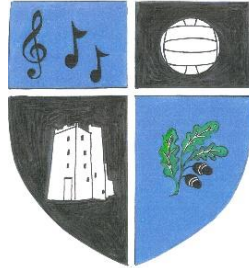


Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore N.S.

Newsletter September 2023



Website: www.rathmorens.ie Phone 045-862145

Email: office@rathmorens.ie

Twitter: [@Rathmore School](https://twitter.com/Rathmore_School)

Welcome back everyone to another school year in **Rathmore N.S.** The teachers and staff are all delighted to see happy children returning to their classrooms and meeting up with their friends once again after the summer break. I would also like to extend a warm welcome back to our teachers, special needs assistants and staff of Rathmore N.S. who will be working with your child this year. We are delighted to welcome new teachers, **Ms. Z. Gleeson**, who is teaching Senior Infants 2, **Ms. Flynn** who is teaching First Class, **Mr. O'Brien** who is teaching Fourth Class and **Ms. Horan** who will be joining the Support Team later in the year.

A special welcome to our new Junior Infant little boys and girls. They have got off to a great start with their teachers **Mr. Bolton** and **Ms. Gleeson**. We hope that each child has a wonderful experience with us this year and continues to flourish under the care of our dedicated team here in **Rathmore N.S.** We look forward to working together as partners in your child's education during this academic year.

Thanks also to **Paul O'Sullivan**, our School Caretaker who has been working to prepare the school for re-opening after the summer holidays and to **Martina Lawler**, our School Secretary for all the administrative support she provides throughout the year.

Wishing everyone in our school community a happy and safe year ahead.

Kind regards,

Lucy Travers, School Principal

Safety in the School Car Park

A big thank you to all parents/guardians for co-operating with our car parking arrangements.

Children should not enter the school building before the Garden Gate is opened to receive pupils arriving by bus from 8.45am as there is no supervision in place. The school day begins at 9.00am and ends at 2.40pm (1.40pm for Infant Classes)

Late pupils should enter through the main school entrance door at Zone A.

Please do not leave your child unattended on the school premises as we cannot take any responsibility for their safety outside of school hours.

- Please remember to park **in reverse** in a designated parking bay and stand beside your car to await collection of your child.
- **No parking** is permitted **along the school driveway** outside of the marked spaces. This allows cars to enter and leave and also provides the necessary space for busses to enter and leave safely.
- You are welcome to use the overflow car park to the rear of the **Community Hall** if necessary.
- Please be **vigilant at all times**, as young children are liable to run behind cars if they are not properly supervised. Once children are collected, they then become the **responsibility of parents/guardians**.

School Contact Details

Please note our school email address is office@rathmorens.ie.

The school Reception Office telephone number is: **045-862145**.

You can follow us on **Twitter/X** using the handle **@RathmoreSchool**

Home/School Communication: Rathmore N.S. Homework Diary

The **Rathmore N.S. Homework Diary** is the **main channel of communication between home and school and the teachers check it daily for any messages written in it by parents/guardians for their attention**. **Martina Lawler**, our school secretary can be contacted in the school office at **045-862145** for any message or through the school office email address office@rathmorens.ie

We kindly request that you do not contact your child's class teacher directly by email unless absolutely necessary. Teachers will do their best to respond to your query within school hours up to 4pm daily.

It is important that all parents/guardians ensure that their contact details are up to date.

*Please contact **Martina** to advise of any changes to your home address, telephone number or email so that they can be updated on our Aladdin system.*

Support For Parents

The *National Adult Literacy Association (NALA)* has developed the website www.helpmykidlearn.ie. This brings together relevant information for parents and the wider community to support children's Literacy and Numeracy development in primary school. You can click on the link below to access the website and the support material is grouped according to age bands.

[Help My Kid Learn](http://www.helpmykidlearn.ie)

Please complete the details in the front two pages of your child's Homework Diary so that we have all your up-to-date details, especially your PHONE and EMAIL ADDRESS.

School Attendance

We would love to see your child in school every day to ensure that they reach their full potential. We understand however, that there may be occasions when your child may be absent for valid reasons. For these days, we would really appreciate if you could provide a reason for your child's absence. We are legally obligated to report all absences over 20 days to TUSLA, so it is important that we record all absence reasons on our roll system. *Aladdin Connect* is the easiest way to do this, or alternatively you can contact your child's class teacher via the *School Diary* or email Martina in the school office.

