



Cloonakilla N.S. Bealnamulla | Athlone | Co. Roscommon

NEWSLETTER, MAY 2025

Dear Parents,

Please find below details of forth coming events in our school and events we took part in.

Sacraments of Confirmation & First Holy Communion

We congratulate our 6th class pupils who received the Sacrament of Confirmation on March 25th. A special word of thanks to the pupils from 4th & 5th classes who sang and played tin whistles so beautifully on the day!

2nd class will celebrate the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on May 17th in Ss Peter & Paul's Church, Athlone @11am. It is very important that all children are in their seats by 10.45am. Each family will have a seat that will be labelled with their name. First Communion Child must be seated at the edge of the seat at the middle aisle.

Please do not take any photos during the Mass as there will be an opportunity to do this when the Mass has ended. You are then free to take photographs.

4th-6th class pupils will provide the choir on the day. I would be very grateful if as many choir members as possible could attend.

The Parents Association invite you to the school after Mass for refreshments in the school hall. This is always a most enjoyable event and I would like to thank the Parents Association for their work.

School Tours

School tours have been organized as follows:

Junior Infants: Glendeer Pet Farm & Jump for Joy on Monday, 16th June

Senior Infants: Glendeer Pet Farm & Jump for Joy on Wednesday, 18th June

1st Class: Turoe Pet Farm on Thursday, 19th June

2nd Class: Let's Go, TUS, Athlone on Tuesday, 10th June

3rd Class: Let's Go, TUS, Athlone on Wednesday, 11th June

4th Class: Bay Sports, Athlone on Wednesday, 18th June

5th & 6th Classes: Emerald Park, Ashbourne, Co Meath, on Tuesday, 17th June

Class teachers will provide you with exact details closer to the time. A staff member who is responsible for the administration of medicines will accompany children with medical needs.

Dates for your Diary

First Communion: Saturday, May 17th at 11.00am

School Tours as above

June Bank Holiday: School closed Monday & Tuesday, 2nd & 3rd June. Re-opens on Wednesday 4th.

Summer holidays: School closes on Wednesday 25th at 12 noon.

Teaching & Learning

At present we are in the process of administering standardised spelling, reading and maths tests. Test results will be analysed by the Special Education Needs (S.E.N.) team in conjunction with class teachers and myself in order to inform Curriculum Planning and our School Improvement Plan 2025-2026.

School Reports will be issued on June 12th via Aladdin Connect. If you require a hard copy of the report please contact the school office. Education Passports/Irish Exemptions (6th class) will be forwarded to relevant secondary schools.

School Self Evaluation

As part of School Self Evaluation we have focussed on Spellings(2nd-6th), Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Programme (Jun Infants-1st class) and Musical Literacy (all classes). Children's test results and work samples will be analysed to evaluate their progress and this in turn will determine our School Improvement Plan targets for 25/26. In response to the Whole School Evaluation recommendations we have also upgraded our main library and class libraries and we have extended the time allocated to teaching of writing genres throughout the school. We are constantly striving to improve best practice in order to enhance educational provision in the school.

SEN: Special Educational Needs

The SEN team are working with class teachers and pupils to support literacy and numeracy throughout the school through a number of initiatives. Literacy Lift Off has commenced in Senior Infants (Ms Shine's class) and will run for the next 6 weeks. Parents need to support their child by reading the familiar book they have in their folder every night. The Reading Recovery Programme is also offered to children with emergent literacy needs. Mrs. McCabe is our Reading Recovery Teacher. The SEN Team also respond to and support children with social, emotional and behavioural needs with transient to long term interventions. We appreciate the ongoing support of parents which adds to the success of all these initiatives.

Children who receive a diagnosis during the school year are monitored and placed on the Continuum of support at a level which best meets their needs - be that Classroom Support, School Support or School Support Plus.

Summer Programme 2025

Once again we are offering a school based Summer Provision Programme commencing June 26th – 9th July for students with complex and special educational needs and those at risk of educational disadvantage. Mr Ó' hÓgain has been appointed as Organiser. A letter pertaining to this programme has been sent to eligible students. It is important that parents who have received this letter respond whether their children are available to take part or not as places in the programme are limited. The theme of the programme continues to be "Building Confidence and Connections" and will build upon the children's work with their school support teachers during the school year.

