



Rathlee N.S.  
Rathlee, Easkey, Co. Sligo.

April 10th, 2025

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Easter Newsletter. Our return to school in January was marked with severe ice and snow and a major storm so it has been lovely to enjoy the lovely, sunny, spring weather during the past couple of weeks. Thank you to all our parents for your continued support of our school, it is always very much appreciated. This term, there has been fantastic teaching and learning taking place in all our classrooms right across the curriculum. Please find below some information and a brief outline of some of this learning and other activities our school has been participating in this term. Also, please find a copy of our school calendar for 2025/2026 included with this newsletter.

### **Junior and Senior Infants Update**

Since the beginning of the year, our Junior and Senior Infants have been keeping busy with a variety of fun and educational activities! They've been showing off their skills in gymnastics, developing strength and flexibility through exciting lessons each Thursday for the past five weeks. During Seachtain na Gaeilge, the children embraced our culture by participating in Bingo through Gaeilge, which gave them the opportunity to learn new words and phrases in a fun and enjoyable way. They also had a blast on Pancake Tuesday, making pancakes and enjoying delicious treats with their friends. Gaelic training has been another highlight, where the children are busy practicing teamwork skills and learning the basics of this fantastic sport, with their trainer John. A real highlight was participating in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Easkey, where our young learners proudly marched with their green costumes to celebrate Ireland's patron saint. It has been a jam-packed term, full of learning, laughter, and teamwork!

### **Green Schools Update**

Our research about the environmental impact of how our food gets to our tables while researching for our Food Miles projects as part of our work in the Green Flag process has been very interesting and informative. It certainly made us all think about the importance of trying to minimise the



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amount of food we consume that travels long distance before it reaches our homes.

### **STEM In The Classroom**

Our children have been busy this term conducting numerous experiments. For example, we have investigated the Life Cycle of a frog and also designed and built our own boats made from different materials. We have just planted vegetable seeds and potato and strawberry plants which we hope to transplant to our raised beds after the Easter holidays.

### **Stem Day In Colaiste Iascaigh**

Our 6th class pupils got a taste for secondary school when they visited Colaiste Iascaigh for a STEM day earlier this term. They took part in a number of activities and got to see how a secondary school runs on a day to day basis which was great preparation for September!

### **Blue Star Programme**

3rd and 4thc Class students are actively participating in the Blue Star Programme this year - This exciting initiative helps young learners develop a better understanding of Europe through history, geography, culture, and the values that unite European countries. At the moment, our students are focusing on the historical and geographical aspects of Europe, we have completed projects on Anne Frank and World War 2, we will be exploring different countries, landmarks, and key moments in European history. Through engaging activities, the children are gaining valuable knowledge about the diverse nations that make up the European Union. A highlight of our participation will be our involvement in Europe Day on May 9th. We are planning some special activities to celebrate European unity and culture and we are all looking forward to it!

### **Catholic schools week**

Catholic Schools Week was celebrated in our school on the week commencing Sunday January 19th. Staff, parents and children from our school attended a mass in St. Muredach's Cathedral celebrated by Archbishop Francis Duffy and associated activities were completed in all classes during the week. The theme for this year's Catholic Schools Week was "Catholic Schools - Alive In Christ".

Telephone 096 49243 Principal James Rafter

E-MAIL [principal@rathlee.net](mailto:principal@rathlee.net)  
Roll Number 16492N



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### **Confirmation**

Sunday March 2nd was a very important day for the boys and girls in 5th and 6th class who received the sacrament of Confirmation from Archbishop Francis Duffy. The children prepared diligently in school and also visited the Fr. Peyton Centre in Attymass as part of their preparation. Thank you to Fr. Hogan for all his work in preparing for the day, the boys and girls who sang as part of our school choir at the ceremony and to our Parents Association and staff who put in trojan work preparing our school for the after Confirmation party that was held back in our school.

### **First confession**

The boys and girls in 2nd class received the sacrament of First Confession from Fr. Hogan in Rathlee Parish Church. Well done everyone and thank you to Ms. Lavelle for all her work in preparing the children for this special occasion.

### **St. Brigid's Day**

Our 1st and 2nd classes marked this special saint's day by continuing the lovely tradition of making St. Brigid's crosses to mark the day.

### **Pancake Tuesday**

We are now in the season of Lent but there was great excitement from our infants right up to our senior classes as the children got to eat some Pancakes on the day before Ash Wednesday. A big thank you to our school secretary Ber for making some very tasty pancakes!

### **Active Schools/Sport**

#### **School Pitch**

The recent fine weather has allowed us to get lots of practice on our school pitch. We have recently installed new portable goal posts which are very child friendly. A big thank you to past pupil, Ollie Gordon, for sponsoring these posts for our school. Our 3rd - 6th class boys and girls are gaelic football training every Monday from 3pm - 4pm. We will be participating in the Cuman na mBunscol gaelic football competition after Easter.

### **GAA coaching**



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Gaelic football coach John Kelly has commenced coaching all the children in our school every Thursday. Each week they develop their fundamental movement skills, ball skills and team play during the sessions. Having our school pitch and new play area available has been a big help in making the sessions productive and enjoyable for the children.

### **FAI 5 a side Soccer**

Well done to our girls and boys for competing in this competition in early February. The boys and girls are to be commended for all the training they did in preparation for the competition and both teams came very close to qualifying for the next stage of the competition.

### **Swimming and Gymnastics**

Our 3rd - 6th classes completed another successful block of swimming lessons this term and our infants - 2nd class really enjoyed their gymnastics lessons in Nadia Gym, Ballina.