To help you to keep track of your child's absences you will receive a notification through *Aladdin Connect* if they miss 15 & 20 days of school. If you have any queries or need to update your home contact details, please feel free to contact our school secretary Martina in the school office.

FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme

We welcome the invitation to 4th, 5th and 6th classes in Rathmore N.S. to take part in the *FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme*, supported by the *Department of Education and Skills and developed by the DCU Anti-Bullying Centre*. *FUSE* is referenced in [Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying](#) which acknowledges the importance of evidence-based, age-appropriate and culturally relevant anti-bullying programmes such as *FUSE*.

FUSE is the first research-based Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme designed to comply with UNESCO's Whole Education Approach to tackle bullying and online safety issues in schools. It is based on 25 years of research on bullying prevention and intervention and is designed to support the wider SPHE/RSE/Wellbeing curricula in schools. *FUSE* consists of a suite of student-led workshops and resources delivered by teachers in classroom settings.

At the heart of *FUSE* is the aim of building capacity in schools to tackle bullying and online safety issues and to empower children and adolescents to understand their own behaviour, be able to recognise bullying and online safety risks and be confident in how to report and seek support when they need it. More information on this programme, including support and resources can be accessed in the Parent Hub at <https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/parent-hub/>



New Covered Bicycle Rack

We are delighted to receive a newly installed covered bike rack free of charge as part of a sustainable transport collaboration between *An Taisce* and *Green Schools Ireland*. The bike rack was installed at the end of August in the Rathmore Community Hall Overflow Car Park with the agreement of the members of the Rathmore Hall Committee. We would welcome some further road safety transport initiatives to ensure the roads leading to our school are safe routes for cycling. **In the interest of health and safety, please remind your child that no climbing on the bike rack is permitted.**



Reminder re Pupil Use of Mobile Phones in School



Please note that as per our school *Acceptable Use Policy*, pupils are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school but, if necessary for home-school communication, mobile phones must be switched off during the school day and not used while on the school premises/grounds. Students are not permitted to use phones/smart watches as cameras under any circumstances in school, on school trips or during extra-curricular activities. The school will not be liable for the replacement of lost, stolen or damaged devices. Pupils who take unauthorised photos or recordings of other students or staff members will face disciplinary action as per the school's Code of Behaviour. The school incorporates this policy into the Code of Behaviour and will treat breaches as they would treat any other breach of the Code.

Parents/Guardians are advised to supervise their child's use of mobile phones outside of school hours and it is advisable that pupils avoid setting up or participating in class *Whatsapp* groups. Please note that the administrator of a *Whatsapp Group* is responsible for the content shared on the chat. Please see the government funded website www.webwise.ie for free education resources, advice, explainer guides to support you and your child with online safety.

School Expenses

Thank you to all parents/guardians who have paid their school expenses using the *Aladdin Epayments* cashless payment facility. The school expenses cover your child's stationary supplies, art and craft, digital licences and photocopying costs in school. We appreciate that the return to school increases the financial burden on parents and if you have any difficulty, please talk to **Martina** our school secretary or to **Ms. Travers**, the Principal.

School Mass



Fr Michael Comer will celebrate Mass in the **Church of the Immaculate Conception, Eadestown** on **Friday 29th September at 11.30am** to mark the beginning of a new school year and all classes in the school will be able to join in online via the parish webcam which can be accessed on the Eadestown Parish website www.eadestownparish.com . All Parents/Guardians are invited to attend the Mass in person in the Church. Special thanks to teachers **Ms. Larkin** and **Ms. Gleeson** who will provide the singing and musical accompaniment.

Note that **Fr Comer** has now confirmed the date for the celebration of **First Holy Communion** as **Saturday 18th May, 2024** and we await confirmation from the Dublin Archdiocese for a date for the celebration of the **Sacrament of Confirmation**.