ICT



There was great news for Cloonakilla NS last term when we were announced as recipients of a €1000 grant from RISE in partnership with National Broadband Ireland. This gave us an opportunity to invest in new technology. We purchased two tablets to provide audio books and a C Pen to enable those with reading difficulties to access text easily.

The RISE Community Fund, established by NBI Chairman David McCourt, has already supported over 140 rural organisations nationwide, empowering communities with the tools they need to thrive in the digital age. We had a very exciting morning on March 25th before heading off to sing at our school's Confirmation. 5th class and members of our Tech Team met with David McCourt and his team for photos and videos for the press release.

Classes have been participating in online zoom calls run in conjunction with Education Centres in Ireland & committees within our school. Pupils took part in a fantastic Easter Maths Quiz which promoted lots of maths talk & cognitively challenging learning experiences. These workshops provide an opportunity to communicate with other schools in a safe forum and within the safety of our classrooms. Well done to the current Coiste Gaelbhrratach who hosted events through the platform of Zoom throughout the whole school. They were most impressive hosts and navigated their way through the use of multiple technologies with ease.



Please feel free to visit our school website to catch up on recent events.

<https://www.cloonakillans.com/>

Please continue to monitor your child's online usage.

Do you have any ICT knowledge that you feel would be of benefit to our school community and would like to share with us? If so, please contact Ms.Cunniffe at her class email: cloonakillans5th@gmail.com

Coiste Gaelbhrratach:

Bhí seachtain iontach againn i Scoil Cluain na Cille ag ceiliúradh Seachtain Na Gaeilge 2025. Bhí deiseanna ag na bpáistí agus ag na múinteoirí ár gcúltúr agus ár teanga dúcháis a chéiliúradh. Bhí réimse leathan gníomhaíochtaí ar siúl agus bhain pobal na scoile an taitneamh agus spraoi astu.

Cloonakilla NS celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge in March. The Coiste Gaelbhrratach organised lots of fun, Irish activities including Tráth na gCeist, Seó faisin, Dramaíocht beag – Toy Story 1.5, an art competition based on different Seanfhocail, Lá glas and a Céilí Mór. The whole school learnt An Dreoilín dance and performed this alongside other Irish dances at the Céilí Mór. It was wonderful to hear everyone using cúpla focal gaeilge throughout Cloonakilla. Mar a deir an seanfhocail – Is fearr Gaeilge Bhriste ná Béarla Cliste. As the saying goes – broken Irish is better than clever English! Cloonakilla NS have successfully completed year one of the Gaelbhrratach programme and we will be awarded a certificate at the end of the year for all our wonderful efforts speaking and promoting Irish throughout the school. Maith sibh gach duine!



Sport:

Sports Day

3rd – 6th class Sports day will be held on Thursday, May 15th. Junior Sports Day will be held after First Communion. You will be informed of an exact date nearer the time.

Gaelic Football

5th / 6th class boys and girls will represent Cloonakilla NS in their Cumann na mBunscol Gaelic football blitz this week. Both teams will play against Creagh, Abbey Boyle, St Anne's Castlerea & Cornafulla NS.

Alan Fitzpatrick from Clann na nGael continues Gaelic training every Wednesday. This term he will have sessions with 5th and 6th classes and is focussing on fundamental movement skills.

Cycle Safely

6th class pupils are engaging in a very worthwhile 4 week programme organised by Roscommon Sports Partnership. Under the guidance of the coaches, they are learning lots of new skills regarding cycling and bicycle care. They have an opportunity to practise their new skills on the school grounds. They will also have an opportunity to use those skills in a real life situation, as they will navigate through some of our local housing estates under the supervision of the coaches.

Please remind them to wear their helmets at all times as their safety is our primary concern.

Soccer

5th and 6th class boys and girls travelled to Celtic Park, Boyle to compete in the FAI Primary School 5's competition. All teams played well on the day and our girls' team were eventual winners of the County Final.

The girls' school soccer team proudly represented Roscommon in the Connacht finals in Umbro Park in Castlebar on Wednesday 7th May. They played some great games which were very tight. A great win against the Sligo representatives unfortunately was not enough to progress to the next round but it has been a hugely successful year and it was great to win the Roscommon final.

