

Scoil Inse Rátha

Déan do Dhícheall

Newsletter September 2024

Dear Parents,

The first month of the school year has been completed. All of our classes are well into their stride now and there is fantastic work being done around the school. We have welcomed new students into our community and they have settled in. All of our new students, especially our Junior Infants, are fantastic and are a wonderful addition to our school. We have a huge amount of work to get through over the next nine months or so and we will be aiming to do it with a smile. Here are some of the highlights from this month.

Leeside Ladies Visit:

We were delighted to welcome, the League and Cup double winning, Leeside Ladies soccer team this month. This was a massive achievement for our local club and for our community. Having past pupils, parents and even a daughter of a member of staff on the team made it more special. We held a special assembly to mark this occasion and we wore our Leeside colours. Hopefully this will help to inspire the next generation to participate in an active lifestyle into adulthood.

PepsiCo Garden Works:

Staff from Pepsi in Little Island, along with McNamaras gardeners, worked to tidy up our garden and trees at the front of the school. We really appreciate their support in helping to keep our school environment looking nice. We continue to benefit from the money raised by recycling the bottles from the Pepsi canteen as well. Thanks to the PA for looking after that.

Sciath na Scol:

We had games in Erin's Own as part of the Sciath na Scol competition last week. We organised a blitz to reduce the number of buses we have to pay for. The boys and girls played and represented our school excellently. I was particularly impressed with how the boys and girls who have never played Gaelic Football before played. Two of our players only arrived in Ireland a few days beforehand! I am incredibly proud of how the rest of our school welcomed and included our new children and of how the new children embraced our national game.

Board of Management:

We held our first Board of Management meeting of the school year recently. Fatima Yaakoubi has joined our Board, replacing Clare Duggan as one of the parents' nominees. We reviewed our Data Protection Policy, we published our Admissions Notice for 2025/2026 and we reviewed our Child Protection Statement using the Mandatory Templates 1 & 2. We also discussed the various needs of the school for the year ahead and beyond.

Sherpa Holiday HQ:

Sherpa Kids have launched a new programme for holiday and midterm periods. As always, it is really important to book your place well in advance as spaces fill up quickly – email lins@sherpakids.ie.

Holiday HQ will provide children with a full schedule of engaging activities and events, all centred around a unique theme. This ensures that each day of the holiday is filled with new experiences,

fostering growth, discovery, and friendship. Our programme aims to refresh and inspire children, making their return to school full of exciting stories to share.

Find out more about Holiday HQ at: <https://www.sherpakids.ie/parents-families/whats-the-holiday-hq/>

World Children's Day:

We will celebrate World Children's Day on November 19th. We have arranged a special event for in the school to celebrate children, in association with CYPSC (Children and Young Persons Services Committee). The Ombudsman for Children, Mr. Niall Muldoon, will be present on the day. This event will be led by the children and we are very excited to see how it turns out. Keep an eye on Instagram for more details as we get closer to the event.

Parents Association:

Our Parents Association held their AGM this month. They are planning their events for the year ahead. Our calendar photo shoot will be held on Oct 4th. You will have received the letter detailing what your child needs to bring in last week. We have taken photos for the Red Day page and for the 6th Class Graduation page already. The new Hobbies page will be very exciting to see given the wide range of hobbies and activities our children participate in outside of school. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Swimming 3rd to 6th:

We will have swimming classes in Mayfield Swimming Pool after Christmas for 6 weeks. 3rd to 6th Class will be going swimming together on Wednesdays from January 8th. We hope to take part in a swimming gala before Easter as well. Swimmers for the gala will be picked based on ability and taking into account the opinions of the swimming instructors.

Basketball:

Mark Scannell has started basketball coaching with 5th and 6th. Each class in the school will get a chance to avail of at least 6 weeks coaching by Mark during the year. It will all culminate with a Basketball Fun Day for everyone next June.

