

Nuachtlitir Nollaig 2024

Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore N.S.

Newsletter December 2024



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Christmas Greetings 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians

The annual *Christmas Fair* will take place on Friday 13th December in Rathmore Community Hall. This highly anticipated event is the culmination of planning, school rehearsals and preparation by members of our *Parents Association* co-chaired by *Jane Byrne and Donna Mahony* and all the class teachers in Rathmore N.S. who have been rehearsing with the children and putting the finishing touches to their performances.

Special thanks to parents *Trevor & Fiona Gyves* for organising the music and sound which really adds to our overall enjoyment. The *Timetable* of each class performance has already been sent out to parents/guardians on Aladdin.

Thank you to the parents/guardians and many grandparents who give their full support to this important fundraising event every year. We look forward to welcoming you all and promise that you will be entertained by your very talented and creative children in the school! A reminder to please exercise caution when entering and exiting the car parks and use the designated car parking areas only.

Please note that while parents/guardians are permitted to take photographs of their children for their own private use, under Data Protection legislation they shouldn't share images of other children in a public forum i.e. on social media platforms.

As 2024 draws to a close, the members of our families and of our school community who have passed away during the year are in our thoughts and prayers and we remember those in our school community and families who are sick or in hospital at this time.

We are very lucky to have dedicated teaching staff and special needs assistants in Rathmore N.S. We are grateful to *Martina* our school Secretary and *Paul* our school Caretaker for all their hard work throughout this school year. Special thanks to the parents who volunteer to assist with school activities such as the school Library and the school Garden and can always be relied upon to help out when needed. It takes the collaborative effort of our school staff, the *Board of Management* chaired by *Gerry Martin*, and our *Parents Association* all working in partnership to ensure every child receives a quality primary education in Rathmore N.S.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a Peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi mhaise dhaoibh go léir!

Lucy Travers

Principal Teacher

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Junior Infants Enrolment 2025/2026 School Year

Please note that we have now published our **Annual School Admission Notice** in respect of admissions to **Junior Infants Classes** for the 2025/2026 school year.

It is very important to note the dates which are applicable for admission to **Junior Infants Classes for the 2025/2026 school year.**

The school will begin accepting completed Application Forms for places in Junior Infants 2025/26 on 6th January 2025 and will close on 7th February 2025.

Failure to accept an offer, or to return a completed Application Form to the school, within the prescribed period outlined on the Admission Notice may result in the offer being withdrawn.

Please spread the word among our school community that enrolment for Junior Infants classes 2025/26 opens from 6th January.

Please contact **Martina**, our School Secretary in the school office on TEL: 045-862145 or by email on office@rathmorens.ie for an **Application Form** or it can also be downloaded from the school website.

Child Safeguarding Statement- Board of Management Annual Review

Each one of us has a duty to protect children from harm and the *Department of Education and Skills* (DES) has published the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools (revised 2023)** to give direction to school management and staff regarding the identification of and response to child protection concerns.

The *Board of Management of Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore N.S* has adopted these procedures as school policy. Please note that the *Designated Liaison Person (DLP)* in place for dealing with child protection concerns is the school **Principal, Lucy Travers** and the *Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)* is the **Deputy Principal, Cairíona Lancaster**.

The *Board of Management* has recently completed an annual review of our *Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment*. A copy of our school's *Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment* are on display in the school reception area and parents/guardians are welcome to read through a hard copy of the documents in the school office or read the documents on the school website.

Additional School Closure- Primary Maths Curriculum

As advised, the *Department of Education and Skills* have notified us of an additional school closure on **Monday 20th January 2024** in order to facilitate teacher continuous professional development for the new *Primary Maths Curriculum* which is being implemented in schools during the 2024/25 school year. The school will be closed to pupils on that day and will re-open as normal on Tuesday 21st January.

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Parents Association Christmas Fair & Christmas Raffle 2024



Our **Parents Association** have been busily working away to ensure that Rathmore Hall will be decorated and ready to host the annual **Christmas Fair** on **Friday 13th December**. There will be teas/coffees and a selection of home baking available to purchase. A big *Thank You* to all the parents who are donating home baking to the *Tea/Coffee Stall* and those of you who have generously donated a range of prizes for the *Christmas Raffle* which can also be left in the collection box in the school.

All the funds raised will go towards funding activities and providing resources for your children attending the school.

