



# Scoil Naomh Molaise

## Nuachtlitir

14ú Feabhra 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian(s),

I hope you are well. Please take a few minutes to read our Nuachtlitir. We endeavour to keep our website up to date with the latest news and upcoming events in our school so please keep an eye on [www.molaise.com](http://www.molaise.com).

### Dátaí don Fhéilire/ Dates for the Diary:

Monday, 17 <sup>th</sup> – Friday, 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2025	Midterm Break
<b>Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>	<b>Staff Training Day (PLC &amp; Bí Cineálta) – no school for pupils</b>
Monday, 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	St. Patrick's Day
<b>Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b>	<b>Internet Safety Talk for Parents, 7-8pm (online)</b>
Friday, 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	School will close at 12pm for the Easter Holidays
Thursday, 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	Confirmation
Saturday, 10 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	First Holy Communion

### Enrolment

There are currently 270 children enrolled at Scoil Naomh Molaise. We extend a warm welcome to our new pupils, Niamh in Senior Infants, and Sylwia in 1<sup>st</sup> class, both of whom joined our school since Christmas. We hope that you will be very happy in our school. Tá fáilte romhaibh!

Thank you to everyone who attended our Open Evening on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February. It was lovely to meet our incoming Junior Infants and to watch them explore their new surroundings. Please ensure that you complete an Expression of Interest Form, available on our school website, before 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### SNA Review

As you are aware, the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO), Marianna Cunningham, conducted a review of our Special Needs Assistant (SNA) allocation on behalf of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) this week. The SENO reviewed the Student Support Plans and Care Needs Plans for all children accessing SNA support in our school. She also visited the classrooms and spoke with teachers and SNAs.

Our SNA allocation remains unchanged in recent years. We consider ourselves very fortunate to have been in a position to offer support to so many children. As is the nature of SNA support, as children grow and

develop, they become more independent, and in most cases, do not require the same level of support as they did when they were younger. It is likely that there will be changes to our SNA allocation after the review but these changes will not come into effect until September 2025. The Board of Management will notify the school community of the outcome of the review in due course.

### **Opening a Special Class**

On a hugely positive note, we are delighted to be opening a class for children with Autism for September 2025. Much work will take place over the next few months to ensure that necessary upgrades to our classroom and sensory room take place. Our teachers and SNAs are excited about this new opportunity, and we believe that the inclusion of this class will be an enriching experience for our school community. We are thrilled that children with SEN living in our local area will have access to education in their local community, subject to the eligibility criteria outlined by the NCSE. The Board of Management will inform the school community once we begin accepting enrolment applications for this new class.

The Student Council will be running a competition after Midterm Break and encouraging our pupils to come up with a name for our new class. For example, other classes around Sligo are called The Plaza, The Glen, and An Cuan. Time to get creative!

### **Ethos**

Catholic Schools Week took place from 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> January. The theme this year was Alive in Christ. The Student Council led a reflective moment each morning and classes engaged in activities based on the theme. As is tradition in our school, 6<sup>th</sup> class will celebrate their grandparents with a mass and refreshments in the school hall. Mr Connolly & Mr Hallissy will let you know the date in due course.

We hope that grandparents enjoyed receiving letters and cards in the post from the children in 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

### **Internet Safety**

Safer Internet Day took place on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February. The theme for this year is 'Too good to be true' with the focus being on the increasing sophistication of online scamming. The children's attention was drawn to different methods used by scammers, i.e. rewards and prizes (you've won a holiday), urgency (you must change your password now or your account will be deleted), requests for personal information, unknown accounts, grammar and spelling mistakes as an indicator of a scam, and suspicious links. There are fantastic resources available for parents/guardians at [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

On Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> March, Jeremy Pagent from Lurtel, will visit our school and give internet safety talks to 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> classes. He will also meet with teachers and hold a parent talk that evening via Zoom. We strongly encourage all parents/guardians to attend. Last year's Internet Safety Presentation was poorly attended, but the parents/guardians who were able to make the session were shocked, appalled and upset by the content presented, and sadly, this is the content that our children may possibly be viewing or engaging with. Being well-informed is the best way to keep our children safe.

You will be getting lots of reminders about this upcoming event.

