, and supporting one another. It has been wonderful to see pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem, with a positive impact on their overall wellbeing and mental health.



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World Mental Health Day



The children and staff of St Joseph's were honoured to host a very special movie premiere in our humble school hall. We were delighted to welcome the talented Ciara and Robbie Boake, who came to share their beautiful film Wildkind with our school community.

Wildkind began as a heartfelt poem written by Ciara for her daughters Adabelle, Fiadh Rós, and Birdie Blue to guide them on how to live with kindness and stay connected to the natural world. Ciara later transformed the poem into a stunning book and eventually, brought it to life on the big screen.

We were treated to a screening of Wildkind in Arabic, Irish, and English, with our very own movie stars Fiadh Rós and Birdie Blue among the audience!

The children spoke warmly about how peaceful and soothing the movie was, describing how it evoked treasured memories of family and togetherness. We are sincerely grateful to the Boake family for a wonderful and inspiring way to begin World Mental Health Day.



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Children's Mental Health Week



We celebrated Children's Mental Health Week by taking part in an online Mindfulness Art Lesson alongside 72 other schools from around the world. This shared experience gave pupils the opportunity to relax, be creative, and focus on their wellbeing while feeling connected to a wider global community.

It was a wonderful way to promote mindfulness, encourage self-expression, and highlight the importance of looking after our mental health.



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Starfish Programme

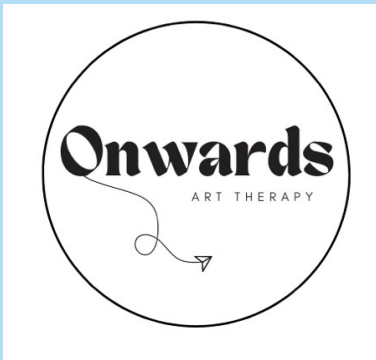
 **Starfish**



This year, a number of pupils participated in the Starfish Programme, which supports young people in developing positive personal, social, and emotional skills. Through regular mentoring, pupils are given the opportunity to build confidence, improve wellbeing, and reach their full potential.

Inspired by the idea that small actions can make a big difference, the programme provides individual support, helping each pupil feel valued and empowered.

Art Therapist



St Joseph's is committed to pupil wellbeing and provides additional support where needed, through Clare from Onwards Art Therapy. Art Therapy offers a safe, creative space for pupils to explore emotions, develop coping skills, build self-acceptance, and strengthen resilience.



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