

Scoil Inse Rátha

Déan do Dhícheall

Newsletter 2025

Dear Parents,

2025 has arrived with a bang with storms and ice and snow! Hopefully that is all behind us now and the rest of the school year will go smoothly. There is a lot of work to be done and our staff and students are working really hard. We have a new Minister for Education so we look forward with optimism to a new approach. Schools need reliable and appropriate funding and resources and reduced pupil teacher ratios. Our Board of Management and our in-school management team need to be able to focus on leading teaching and learning for the good of your child. We have a wonderful, supportive school community and we must not take that for granted. Thank you for the part you play in that!

Safe Routes to School Survey:

Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill in this survey. The results will help to inform the works that will be done this year. We are due to meet with Ken and his team shortly to discuss the plans. Funding has been secured for this project so works will be done to the front of our school to improve safety and accessibility for our students, this year.

East Cork Studios:

Austin and Gwen will be in school in February 11th to take photos of the children. You should have received the order form by now but if you haven't, please let us know. This year there is an option for children throughout the school to have their photo taken. We always take Junior Infant and 6th class group photos for our school wall. It is completely optional to buy the photos but they do make a nice keepsake.

FAI 5-a-side:

The FAI 5-a-side competition is coming up at the end of February. We have started training for this and everyone from 3rd to 6th Class is welcome to take part. The final panels will be made up mostly of 6th Class. However, we will have lunchtime leagues and some challenge matches to look forward to, where other children will get a chance to play and represent their school. Park NS are going to come and play us on February 14th and there will be a friendly blitz in Carrigtwohill in the next few weeks as well.

Lego Robotics:

2nd Class and 6th Class worked together last week to build Lego robots using our robotics kits. This involved computer programming, communication, team work and problem solving. These are essential skills for the world that our students are preparing for and they had the added benefit of having fun while learning! Other classes will be using these kits and developing these skills as the year progresses.

3D Printing:

5th and 6th Classes have been using the 3D printer. Each child teaches the next child how to select their item for printing, load the correct item to the printer, set up the printer and trouble shoot any issues that arise. They then have to remove any supports from the model to get the final product.

This can be tricky as it can be hard to differentiate between the supports and the actual model. We are grateful to Stryker for loaning this printer to us.

Staff Training:

We are in a very privileged position being able to educate the next generation of students. This is a responsibility that we take very seriously. School needs to be relaxing and enjoyable in order for our students to achieve their potential but the job we do is complex. Children have a wide variety of needs and the more we learn about how children learn the more complex our job gets. We are committed to constantly improving and our staff regularly undertake professional development in their own time. We also need to have whole school training events to work together to make sure our students get the best education possible. On February 26th our school will be closed for a training day facilitated by The National Council for Special Education. This is the in-service that was cancelled in January 6th due to the weather. On March 31st we will be closed for training on the Primary Maths Curriculum and the new anti-bullying guidelines, Bí Cinéalta. We understand that these closures can be awkward for families but they are necessary. Sherpa will be open on both of these days if you need childcare.

Swimming:

3rd-6th Classes have started swimming lessons in Mayfield Swimming Pool. While we only have two weeks completed, we can see that the children are making great progress and are enjoying the experience as well. Swimming is a brilliant activity and skill so it would be fantastic if the children could build on what they learn in these lessons by going swimming with their families. It is also great to see the children developing independence and organisational skills. For some children this is the first time they have had to organise their own clothes and gear. The sense of accomplishment in being able to manage on their own can improve self-confidence.

Local Teachers Meetings:

Our 3rd&4th Class teachers will be meeting with teachers from local schools to share ideas. It is a wonderful opportunity to have professional conversations and to tap into the knowledge of other excellent local teachers and for our wonderful teachers to share their ideas. It will benefit all the pupils in our locality.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Chess will continue up to midterm break and then we will switch to outdoor activities. Ready, Set, Fun is back and the children are loving it. Soccer, hurling, Gaelic Football etc will be coming up over the next few weeks as well. A local children's choir will be starting in The Complex shortly as well. Notes have gone home this week with more details.

Past Pupils Work Experience:

We have had a large number of past pupils applying for work experience this year and we have done our best to accommodate them. We will have five students in the next two weeks and more later in the year. We are limited in how many we can take but we are always delighted to see our past pupils and to hear how they are getting on.

Board of Management:

Our Board will be meeting this month and have a lot on the agenda. We are currently looking for funding to replace the flat roof on our school as it is old and we have had a number of leaks. We have

successfully applied for funding for solar panels and these will be fitted before the summer holidays. The tendering process has been completed and the successful company will conduct a site visit this week. This will help to reduce our electricity bills and any excess power generated can be sold back to the grid. This is fully funded by the government. We have given Cork Golf Club permission to fund raise to help us to provide a sensory room for our students. The funds raised will be added to our government grant to provide a calm space for students who need it during the day. The Little Island Industries Company (LIIDC) are also supporting us with this project. PipeLife have agreed to sponsor a number of outdoor nature signs for our yard. These will be a lovely addition to our school but without support would have been out of our budget.

As you can see there is a lot going on behind the scenes to keep improving our school!

That's all for now. Keep an eye on our Instagram account for the latest news and photos.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

Up Coming Events:

Feb 3rd: Bank Holiday – school closed.

Feb 11th: East Cork Studios school photographs

Feb 14th: soccer blitz with Park NS in school

Feb 17th-21st: school closed for midterm break

Feb 25th: boys FAI 5-a-side soccer blitz in Carrigtwohill

Feb 26th: school closed for NCSE in-service