SNA Appreciation Day:

Thursday September 26th was SNA Appreciation Day. We are lucky to have such wonderful people working in our school and our SNAs are the glue that hold us all together! They are highly valued members of staff and we couldn't function without them. We were delighted to acknowledge their importance to our school community last week.

Parking:

I would ask you to be conscious of our neighbours when you are parking outside the school. There are double yellow lines on the road so that traffic can flow safely – please do not park on the double yellow lines or in front of our neighbours. The Set Down area outside the school is for parents who are dropping their children and leaving so should be kept clear and not parked on.

Official School Opening and Closing times:

Children are supervised from 8.40am each morning. They go into their classes at 8.50am when teaching starts. Infants go home at 1.30pm and 1st-6th classes go home at 2.30pm. Outside of these

times we are not responsible for your child(ren) unless they are on a school related activity. We cannot take responsibility for children who are dropped to school before 8.40am. Sherpa Kids offer a childcare service before and after school. You can contact them at lins@sherpakids.ie.

Allianz Insurance:

Every child in our school is covered by the pupil personal accident 24hr insurance policy. The policy is valid from 1/9/2024-31/8/2025. Please visit www.allianz.ie for full details. There is a claim form on their website that has to be filled in and signed by me to confirm your child is part of the scheme.

Post Primary Enrolment:

In recent years there has been a growing demand for secondary school places in East Cork. Please be aware of the relevant closing dates for your preferred schools. They will all probably have waiting lists and if you miss the closing date you will be bottom of the list regardless of any other criteria. It is important to have a back-up plan, in case you don't get your first preference. If you have any questions please contact me.

Credit Union:

The Credit Union is back. They will visit every week on Wednesdays. If you can at all, encourage your child to save as it is a great life skill. Help them to set targets and to save for this by doing jobs around the house to earn pocket money.

Instagram:

Instagram is up and running and there are daily messages and updates posted from various classes and from the school in general. Keep up to date by following us!

Italian:

Ms. Ginevra has started Italian with 6th class. This is a great opportunity for our students to learn a different language and about a different culture.

Mobile Phones:

There has been a lot of talk about young children having mobile phones recently. We have never allowed our students have mobile phones in our school. If you or your child need to make contact, you can ring the office or email me. If your child has to have a phone for before or after school, they have to turn it off and hand it to their teacher at the start of the day. They will get it back when they are going home. If a child has a phone during the day, it will be confiscated, and you will have to come in to get it back.

School Improvement Plan:

Every year we pay particular attention to some areas of the school in order to continuously drive improvement. This year we are looking at the Primary Maths Curriculum and Bí Cineálta, the new Anti-Bullying Guidelines that come into effect in the next school year. We will also be looking at Wellbeing giving particular attention to student voice and student participation.

Chess:

Chess will start after school after midterm for 3rd-6th. I will send out more details once the football season is over.

Mobile Library:

The Mobile Library is back providing a fresh selection of books every two weeks for the all of our avid readers.

Safer Routes to School:

We applied to be part of this scheme a number of years ago. It is now in Phase 3 nationally and we have been included. Over the next 18 months to two years, we will be working towards this. It will involve a collaboration between ourselves, An Taisce and Cork County Council to improve the footpath and cycle lanes around Little Island to improve safe access to the school. It will also involve realigning the area and carpark at the front of the school to make it all safer for our children. The first step will be a survey for parents to gather information about where you are travelling from and how your child gets to school. You will get this survey in the next week or so and I will be asking you to prioritise filling it in. The more information they get the better the end result will be. There will be quite a bit of work involved for the school but it will benefit our current and future students along with improving the infrastructure in Little Island for our community. You will receive more information once the survey issues.

That's all for now.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

Up Coming Events:

4th October: PA photo shoot for calendar

5th October: World Teachers Day

8th October: Junior Infant Homework meeting

15th-22nd October: Book Fair

28th October – 1st November inclusive: midterm break.

25th&26th November: Winter flu vaccine will be offered to all students in school. Parental consent will be sought in advance. More details will be available closer to the time.