### **Extra Curricular:**

- As part of the Creative Schools Programme, all classes participated in a drumming workshop with Peter Crann in recent weeks. He is exceptionally talented as a musician and teacher, and captivated pupils from start to finish.

- 4<sup>th</sup> classes participated in the Seashore Explorers Programme in January. The classes received an in-class workshop from a co-ordinator with the Marine Institute, and following that, they had the opportunity to go to Streedagh Beach to explore and engage in a variety of rock pool and sand activities. The classes will be completing projects on the theme and inviting parents/guardians to come and see their work on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March, 7-8pm.
- 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> classes took part in the "Show Racism the Red Card" campaign with Sligo Rovers. Both classes really enjoyed the interactive talk with Jamie, and then, got to practise some football skills.
- As part of the Brid Festival Sligo, an artist from the Sligo Arts Council worked with 4<sup>th</sup> classes making St Brigid's crosses and writing poetry.
- 5<sup>th</sup> class girls had a very enjoyable day out to the Ursuline for their performance of "High School Musical" recently.
- 1<sup>st</sup> class enjoyed a memorable day on a recent visit to Gleniff Mill as part of their SESE studies of the local environment. They were also very fortunate to see the new Dogman movie; the Dogman series of books is by far the most popular series in 1<sup>st</sup> class at the moment!
- Seachtain na Gaeilge is not far away – 1ú-17ú Márta!

### Sports

- Our 6<sup>th</sup> class boys and girls took part in the first round of the Cumann na mBunscol Indoor Hurling/Camogie Competition earlier this week. Both teams did very well, with the boys winning one game but losing the other, while the girls won both their games and have qualified for the next round.
- Our girls' camogie team also won the Cumann na mBunscol Large Schools Camogie title in January, defeating Strandhill N.S. in the final. Maith sibh, a chailíní!
- We had four teams representing the school in the FAI 5-A-Side Schools Competition held recently at McSharry Park. It was an enjoyable and action packed morning with our teams playing four games each. There was some very competitive matches and plenty of entertainment. One of our girls' teams won all of their games and will continue to the next round. Well done, girls!
- 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> classes are enjoying their swimming lessons at Ballyshannon Leisure Centre. There will be one final session after the Midterm Break. Thank you to the Parents Association for subsidising the cost of the swimming lessons.
- Our 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> classes are receiving a 6 week block of tennis coaching at the moment with Mark, from Sligo Tennis Club. We greatly appreciate the opportunity for these fully funded lessons.
- 5<sup>th</sup> class have started to train for walking/ jogging 5km. They hope to take part in the Grange 5K on Good Friday this year.

### The Junior Entrepreneur Programme

6<sup>th</sup> class is now onto the final stage of the Junior Entrepreneur Programme. Last term, mini companies were established and ideas were brainstormed and refined until the children were happy with their business model. Each group researched the cost of materials and the time required to develop their products and marketing strategies were developed. The groups had the opportunity to present their business idea to some local dragons, and taking into account the feedback from the dragons, as well as the valuable market research gained from the wider pupil population, one business model was developed by the class and is now available for purchase. As per the JEP guidelines, the entire 6<sup>th</sup> class now come together and get behind one business idea, taking responsibility for the production, marketing, sales and PROFITS of the company! This year's winning project is the resin keychain, incorporating logos of the local GAA and soccer clubs as well as several other creative ideas in their products.

6<sup>th</sup> class are going to start selling them on a class by class basis, starting with Junior Infants. They will make a presentation to each class, showing their range of products. All products cost €5.00. Payment can be made via Aladdin.

## **Student Council**

- At the start of every week, our Student Council deliver the school news and notice of birthday celebrations over the intercom. We all enjoy their announcements. The children also speak at our assemblies. Maith sibh, a phaistí!
- The Student Council organised a very successful Pink Day fundraiser in aid of Breast Cancer Ireland recently. There was great colour around the school, among both pupils and staff. A final total will be announced after the Midterm, but the total raised through donations and sales of the pink ribbons is almost €500. Míle Buíochas!
- Our second fundraiser is a Jersey Day this Friday, in aid of our local Community Games. A link for both fundraisers is on Aladdin. Thank you for your support.
- As mentioned above, the Student Council will be running a competition after Midterm Break and encouraging our pupils to come up with a name for our new class. We look forward to their suggestions.