Healthy Lunches & Nut-Free Zone



We have a *Healthy Eating Policy* in the school and parents are encouraged to support this healthy eating initiative. Children are permitted to include one small treat in their lunch box on Fridays and 2 small treats when it's an end of term class party. The month of September provides a great opportunity to foster healthy eating habits in our children and remind us of some of the healthy foods to pack in your child's school lunch box. We are also encouraging the children to use *less packaging* and *reduce single use plastic items* in their lunches in order to minimise the amount of waste generated in the school. Please click on the link below for more tips and suggestions for healthy lunch boxes.

<https://www.safefood.net/Healthy-Eating/How-to-plan-family-meals/Healthy-lunch-ideas>

In order to minimise the risk of a pupil with an allergy to nuts to a potential allergic reaction requiring medical intervention, as a school, we have decided to become a **Nut-Free Zone** for children and staff from the start of the new 2023/24 school year.

We are asking the co-operation of parents/guardians with this health and safety measure.

Please do not send nuts or food products containing nuts in your child's lunch box and please remind your child not to swap food items in their lunch boxes with other children in their class.

School Photographer



County Photos, (professional school photographers) will be coming to the school on **Thursday 19th October** to take photos of the children in both **Junior Infants Classes**. Details will be sent home in your child's school bag shortly.

Public Health Infection Control Measures In Schools

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) have issued some information to schools as the new year commences regarding COVID-19. The key messages are as follows:

- **Please keep your child at home if he/she is unwell.** The best way to keep viruses out of school is to stay at home until symptoms have substantially resolved for 48 hours or contact your GP for further advice if necessary.
- We will be continuing to **maintain our now established hygiene routines** in school in relation to handwashing.
- Children will be reminded to **adhere to good respiratory etiquette** by covering a cough and sneezing into their elbow. It is advisable that each child has a small packet of tissues which can be kept in their bag for their personal use in school.
- Good **ventilation** will continue to be maintained in all classrooms.

Mindful Tuesdays

A very successful and popular **Wellbeing Initiative** was rolled out across the school last year where all children were given a night off homework. Parents/guardians were encouraged to have a *technology-free* evening and engage in relaxing and mindful activities that enhance our wellbeing, such as playing a family board game together, baking/cooking together, reading a book, going for a walk, play/listen to music, having a family meal and chat, engaging in art activities, gardening, cycling or playing sports. The choice is endless! We will continue with this successful initiative during this school year which takes place on the **second and last Tuesday** of each month.

School Library



It was wonderful to see our School Library back up and running on Friday 8th September. The children get so excited for their weekly Friday Library visit which helps to foster a love of reading and books. Special thanks to **Lisa Sargent** and our parent library volunteers who come and give of their free time each week to provide this service. If you can spare some time on a Friday to help out, please contact **Martina** in the school office and we can include you on the **Library Weekly Rota**.

Visit of Paddy Madden

We were delighted to welcome nature and biodiversity expert **Paddy Madden** to our school on a sunny Wednesday 6th September to facilitate outdoor learning workshops with the children in 3rd, 4th, and 5th classes as part of *National Hedgerow Week* which ran from 1st -8th September. The children were so engaged in active learning about the plants and animals which live in our native hedgerows. Paddy explained that we are very lucky in Rathmore to have one of the best examples of a native hedgerow in all of Ireland and that we all have a responsibility to protect our native hedgerows which support a wide variety of plants and animals.



Co-Curricular Activities

Swimming for all pupils beginning with the children in **Mr. Collier's 6th Class** and **Ms. Malone's 5th/6th class** began last **Wednesday 6th September** in K-Leisure in Naas.

Hurling coaching with **John Holmes** for timetabled classes begins on **Tuesday 12th September** for **Mr. Walsh's 6th Class** and **Mr. O'Brien's 4th class**.

GAA coaching with **Rob Thompson** begins on **Thursday 14th September** for timetabled classes.

Friendship Week



Friendship Week takes place during the week of 25th September. The emphasis is placed on the promotion of positive relationships and the important role that friendship can play in our lives. Friendship Week gives us the opportunity to celebrate this at the very start of the year so that we can begin as we mean to go on. During the week the pupils, staff and parents are encouraged and afforded the opportunity to forge new friendships and renew and strengthen old ones.

