



Aisling Doherty, Nathan Moran, Kyle McManamon, Caolan Moran (and Jason!)

# School Newsletter



*A very warm welcome back to all our 192 students, who have settled back to school. I extend a particularly warm welcome to our 26 junior infants who are really enjoying "big school". New pupils D.J., Charlie and Euan have joined the Explorers' preschool class. They are very happy and are already travelling independently by bus. Well done boys! Welcome also to new staff member SNA Eithne King who has joined our team.*

*We hope you all enjoy your time in Newport NS and find that we offer a high quality learning environment and a broad learning experience. We wish all our parents, pupils and staff a fruitful and enjoyable school year.*

*The school was a hive of activity throughout the summer as the school remained open for July provision, sports and activity camps, Céilí, handball, soccer, badminton, English language classes for European students and many visitors made use of the playground and astro turf. Our grounds were used free of charge for parking and also as a drop off point for the free bus to Ballycroy national park. Local traders have expressed their thanks for this facility as it frees up short term spaces in the town where parking is at a premium.*

*As always our fantastic hall is available to the community for use throughout the year. Please contact us at 098 41442 to reserve a slot.*

### **Town Design Statement for our beautiful town**

Newport is on the move again. A whole town design statement is being co-ordinated by Newport and District Development Company in collaboration with Mayo County Council. Many volunteers have been busily sowing the seeds for a regeneration plan for Newport for years and now finally on September 12<sup>th</sup> next all members of the community are invited to make submissions with regard to the next phase of development for Newport. Please have your say in Newport's future by dropping in to Hotel Newport on the 12<sup>th</sup>! We are very thankful to the local volunteers who have pursued this issue relentlessly and have not given up despite being disappointed on many occasions.

### **School Garden**

We had a wonderful crop of vegetables and fruit this year owing to the lovely sunshine in May and June. Thank you to the Green schools committee who worked with Ms McAuley on the planting.

During the last school year we relied on oil heating for just five months. This was a great saving on fuel due to good weather and all the additional upgrading on insulation carried out on the building.



**A busy summer at Newport NS!**



### **Maigh Eo Abú**

We are all getting behind the Mayo team and extend best wishes to club player Jason Doherty and all the Mayo team who contest the All Ireland final in Croke Park on Sunday September 17<sup>th</sup>. Jason's sister is Ms Doherty who is a teacher and sports coach in Newport NS. We have put up flags and banners and of course our famous jersey which Majella Palasz kindly created for us. The Mayo News photographer visited us on Thursday 7th September and we look forward to seeing the results in next week's Mayo News.

Children are free to wear their county colours on the Friday before the match.

Best wishes to Ava Kelly who won the chance to walk out the Mayo team in Croke Park on All Ireland Sunday! We will all be cheering for Ava and the Mayo team on the 17th

### **School Improvement**

You will all have noticed the additional enhancement work carried out on the school grounds throughout the summer. I would like to thank Gerard McCreeve who did a lot of work on the grounds and ensured weeds were kept at bay! Internally we have upgraded two classrooms. New carpets were fitted along with reconfiguring the rooms to create extra space for pupils. Those rooms also have hot and cold water. We purchased new furniture for classrooms.

This work was carried out when the school was not in session in order to minimise disruption to pupils. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the huge contribution made by staff during their holidays in order to ensure that the building was fully furnished, cleaned and ready for pupils' return in September. In particular Martin Maguire our dedicated caretaker took no holidays. He worked tirelessly all summer in at times stressful conditions overseeing what was a massive undertaking. So if you meet Martin, be sure to compliment him on the building and on the new access routes, which make for safer access from Rosmore and from the buses. He certainly made my job a lot easier this summer as he was so generous with his time and skill.

### **Opening Times and Safety**

The school opens to receive pupils each morning at 9:20am. Supervision is provided from 9:10am by one teacher and one SNA, under the external colonnade of the new hall. The colonnade provides shelter for children as they assemble for class.

**Children travelling by car should be accompanied to and from the playground as the car park can be very busy at drop off and collection times. Rosmore children should travel by the path along the Rosmore fence, and town children can enter through the lower astroturf gate.**

No responsibility is accepted by the Board of Management for pupils arriving before that time. Please ensure that you see an adult staff member in the yard before driving off and leaving your child. No pupil should arrive any later than 9:30am., as it can be a source of embarrassment for the child. Classes end each day for Infants at 2pm and for all other children at 3pm. Parents of infants meet their children at the colonnade, and the other children are met in the school yard.

We are governed by the Education Welfare Act and all absences are recorded. Children are prone to childhood illnesses and regularly need to be cared for at home. Please send a note explaining each absence. Do not phone as we retain written records of absences for Tusla. Should your child miss in excess of twenty days, we are obliged to inform the National Education Welfare Board (Tusla). We ask you to ensure that your child arrives at the school at 9:20am as the admittance of all children together cuts down on the disruption to the class. Should your child get delayed, a note is sufficient to explain what has happened. There is no need to interrupt the class at that point.