I would like to commend the players on their excellent work ethic and encouragement of each other throughout the season. They are a credit to the school. Well done girls!

Basketball

5th and 6th Basketball

Our school basketball teams recently attended the Roscommon Primary Basketball Blitz which was held in The Hub, Castlerea. Both teams showcased great teamwork and determination throughout their games and managed to secure a place in the semi-finals after winning 3 out of their 4 games! These semi-finals will be held on May 22nd. Both teams continue to train hard during their lunch break in preparation for the next round. We wish them the very best of luck in the semi-finals!

3rd and 4th Class Basketball

There is an upcoming blitz for our newly formed basketball teams on Friday June 6th. Cloonakilla will be sending both a boys and girls team to represent the school. Both teams have great potential and we wish them the very best of luck at their debut blitz.

Active Schools Week

Our school reinforces the message that children require 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. We have just completed Active Schools Week May 6-9th. There were activities scheduled for every class each day. A skipathon and basketball and penalty shootouts were in this year's line-up. All children participated with finals taking place each afternoon for various events.

Active style homework was assigned to all pupils. This was monitored and recorded by each child to emphasise their daily activity during the week. Children who returned their forms were entered into a raffle to be in with a chance of winning a homework pass. Well done to all who participated and our lucky winners from each class.



A special word of thanks to Martin Ward (Na Fianna Martial Arts School), Mary Mannion (Athlone Taekwando), Charlie Cooper (Buccaneers RFC), Noel McGee (St Peters FC) and Charlene (Roscommon Sports Partnership) who gave up their time to share their expertise with the students of Cloonakilla.

We are now hoping to apply for our second Active Schools Flag. A huge word of thanks to our Active Schools Committee for their continued efforts and enthusiasm.

School Jerseys

The Lunch Bag Company kindly sponsored a set of jerseys for our senior soccer team. The girls' team were delighted to wear them for the first time at their Connaught final matches. Well done to Kiersten and Daniel from 6th class who designed the jerseys! Sincere thanks to Colin from the Lunch Bag for all his help.



Wellbeing

The Wellbeing Committee organised an Easter Wellbeing Raffle which took place on Thursday, April 10th. The raffle raised an amazing €2,120.95. The funds will be used to equip wellbeing spaces in every classroom, ensuring that all students have access to calming, supportive environments to help them thrive.

The Wellbeing Committee are very grateful to all the businesses, parents, grandparents and staff who generously donated prizes for the raffle. A full list of our generous prize sponsors can be found on the **school website**. Your support truly makes a difference and is deeply appreciated. We would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the students and staff who supported the event by purchasing raffle tickets. Your support makes a real difference.

The Wellbeing Committee continues to promote positive mental health through our ongoing Wellbeing Wednesday initiatives. Together, we're building a brighter, more mindful school community.

Raffle Prizes & some of our recent raffle winners:



TUS Dental Student Visit

2nd Class had a visit from the dental nurses from TUS. They explained that good oral hygiene is crucial for maintaining lifelong health. They covered topics such as:

- The importance of brushing and flossing
- Healthy eating for strong teeth
- The role of dental visits in preventing cavities
- Fun facts about teeth and oral health

Children took part in some exciting experiments on their teeth and really enjoyed the experience. It was a fun and educational day for everyone!

Student Council Fundraising Success & Upcoming World Culture Day

Our Student Council, in conjunction with the Parents' Association, were proud to donate 500 to our local branch of The Samaritans who are dedicated to supporting those in need. 2 members of the Athlone Branch of the Samaritans visited the school to accept the cheque. They were most grateful for our generosity. The Student Council & Ms Kelly are organising **World Culture Day** on **May 21st**. This will be a wonderful opportunity to honour and showcase the many diverse cultures represented in our school. We look forward to a day full of learning, sharing, and celebrating the rich cultural tapestry that makes our school so special.

Green Schools

Big Travel Challenge: Cloonakilla NS took part in the Big Travel Challenge in February. This is an initiative run by the Green-Schools Programme. The Big Travel Challenge asks school communities to focus on modes of active travel such as walking, cycling or scooting. The aim of this initiative is to try to get as many pupils and members of the school community using these modes as much as possible over a period of nine school days. The Green School

Committee worked with our Active Schools Committee and Well-being Committee to promote the Big Travel Challenge in our school. This hard work paid off as Cloonakilla NS were awarded first prize in County Roscommon!. A big achievement for our school! We want to thank all the children, parents/guardians and family members who supported us with this.



