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

Dear Parents,

As another busy and successful school year draws to a close, I would like to share some news and some of the activities that our pupils have enjoyed in Term 2 and Term 3. These activities are a very important and enjoyable addition to school life in Rathlee NS. Also please find the Parents Association newsletter, school calendar for 2026/27, Summer Slide sheet and Developing Oral Language sheet attached.

I would like to extend my thanks to our dedicated staff, whose hard work and commitment continue to enrich school life each day. Our pupils have shown enthusiasm, kindness and creativity in all they have taken on during the past two terms, and we are very proud of them. We are also very grateful to our parents and wider school community for their ongoing support.

Wishing Ms. Naughton the Best! - Sincere thanks and best wishes to Ms Naughton as she leaves Rathlee NS. During her time with us, Ms Naughton has made a wonderful contribution to our school community and has shown great care, dedication and enthusiasm in her work with the children in the Infant Room. Her kindness, patience and commitment have helped create a positive and nurturing learning environment where young pupils could thrive. We thank Ms Naughton for all she has done for Rathlee NS and wish her every happiness and success in the next chapter of her career.

6th Class Graduation - We say a fond farewell to our 6th class pupils. We are very proud of all you have achieved and wish you every success and happiness as you take your next steps. All our 6th class pupils were presented with their graduation certificates and goodie bags at mass on Wednesday. Thank you to Ber for baking the treats for our annual 6th class tea party which the boys and girls really enjoyed yesterday. On behalf of everyone in Rathlee NS, I would like to wish the 6th class of 2026 all the best in secondary school.

First Confession/First Holy Communion - Our 2nd class children received the sacrament of First Confession in March. It was a lovely, bright day for our school's First Holy Communion ceremony which took

place on Saturday May 9th in Star Of The Sea Church Rathlee. Thank you to Ms. Lavelle for preparing the children to receive the sacrament, to Fr. Hogan for celebrating the ceremony and to the Parents Association for organising refreshments in the school afterwards.

Rathlee NS Centenary Celebrations - Our centenary celebrations which took place in April were a very special occasion for the entire school community. The day included a commemorative Mass, tree planting ceremony and refreshments in the school. We were honoured to welcome former pupils and community members back to our school. The event helped pupils learn about the history of their school, appreciate their local heritage and develop a sense of pride in being part of Rathlee NS.

Parents Association - We would like to sincerely thank our Parents Association for their continued support throughout the year. Their fundraising efforts and assistance with school activities has greatly benefited our pupils. The Parents Association plays a vital role in school life and we would welcome new members who would like to become involved in supporting our school community.

School Facilities Improvements - 5th/6th Class assisted in dismantling our old raised beds as part of improvements to our school grounds. New, more accessible raised beds have been installed and pupils are already growing strawberries, lettuce, radishes and turnips. Our new link corridor has also been painted, had flooring installed and is now fully complete. The conversion of the old office into The Den has been a great success. It is a calm and supportive space that many of our pupils have enjoyed this year.

Samsung Tablet Donation - A big thank you to past pupil John Scott and the RSA for their recent, generous donation of ten Samsung tablets. These devices will greatly enhance digital learning opportunities across the school, supporting research, creativity and collaborative learning.

Junior and Senior Infants - The Junior and Senior Infants have had a busy and exciting time over the last two terms. We celebrated Pancake

Tuesday by making and enjoying our own delicious pancakes. We took part in five weeks of gymnastics in the Nadia Gym where we developed our balance, coordination and confidence while having fun. Before the Easter holidays, we enjoyed baking and decorating Easter treats to show off our creativity. We also had fantastic opportunities to learn new skills through basketball sessions with Elijah and drumming lessons with Anthony. We were very proud to perform a drumming concert at the end of our sessions for our school community. One of the most recent highlights this term was our school tour trip to Let's Go Camp in Knocknarea Arena, where we enjoyed a full day of activities both indoor and outdoor.

1st/2nd Class - It has been an incredibly busy and exciting time in 1st and 2nd class! As part of our Science project, we explored the fascinating world of Butterfly Lore. We welcomed five tiny caterpillars into our classroom and carefully observed them as they grew, formed chrysalises, and finally emerged as beautiful butterflies. We released them on a sunny Friday.
Alongside our insect adventures, we flexed our green thumbs back in April by planting sunflower seeds, and we are thrilled to watch our seedlings shoot up higher every day. The absolute highlight of the month of May was our school tour, when we headed off to Let's Go! Multi-Activity Camp at ATU Sligo. We had fantastic fun trying out all the high-energy games and inflatables. It was a super day.

3rd/4th Class - We had a fantastic time learning all about the Vikings. We discovered where they came from, studied Denmark, one of the Scandinavian countries they originated from, and learned about Viking life. We designed and built our own Viking longships, created Viking shields inspired by Viking art, and even baked Viking bread.
We worked hard on developing our writing skills this term. One area we focused on was procedural writing. We completed a recipe hunt, baked delicious scones, and even made our own butter while following instructions carefully. During Seachtain na Gaeilge, we welcomed Helena Golden, The Willow Woman, to our classroom for a fantastic basket-making workshop where we created our own handmade willow baskets and learned about the traditional Irish craft.

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

Our Safari Park project was a great success. We researched safari animals, created habitats to build our own *Rathlee Safari Park*, wrote detailed animal reports, designed impressive information booklets, and sculpted our animals from clay. We finished the term by working in groups to create stop-motion animation videos. Everyone showed great creativity, teamwork, and imagination to produce their own unique films.

St Brigid's Crosses - To celebrate St Brigid's Day, pupils created colourful woven crosses using wool while learning about the traditions associated with St Brigid. The activity developed creativity, fine motor skills and cultural awareness while helping pupils connect with Irish heritage.