Christmas Raffle: Thank you to everyone who has supported the *Parents Association Christmas Raffle* by buying tickets or donating prizes. Raffle tickets can be purchased on Aladdin E-Payments up to Thursday 12th December.

The draw will take place in the school PE Hall on **Tuesday 17th December at 1pm**. Good luck to everyone!

Influenza Vaccination Campaign 2024/25

Please note that the **nasal flu vaccine** is now available in Ireland for children aged 2-17. The flu vaccine and administration are free for everyone aged 2 to 17 years through the HSE vaccination programme. It is a safe, easy and pain free way to help protect children against flu this winter. The flu vaccine will also help reduce the spread of flu to others such as siblings, parents, teachers and grandparents. Please see the HSE flu website for more information: <https://www.hse.ie/flu>.

A team from the HSE came to the school on Thursday 28th November and administered the nasal flu vaccine to all children in both our Junior and Senior Infant classes.

A letter from the HSE on **Winter Health Advice** was also communicated to parents/guardians.

If your child is unwell, keep them home. Many children might have a runny nose or a slight cough as the seasons change. However, if a child is feeling unwell, they should be at home. For example, if your child:

- has a fever (a temperature of 38 degrees higher)
- is low in energy
- has diarrhoea or vomiting
- cough and sore throat.

They should stay at home until they are feeling well again and their symptoms have substantially finished.

Student Council St. Vincent De Paul Christmas Food Appeal



The *Rathmore Student Council* have made an appeal to the children of Rathmore N.S. and their families to donate non-perishable food (cereals, tinned foods, pasta, pasta sauce etc) to the **Society of St. Vincent De Paul** charity for local families in need throughout the year. Food donations can be dropped into the school for this very worthy cause until **Wednesday 18th December**.

Please contact **Susan Madden** on 087-7797867 if you have any questions.

School Mass – Feast of the Immaculate Conception 8th December 2024 & Season of Advent



Fr. Micheál Comer is celebrating a special Mass for the *Feast of the Immaculate Conception* in Eadestown Church on **Monday December 9th at 11.30am** and the children and their teachers will be joining in via the parish webcam. We are now in the liturgical season of **Advent** and have begun our preparations to celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

Special thanks to **Brigid Judge** for making a beautiful **Advent Wreath** which is on display in the school.

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Spirit of Rathmore Certificates- November 2024



| December 2024 | |
|--------------------|--|
| Junior Infants | Lara Dunne, Tessa Jones & Jack Buckley |
| Senior Infants | Erin Healy |
| First Class | Robyn Higgins & Éala Causevic |
| Second Class | Abbie Elliffe |
| Second/Third Class | Harry Ashe |
| Third Class | Caoimhe Duggan |
| Fourth Class | Isabel Mulligan |
| Fourth/Fifth Class | Harry Osborne |
| Fifth Class | Thomas Breen |
| Sixth Class | Sophia Elliffe |
| Sixth Class | Cillian McConn Ampadu |

It is very important that we all feel safe and happy in our school. The Minister for Education and Skills, **Norma Foley** launched the *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying 2023-2027* last year to prevent and address bullying in all its forms. Our children and young people are placed at the very heart of *Cineáltas* and this action plan aims to enhance the work that we already do to ensure that all children who attend our schools are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our children is at the forefront of everything we do.

The plan takes a whole education approach to addressing bullying and emphasises prevention, providing support to every school community, improving oversight and awareness and working together as a community with a renewed sense of partnership and *Cineáltas* towards each other. Note that the school will close for a half-day on Wednesday 19th February to facilitate school staff to work on our revised *Cineáltas* school policy.

Congratulations to the November *Spirit of Rathmore* Certificate Award winners nominated by their teachers for showing kindness and respect to others around the school and contributing to a happy and positive school culture in Rathmore N.S. in the spirit of our **Cineáltas** flag.