Climate Action Workshops: Ciaran Hussey Green Schools Travel Officer visited our school on the 26th of March. He conducted Climate Action Workshops with both 6th Classes. The workshop covered Climate science, the reasons why the earth is warming and things we can do to combat it.

National Spring Clean: We held our annual An Taisce National Spring Clean on the 11th of April. 3rd, 4th and 5th classes were involved in a "Spring Clean" of our school grounds. The **An Taisce National Spring Clean** is Ireland's largest and longest-running anti-litter campaign, organised by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce. We were delighted to welcome Jonathan Jones Environmental Officer from Roscommon County Council who visited our school on the day. Jonathan is pictured above with our Green Schools Committee. A big thank you to all the children who took part.



WOW Days

Our WOW days, (Walk on Wednesdays) will take place every Wednesday throughout the month of May. This is part of our Green Schools (Travel focus), Active Schools & Well Being initiatives. Walking to school reduces the amount of cars on the roads, which reduces emissions and this helps our environment. Walking is also part of your daily physical activity, it improves your wellbeing, the exercise helps with your concentration in class and it is a great positive way to start the day! We will meet at The Mill car park every Wednesday morning at 8:50am and walk to school. Everyone will cross at the pedestrian crossing at the school. Teachers will supervise along the way. Please wear a hi-vis jacket for our WOW days, stay on the footpath and be mindful of road safety. We had a great turn out for our first WOW day on the 7th of May. We appreciate your continued efforts to take part in the WOW days for the month of May.



Green Schools Committee

We would like to wish the Green Schools Committee the very best of luck for the coming weeks as they get ready to leave Cloonakilla NS and transition to secondary school. For the last two years, they have been a dedicated committee full of enthusiasm and creativity, who always lead by example and worked as a team. They always took pride in raising awareness to make our school more environmentally friendly. Well done to each and every one of our committee members - 2023-2025!



Spelling Bee

Alex Robinson represented the school in the Spelling Bee Competition in Tarmon, Co Roscommon on 28th March, having won the Cloonakilla School Spelling Bee Competition. He was placed 6th overall. Well done Alex!

6th Class Graduation

6th class graduation ceremony will be held in the school on Tuesday, June 24th @ 10.15pm. Parents are invited to attend. I am very aware that our time with 6th class is coming to an end and I hope that these last few weeks will be a happy and contented period for them. Transition is never easy and often we do not appreciate this. Please continue to support them as they navigate this next phase in their lives. I would like to commend our 6th class pupils for their excellent behaviour all year. They have proved worthy role models for the rest of our pupils. I am very proud of their achievements and their behaviour.

New Junior Infant Enrolment

Our Junior Infant Enrolment afternoons will be held on May 28th & 29th. An information video detailing all relevant school information has been emailed in advance and parents have been informed of their exact day & time. We look forward to welcoming them to our school.

Parents' Association

The Parents' Association has organised their annual walk for June 14th. This is always a most enjoyable event and your support would be greatly appreciated. Please see poster overleaf.

Resignation

At our most recent meeting I tendered my resignation to the Board of Management with effect from August 31st after 40 years service in Cloonakilla NS. It has been a wonderful journey .

Throughout my time here I have had the pleasure of working with excellent staff, supportive parents, dedicated Boards of Management and last but not least inspiring children who make it all worthwhile. I would like to thank you all for your support over the years. As I step away from this role I would like to wish the entire school community every success in the future. You will never be far from my thoughts.

Regards,
Mary O'Rourke,
Principal

Cloonakilla NS to The Mill
Bar and Loop back to
School (track also
suitable for buggies)



**CLOONAKILLA
PARENTS
ASSOCIATION**



COMMUNITY FUN WALK

Saturday 14th June 2025

Registration at

Cloonakilla NS @ 11.30am

everyone must register for insurance purposes

Walk commences @12.00pm

**€5 Entry OR €10 per family (extended family
members are also welcome)**

CASH ONLY

**RAFFLE on the day
€2 a strip/€5 for 3 strips**

**Tea/Coffee &
Refreshments
served afterwards**

**ICE - CREAM
Van for the children!**