BLAST Creative Arts Programme - Early in Term 2, 5th/6th Class completed the BLAST Arts and Creativity Programme with artist Karen Webster. Pupils explored watercolours, sketchbook design, clay work, seaweed pressing, gel printing and ephemeral art. The programme encouraged creativity, observation, problem-solving and self-expression while fostering an appreciation for art inspired by nature.

LEGO Spike Robotics - In January, pupils from 3rd-6th Class used LEGO Spike kits to explore coding, engineering and robotics. They designed and programmed models using motors and sensors while learning how to test and improve their code. This work developed computational thinking, problem-solving, creativity and teamwork skills.

Sam's Business Bus - 5th/6th Class participated in the Sam's Business Bus entrepreneurship programme from January to March. Pupils worked collaboratively to design products, develop business ideas and operate their own shop for parents and pupils. The programme fostered creativity, financial literacy, communication skills and entrepreneurial thinking.

St. Patrick's Day Parade - Thank you to all our pupils and staff who proudly participated in the local St Patrick's Day Parade with a float

celebrating our centenary year. We dressed up in 1926 clothes and our 2026 uniform!

Seachtain na Gaeilge - Seachtain na Gaeilge provided many opportunities for pupils to use and enjoy Irish through céilí dancing, quizzes and language activities. 3rd/4th Class took part in "Timpeall Gaeilge Orainn", using their "Gaeilge eyes" to identify Irish language examples in their surroundings. They combined language learning with practical activities by making pizzas as part of their Gaeilge studies. Pupils learned new vocabulary, followed recipes and used Irish language phrases throughout the activity.

Drumming - As part of Creative Schools, pupils participated in a five-week African drumming programme with Anthony McNamee, which concluded with a whole-school performance. Through music-making, pupils developed rhythm, listening skills, teamwork and confidence while experiencing the joy of performing together.

French in the Classroom - As part of the Say Yes to Languages programme, 5th/6th class pupils participated in ten weeks of French lessons with Julien Porzadny. Learning French is helping our pupils develop communication skills in another language and also develops an appreciation of culture in another European country.

Creative Schools and Hare's Corner Project - As part of our Creative Schools initiative, we were delighted that our Parents Association successfully secured five apple trees through the Hare's Corner Project. The trees are currently growing in pots and will become an important part of our school's biodiversity in the years ahead.

Sport/Physical Activity/Wellbeing

Physical Activity Programme - Early in Term 2, our infants - 2nd class were delighted to partner with the Youth Sport West initiative from the Sligo Sports And Recreation Partnership over a 6 week block to deliver a very enjoyable physical activity programme for the pupils from infants - 2nd class. Thanks to our coach Bernie for her weekly visits.

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

Wellbeing Through Physical Activity - During January and February, all classes participated in Active Movement Breaks using resources from the especially produced Croke Park movement videos. These short activity sessions helped improve concentration, physical fitness, mood and overall wellbeing throughout the school day.

Gaelic Football - Our boys' and girls' teams represented the school excellently in Cumann na mBunscol competitions in April and May against Dromore West, Cloonacool and Achonry. They trained hard and are continuing to develop their football skills, teamwork, resilience and sportsmanship. Our June lunchtime Gaelic Football Leagues were highly competitive and thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. Congratulations to Sligo, who won the Cup, Dublin, who won the Shield, and Donegal, who won the Plate.

Indoor Hurling - In March, our pupils enjoyed an exciting day of indoor hurling in Banada against Tubbercurry NS and Ballintogher NS. Participation in this event really helps with our hand-eye coordination!

Sligo Rovers Academy Visit - We were delighted to welcome Sligo Rovers Academy Head Coach Conor O'Grady and player Leah Kelly to our school. They worked with pupils from all classes and it was a fantastic opportunity for children to learn new skills from experienced coaches.

Basketball Coaching - All classes benefited from six weeks of basketball coaching with Elijah Faapito from Sligo Razorbacks and Sligo Sports Partnership. Pupils improved their skills, fitness and teamwork, culminating in a very competitive yet enjoyable pupils-versus-teachers match!

Cuman na mBunscol Sports Quiz - Congratulations to our sports quiz team who successfully retained their Cumann na mBunscol Sligo Sports Quiz title for a second consecutive year. The team later proudly represented Sligo at Connacht and All-Ireland level.

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

Swimming and Gymnastics - Our older pupils attended swimming lessons during January and February, while the younger pupils participated in gymnastics sessions during February and March. These programmes helped develop physical literacy, coordination, balance, water safety skills and self-confidence.

Sports Day - We held our annual Sports Day last week. We had a thoroughly enjoyable day with lots of fun team games and activities. We are very lucky to have the use of our yard, pitch and soft play area for these days.

School Tours - Our pupils enjoyed memorable school tours this year. Infants to Fourth Class travelled to Let's Go at ATU Sligo, while Fifth and Sixth Class visited Wildlands in Galway. These outings provided opportunities for teamwork, problem-solving, physical activity and social development in exciting new environments.

School Website and Blog - Don't forget to keep an eye on our school website and blog at www.rathleenns.ie for school news and updates of school activities. We can also be followed on Facebook.

School Policies - A reminder that a selection of our school policies can be visited on our school website and all our school policies are available to review upon request from our school office. Our Board Of Management has recently ratified our Acceptable Usage of the Internet Policy, Wellbeing Policy and have completed an annual review of our Bí Cinealta policy.

Finally, on behalf of all the staff in Rathlee NS, I would like to thank you for your continuing support and wish you all a happy and enjoyable summer break.

Yours sincerely,

James Rafter

Príomhoide