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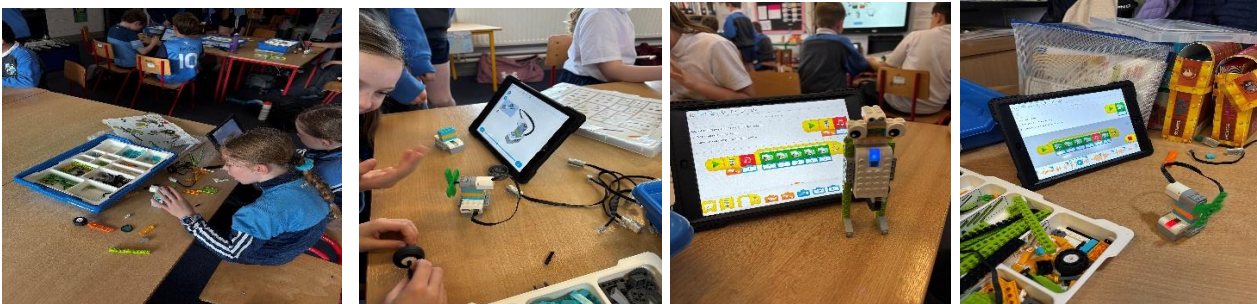
Primary Languages Sampler Initiative – Say Yes To Languages!



This fully funded initiative facilitates participating Primary Schools to introduce their pupils to a Modern Foreign Language. The children in 3rd to 6th Classes began learning a module of French over 10 weeks during the school day after the Mid-Term break. The French module is being taught by post-primary teacher **Madame Clifford** who is a French National and she has commented that the children in Rathmore N.S. are so motivated and enthusiastic about learning French. Bravo!

The aim of *Languages Connect* is to build awareness of the many advantages of having foreign language skills, and to make foreign language learning more appealing to everyone. Foreign language skills connect people to more personal, professional, social and cultural experiences. The *Department of Education and Skills (DES)* have recently announced that learning a Modern Language in primary school will be a subject in the new *Primary Curriculum* for 3rd-6th classes.

Science, Technology, Engineering Maths (STEM)



Ms. Smyth's 4th/5th class engaged in STEM and **Matthew O' Sullivan** shared his experience.

LEGO WeDo is a fun, learning experience for children of all ages and includes computer skills, engineering, teamwork and STEM. We built fun and challenging projects, teaching us valuable life lessons and skills taught in an enjoyable and secure system. I enjoyed coding our LEGO builds to do interactive tasks while exploring our full potential. I learned how to use logic and initiation to build and code in this fantastic interactive learning experience.

Hot School Meals Elections



There was brisk voting in the school last week when the children in Second Class and their teacher **Mr. O'Brien** organised a **Food Election** to find out which of the hot meals provided by **The Lunch Bag** was the most popular in **Rathmore N.S.** An exit poll at the polling station and first tally indicated there would be a tight race for the top spot on the Menu! The team at **The Lunch Bag** were very impressed with democracy and student voice (and taste buds!) in action in our school and wrote a special letter of congratulations to the children with a box of prizes to share among their class. Thank you to **Peter** from *The Lunch Bag* for delivering the letter and prizes to 2nd Class and a big shout out to **Susan Mooney** of **The Lunch Bag** who comes to Rathmore N.S. every day and ensures that the children all receive their delicious hot meal order on time in school.



*In Second Class we had an Election and this is the result. So, in last place we have the **Bolognese Bowl** with 7 votes. In second last place we have the **Chicken Melt** with 16 votes. In fourth place we have the Meatball Munch with 17 votes. In Third place place we have the Curry with 38 votes. In second place we have Goujons with 61 votes. In First place we have the **Sausage Baguette** with 67 votes! Thank you so much for giving up your time to vote.*

By Leo Graham

Active Schools Flag



Here at Rathmore NS, we are focused on renewing our **Active School Flag** for the third time. All students are currently participating in the **Active Break Every Day Challenge**. This initiative is a great way to incorporate movement into daily routines, which is so important for both physical and mental health. Teachers are providing a variety of indoor and outdoor activities to ensure that everyone can get involved, regardless of the weather. In addition, thanks to our **Active School Playground Leaders**, we have dedicated **Active Zones** twice a week. The students are having a lot of fun while building lifelong healthy habits. We remind ourselves daily to 'Get off our chair and Get some air!'

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Tin Whistle Lessons with Kiltel Comhaltas



We are delighted that *Mary Ryan* of **Kiltel Comhaltas** has begun teaching the tin whistle to the children in **Mr. O'Brien's** Second Class and **Ms. Murray's** 2nd/3rd Class recently and **Kiltel Comhaltas** have kindly supplied a tin whistle to every child in both classes to encourage their love of Irish traditional music and cultural heritage. They have all been hitting the right notes so far. Maith sibh go léir!