### **GAA Amigos Skills Competitions**

Well done to our school representatives who did very well in the Gaelic football skills competition held in Enniscrone in early March and to our hurling competitors who performed last week at the Sligo GAA Centre of Excellence in Scarden.

### **Indoor hurling**

Our 5th and 6th classes put in a lot of practice during PE for our annual indoor hurling competition. The old factory in Easkey hosted this year's competition and we had an enjoyable morning back in early match playing games v Enniscrone and High Park.

### **Food Dudes**

Healthy eating is very important in Rathlee NS and we were delighted to participate in this year's Food Dudes Programme which encourages the boys and girls to eat fruit and vegetables at home and in school.

### **Sports Quiz**

Our sports quiz team has been busy this term. After winning the Sligo Cuman na mBunscol competition before Christmas, they put in commendable



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performances in the Connacht competition held in Claremorris in February and the All-Ireland competition held in Tullamore at the end of March.

### **Creative Writing Workshops**

Our middle and senior classes have been very lucky this term to participate in a number of creative writing workshops. Pierina and Emily from the Fighting Words Project worked with the children in January to create very interesting food themed stories based on the local area. In March, author and poet Gerry Boland did poetry and story writing workshops with our budding poets and authors!

### **Book Fair and World book day**

We held a very successful book fair a couple of weeks ago and thank you to all our parents for supporting it. 3rd and 4th class marked World Book Day in early March by hosting a live online talk from children's author, Anthony Garvey.

### **Artist In The Classroom**

Our 5th and 6th classes worked with artist Kiera O'Toole as part of the Blast Arts and Creativity in Education Residency in February. Over a number of days, the children used recycled materials to create some fantastic pieces of art ranging from musical instruments to sea creatures. There was fantastic creativity and teamwork displayed by all the children!

### **Belle Cinderella**

Our 5th and 6th class visited Enniscrone Secondary School at the end of January where they thoroughly enjoyed the performance of the musical - Belle Cinderella.

### **St. Patrick's day parade**

One of the highlights of the term was when our school participated in the Easkey St. Patrick's Day parade. The children dressed up in green for our annual Lá Glas on Friday. The children played their tin-whistles and dressed up in environmentally themed costumes to represent our school's long tradition with the Green School's programme. A big thank you to all the children who participated and to our staff members who helped prepare for the day and helped out on the day of the parade.



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### **Seachtain Na Gaeilge**

Seachtain na Gaeilge was celebrated throughout the school in March. During Seachtain na Gaeilge, the younger children embraced our culture by participating in Bingo through Gaeilge, which gave them the opportunity to learn new words and phrases in a fun and enjoyable way. The older classes had their general knowledge tested by taking part in a Tráth na gCeist.

### **Tin Whistle In The Classroom**

Children in all classes have completed another enjoyable term of tin whistle. Excellent progress continues to be made in all classes. The middle and senior classes have been learning and playing a variety of Irish celebratory tunes to coincide with Seachtain na Gaeilge and St. Patrick's Day.

### **French In The Classroom**

Our 5th and 6th class children have just completed a 10 week block of French lessons with tutor Brendan Doyle. This was a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to get a taste of another language which will be very beneficial not only in secondary school but later in life.

### **Internet safety week**

All classes participated during Internet Safety Week before the mid term break in February. Our infant classes learned a lot from Buddy the Internet Safety Dog. Buddy taught the children a song to remind them of ways to be safe when using the internet.

### **School Enrolment**

There was great excitement at our annual enrolment evening held in late January when the boys and girls who will be starting with us in September got to see their classroom and received a tour of the school. A big thank you to the parents for coming along and our staff who helped out on the evening.

### **After School Coding Club**





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Children from our 3rd - 6th classes have just completed a 6 week block of coding classes with Serhii. Serhii hopes to complete another 6 week block with children who are interested after we return from the Easter holidays.

### **School Charity**

This term our school has been supporting the Our shoes Campaign which provides previously worn shoes to children in less fortunate parts of the world. Thank you to all who supported this year's appeal.

### **Parents Association**

The Return-scheme for plastic bottles has proved to be very successful. The orange bin is located in the school porch and bottles and cans can be deposited there at any time the school is open. Thank you to everyone who has donated bottles or cans and to our parents association members for collecting the bottles and cans and bringing them to vending machines at retail outlets.

### **School Website and Blog**

Don't forget to keep an eye on our school website and blog at [www.rathleenns.ie](http://www.rathleenns.ie) for school news and updates of school activities. We can also be followed on Facebook at Rathlee National School and on X (formerly Twitter) @rathleeS.

### **School Policies**

Our Board of Management has just ratified our school's new Bí Cinealta Anti Bullying policy which will be implemented in September. Thanks to all parents for responding to our survey. The results of this survey played an important role in formulating the policy. A child friendly version of the policy will be displayed in all classrooms from September. Copies of our other school policies can be viewed on our website or you can request a copy from the school office.

## **School Calendar 2025 (remainder of the school year)**

*School will be closed on the following dates:*

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E-MAIL [principal@rathlee.net](mailto:principal@rathlee.net)  
Roll Number 16492N



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**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April until** Easter Holidays  
- (closing Fri. 11<sup>th</sup> April  
**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April** Re-opening on Monday  
28<sup>th</sup> April).

**Mon. 5<sup>th</sup> May** Bank Holiday

**Mon. 2<sup>nd</sup> June** Bank Holiday

**Summer Holidays - closing on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>  
June, 2025**

Finally, on behalf of all the staff in Rathlee NS, I would like to thank you for your continuing support and see you all after the holidays.

Yours sincerely,

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James Rafter

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