School Garden



We have a beautiful school garden for the children to enjoy and experience outdoor learning. Thanks to our green fingered regular Garden volunteers **Sakoto Yoshimura,, Julie Shiels and Brigid Judge** for giving of their time and expertise. The children really enjoy having their own class plots and engaging in seasonal planting activities. It is a very positive activity which also promotes wellbeing among children and adults.

If you have some expertise in gardening or are interested in getting involved with planting and maintenance of our school garden, we would love to hear from you! Please get in touch with **Martina** in the school office.

Sixth Class Hoodies – Rathmore N.S. Class of 2024



A big ‘thank you’ to parent **Carmel Doyle** and **Orla Mescal** for volunteering to co-ordinate the purchasing of the Sixth Class Rathmore N.S. hoodies this year. Thanks also to class teachers **Mr. Collier** and **Ms. Malone** for their assistance in ensuring the hoodie is unique to Rathmore N.S. as it incorporates our school crest and Sixth Class pupil signatures. The hoodies have proven to be a big hit and this year’s Sixth Class are looking forward to receiving and wearing them in school. The hoodies cost €35 and this payment can be made through Aladdin e-payments. The deadline for ordering and payment for the hoodies is **Friday 15th September**.

Schools Sports Training 2023/24

We appreciate all our teachers who give of their time for sports training, subject to weather conditions on the day.

Boys Football training takes place with **Mr. Bolton** and **Mr. O’Brien**.

Girls’ Football training takes place with **Ms. Shaw & Mr. O’Brien**.

Boys Hurling training takes place with **Mr. Collier** and **Mr. Walsh**.

Camogie training takes place with **Ms. Lancaster** and **Ms. Flynn**.

Boots and gum shields must be worn for all football training.

Mr. Bolton and Mr. Collier are requesting that the boys bring their football/hurling gear into school every day.

Shin-guards, boots, track suit bottoms/shorts and socks must be worn for hurling/camogie training.

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
12.25pm Lunch	Boys Football	Girls Football	Boys Football	Girls Camogie	Boys Hurling
	Boys Hurling	Boys Hurling Boys Football	Boys Hurling	Boys Football Boys Hurling	Boys Football

REMINDERS

UNIFORMS: Please note that the school uniform is inter-changeable and pupils can wear either the uniform or school tracksuit to school. However, all children in 6th class who intend receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation are required to wear the full school uniform for Confirmation. Your class teacher will advise on what days P.E. is taking place when your child should wear the school tracksuit. Please ensure that your child has a light, rain-jacket or coat for school and remember to check that all items of school clothing are clearly labelled with your child's name.

GARDA VETTING: As part of **Child Protection Guidelines**, it is a requirement that all parents helping out with school activities are **Garda-vetted**. This process is confidential and once the initial application is submitted by the school, the process is online for the applicant. Therefore, parents/guardians who may become involved in school activities such as **Sports Days, Tours, Library, School Garden, Matches, Swimming** or who wish to help out with children in the school must first be *vetted*. All details on Diocesan Vetting requirements can be obtained from the School Office.

Local Secondary School Open Nights

Please note the following upcoming *Open Nights* for children in Sixth Class taking place in local secondary schools:

St. Mary's College Naas: Thursday 21st September

Naas Community College: Thursday 5th October

Piper's Hill College: Thursday 5th October

Christian Brothers Naas: Tuesday 10th October

Dates for your Diary

Hallowe'en break commences on Monday, 30th October to Friday 3rd November 2023.

Christmas Holidays: Friday 22nd Dec at 12.30pm and school re-opens on Monday 8th Jan 2024.

St. Brigid's Day Bank Holiday: School closed on Monday 5th February 2024.

Mid-term break: School closed on Thursday 15th and Friday 16th February 2024.

St. Patrick's Day: School closed on Monday 18th March 2024.

Easter Break: Starts at 12.30 pm on Friday 22nd March 2024 and school re-opens on Monday, 8th April 2024.

May Bank Holiday: School closed on Friday 3rd, Monday 6th & Tuesday 7th May 2024 and re-opens on Wednesday 8th May 2024.

June Bank Holiday: School closed on Monday 3rd June, Tuesday 4th June and Wednesday 5th June re-opens on Thursday 6th June 2024.

Summer holidays commence on Thursday 27th June 2024 at 12.30pm.