## **Green Schools**

A massive well done to all of the boys and girls for their amazing entries for our Green Slogan competition. Our Green Team could only choose one slogan out of all of the fantastic entries. They narrowed it down to "*Scooby Doo said it's not cool to drop litter in school*". Congratulations to Julianna Kennedy, 1st class, on the winning entry.

Each Monday, a different class takes on the Litter Picking task for the week. Well done to all of the classes that have been litter picking around the school this term. We have also been working hard in our community park and making sure that it is litter free.

Well done to all of the children who entered the "Water is Life" poster competition. Amazing pieces of artwork were completed in all classes, well done to all! We hope to hear the results from An Taisce soon.

## **Parental Involvement**

Our Parents Association held their AGM on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> March. It was great to see some new faces at the meeting, and we also really appreciate the messages of apology that were sent by other parents. We understand that the evenings are busy in every house, between work, homework, activities etc. so we greatly appreciate parents giving whatever support they can, when they can.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the outgoing committee officers, Ann Cullen (Chairperson), Tracey Kelly (Secretary), and Grace Siggins (Treasurer) for their hard work and dedication to our school over the last number of years. It has been my pleasure to work with you for the benefit of our pupils.

Best wishes to our new committee officers, Sinéad Feeney (Chairperson), Sandra Lehmann (Vice Chairperson), Laura Caraway (Secretary) and Huibre Malan (Treasurer). I look forward to working with you and our Parents Association in the years ahead.

A letter from the new Chairperson, Sinéad, was sent to all parents/guardians earlier this week, along with the dates for meetings for the rest of this year. The PA will be trialling a hybrid model for meetings, whereby you can come in-person to the school or join the meeting remotely from home.

The focus of the Parents Association in the coming weeks:

- Annual Duck Race on 17<sup>th</sup> March, St Patrick's Day – sponsorship card will be sent home after Midterm Break.
- Family Fun Walk around Barnaribbon Mountain Walk on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> May at 12pm.

## Our Shoes Campaign

You may recall that in previous years, we collected pre-loved sport shoes in good condition for the 'Our Shoes' campaign which sends the donations to children in need in South Africa. We are collecting again for this worthy cause. Please dig out the old sports shoes, tie them together using laces or cable ties, and send them into the school after the Midterm. More details attached to the email.

## Miscellaneous

- We have two student teachers on work placement this term; Ellie Ferguson has just finished her placement in Senior Infants, and Meadhbh Hallissy is working in Junior Infants.
- We are fortunate to have past pupil, Sarah Kiernan, with us on a 20 week placement as part of her third level studies. She is supporting teachers across the school, but in particular at infant level.
- Past pupils, Ruairí Cronin, Diarmuid Gillen, Delindhi Siriwardana, Matthew Colleran, Evie Redahan and Carys Griffiths-Maher are also completing work experience with us this term.

## Safety Issues

Please note the following points which will ensure that everyone can approach/leave our school in a safe manner.

- Use the playground car park and cross carefully at the traffic lights.
- **Do not park in the bus area/staff parking area in front of the school**
- Please exercise extreme caution when dropping children at the rear of the school as this is the staff parking area and thus poses a danger to small children entering/exiting the school.
- The school gates will be opened at 9am. Children are not permitted access to the school grounds before 9am. Children will walk directly to their classroom once they arrive at school.
- **Teachers/SNAs are at the gates/doors to welcome the children in the morning. If you are running late, and there is no teacher/SNA at the gate, please ensure that your child uses the main front door to enter the school. For safety and child protection reasons, the door at the junior end of the school is closed at 9:20am. After this time, children MUST use the main door at the office to enter the school.**

## Head Lice

There have been some reports of head lice in the school of late. With midterm next week, it is a great opportunity for every family to check your child's hair and treat it appropriately, if necessary. If every family does this next week, we have a better chance of getting rid of head lice in the school. Please speak to your pharmacist for advice on how best to treat head lice. I will send reminder texts about this next week.

## Policy Review

Recently reviewed policies available on our school website:

- Homework Policy
- Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy
- Policy on the Use and Hire of the School Premises and Grounds

Finally, I hope you all enjoy your Midterm Break.

Le gach dea-ghuí

**Louise O'Connor**, Príomhoide