### **Child Protection**

All concerns regarding the safety of children are dealt with by Bríd Chambers (DLP—Designated Liaison Person) or, in her absence, by Bríd McAuley.

### **Parent/teacher meetings**

The annual **parent/teacher meetings** take place during the week commencing November 13<sup>th</sup> with most appointments being arranged for the evening of Thursday November 16<sup>th</sup>. Teachers will contact you in advance of this week to arrange appointments. The school will close at 2.45pm (in line with Department of Education rules) on Wednesday November 15<sup>th</sup> and Thursday November 16<sup>th</sup> in order to facilitate meetings. Please collect your children promptly in order to ensure appointments run to schedule.

These meetings provide a formal opportunity for you to meet your child's teachers and you will be given an outline of their progress since the beginning of the year. If during the year you have a concern about your child please arrange a meeting with your child's teacher. A prior appointment is always necessary as teachers cannot be replaced in their classrooms at short notice

## **OUR NEW INFANTS!**





and an unannounced visit, however brief disrupts learning for all students. You can do this by writing a note in the homework journal or by ringing Fiona, the school secretary.

### Complaints procedure

We have a complaints policy in place which broadly directs parents or pupils to bring an issue to the attention of the **class teacher** at the earliest possible stage. The vast majority of incidents which cause concern can be sorted at this early stage. Over the years we have found that problems addressed by a class teacher are easily resolved with no long term fallout. It is natural and anticipated that there will be occasional disruption to relationships and we are well placed to deal with issues as they arise once we are informed of the problem.

### Green Schools

This year we are working towards our eighth green flag. The theme is Marine life. We are blessed to be surrounded by the sea and have the wonderful resource of the Marine Institute on our doorstep. A new green schools committee will be formed under the stewardship of Ms McAuley. The group will include representatives from all classes.

### School improvement plan

Newport NS is continuing our school improvement plan. This year we are reimagining our focus on literacy. We continue to teach comprehension strategies and allocate time to reading for pleasure as well as working on an improvement in individual achievement. Each class teacher is explicitly teaching comprehension skills and we have a **Drop Everything And Read (DEAR)** slot allocated to reading for pleasure in each classroom. A new model of Special Education provision is being implemented nationally following a ministerial review. Support teachers will work mainly in-class. This will enable each child to have access to a support teacher (SET) as necessary. Additionally we are timetabling the support teachers to work as a team to deliver an accelerated reading programme to each class. Over the course of 2017/18 each class will benefit from an intensive six week programme which will concentrate for one hour a day on improving literacy. We are starting this initiative with First class. The programmes being used are Literacy Lift Off and Peer tutoring. Both programmes have been scientifically analysed and reports show significant gains are made by pupils over the course of the intervention.

In mathematics all classes are going to work on improving number through games, competitions and the learning of tables. Maths language is explicitly taught and problem solving strategies are learned by pupils.

Parents can play a major role in this initiative by tracking which tables are being taught and by timing your child or downloading an app to help them with the tables. A dedicated School improvement/DEIS (delivering equality of opportunity in school) notice board is located on the ground floor corridor. Regular updates are posted here.

### **After school classes**

Teachers, parents and outside providers provide a broad range of after school classes. We receive excellent feedback from the children in those classes and thank all involved for sharing their talent to enhance the lives of our pupils. A full list of activities is published on our website. Set Dancing and Drama classes will re-commence on 19th and 20th September and traditional music will start on Thursday 21st September. We will communicate start dates of other classes as they become known. As always, the school website should be your first port of call for the latest information on everything school-related,

### **Uniform**

Sports clothes are worn on P.E. days only and no branded sports clothing is worn in order to ensure uniformity. Parents experiencing financial hardship in relation to purchasing the correct uniform shoes should make a confidential telephone call to either me or Fiona and assistance will be arranged immediately.

### **Lost property**

The lost property box has already filled since term commenced. It is located at the Rosmore side entrance. Please **put names on all clothing** so that we can reunite lost property with their owners!

### **Clothing Collection**

Each term we arrange a collection of unwanted clothes, linens, shoes etc. to raise funds for the school. This term the collection will take place on **Wednesday 11th October**. Bags of clothes may be dropped to the school before 10am and placed under the colonnade of the new school hall.

### **Board of Management**

Our Board of Management has put a lot of time into overseeing the governance and smooth running of our school. We thank all those voluntary workers who attend numerous meetings and fulfil their role so conscientiously. Their good work is in evidence in every aspect of school life. As is proper, the children are the benefactors of their input and industry.

## **OUR NEW EXPLORERS!**