Sacramental Preparation

The next Confirmation preparation Mass will take place on **Saturday 9th February at 11.30pm in Eadestown Church.**

The boys and girls in 6th class will also be taking part in a **Class Retreat** during the school day organised by the *Mount St. Anne's Retreat Team* in Rathmore Community Hall on **Friday 24th January 2024.**

First Holy Communion 2024: The next 'Do This In Memory' Mass will take place on **Sunday 15th December at 11.30am in Eadestown Church.**

Christmas in Rathmore N.S

Rathmore N.S. is looking very festive indeed both inside and outside with decorated corridors, our beautiful Advent Wreath, Christmas Tree, Crib and Santa Grotto as well as a festive School Library and School Garden which were decorated by our parents Library and Garden Committees. The children and all their teachers have also worked with the children to create some beautiful Christmas-themed Art and even painted some of the school windows with Christmas themes! Thank you to **Martina, Paul, our teachers and SNAs Nora, Rita, Louise and Brenda** for all helping to deck the halls of Rathmore N.S. and add to the Christmas spirit around the school. Nollaig Shona!



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REMINDERS

The children can wear their Christmas Jumper/Christmas clothes into school on **Friday 13th for the Christmas Fair**. Our **Christmas Jumper/No Uniform Day** takes place on **Tuesday, 17th December** and the members of our **Student Council** have chosen the **Jack and Jill Foundation** for our Christmas Jumper/No Uniform Christmas Charity this year. A donation of **€2 per child/€5 per family in cash** or whatever you would like to contribute would be appreciated on the day.

We are expecting a **Very Special Visitor** to the school who goes by the initials **SC!** Special thanks to our **Parents Association** who are kindly sponsoring a treat for every child in the school!

The children can wear their **Christmas Jumpers/Christmas clothes** again on **Friday 20th December** when we finish up at **12.30pm for the Christmas Holidays**.



Co-Curricular Activities

Swimming for all pupils in **Ms. Behan's 3rd Class** and **Ms. Broe's 4th Class** finishes on **18th December** in K-Leisure in Naas. **Mr. O'Brien's 2nd Class** and **Ms. Murray's 2nd/3rd Class** will begin swimming lessons in K Leisure Naas on **Wednesday January 8th**.

Hurling skills coaching with **John Holmes** continues with timetabled classes on **Tuesdays**.

Gaelic Football coaching with **Rob Thompson Games Development Officer** with Kildare GAA continues on **Thursdays**. A big thank you to both coaches for their coaching involvement with the children in the school throughout the year.

Christmas Holidays Friday 20th December Staggered Closing Times

Please note the staggered departure times in operation on **Friday 20th December** when we close for the Christmas Holidays on a half-day.

- 12.10pm Funbugs Collection
- 12.10pm Busses leave the school
- 12.15pm Junior & Senior Infants & their siblings
- 12.20pm 1st & 2nd Classes & their siblings
- 12.30pm Rest of school - 4th to 6th Classes

Dates for your Diary

Christmas Holidays: Start on **Friday 20th December** at **12.30pm** and school re-opens on **Monday 6th January 2025**.

Sixth Class Visit to Punchestown Racecourse: **Monday 13th January** during the school day.

NOTE: Additional School Closure Primary Maths Curriculum CPD: Monday 20th January 2025.

Junior Infant Parent/Teacher Meetings after School on Wednesday 22nd & Thursday 23rd January.

Sixth Class Retreat in Rathmore Community Hall on Friday 24th January 2025.

St. Brigid's Day Bank Holiday: School closed on **Monday 3rd February 2025**.

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NOTE: Half-Day Closure: 12.30pm on Wednesday 19th February 2025.

Mid-Term break: School closed on Thursday 20th and Friday 21st February 2025.

St. Patrick's Day: School closed on Monday 17th & Tuesday 18th March 2025.

Confirmation: Friday 4th April at 11 o'clock in Eadestown Church.

Easter Break: Starts at 12.30 pm on Friday 11th April 2025 and school re-opens Monday, 28th April.

May Bank Holiday: School closed on Monday 5th May 2025 and re-opens on Tuesday 6th May 2025.

First Holy Communion: Saturday 17th May at 11 o'clock in Eadestown Church.

June Bank Holiday: School closed on Friday 30th May, Monday 2nd June and Tuesday 3rd June and school re-opens on Wednesday 4th June 2025.

Summer holidays commence on Wednesday 25th June 2025 at 12.30pm.



Happy Christmas and Best Wishes for 2025 from everyone in Rathmore N.S!