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St Joseph's BNS Spring Newsletter 2026

We can't quite believe that Easter is already upon us. The term has flown by in a blur of activity, learning and laughter. Throughout the past few months, the boys of St Joseph's have embraced every opportunity presented to them — in the classroom, on the yard, on trips, and through the many enriching experiences that make school life so special.

This newsletter offers a glimpse into that journey. It captures the energy, creativity and sense of community that continues to define our school.

To all our school community,
we hope you
enjoy the Easter break. 😊



1. **School Attendance**

Attendance remains a vital part of each child's educational journey. When your child returns to school after a period of absence, please ensure that a written note containing his name, the date of absence and the reason for absence is given to the class teacher. Alternatively you may enter these details on the Aladdin app.

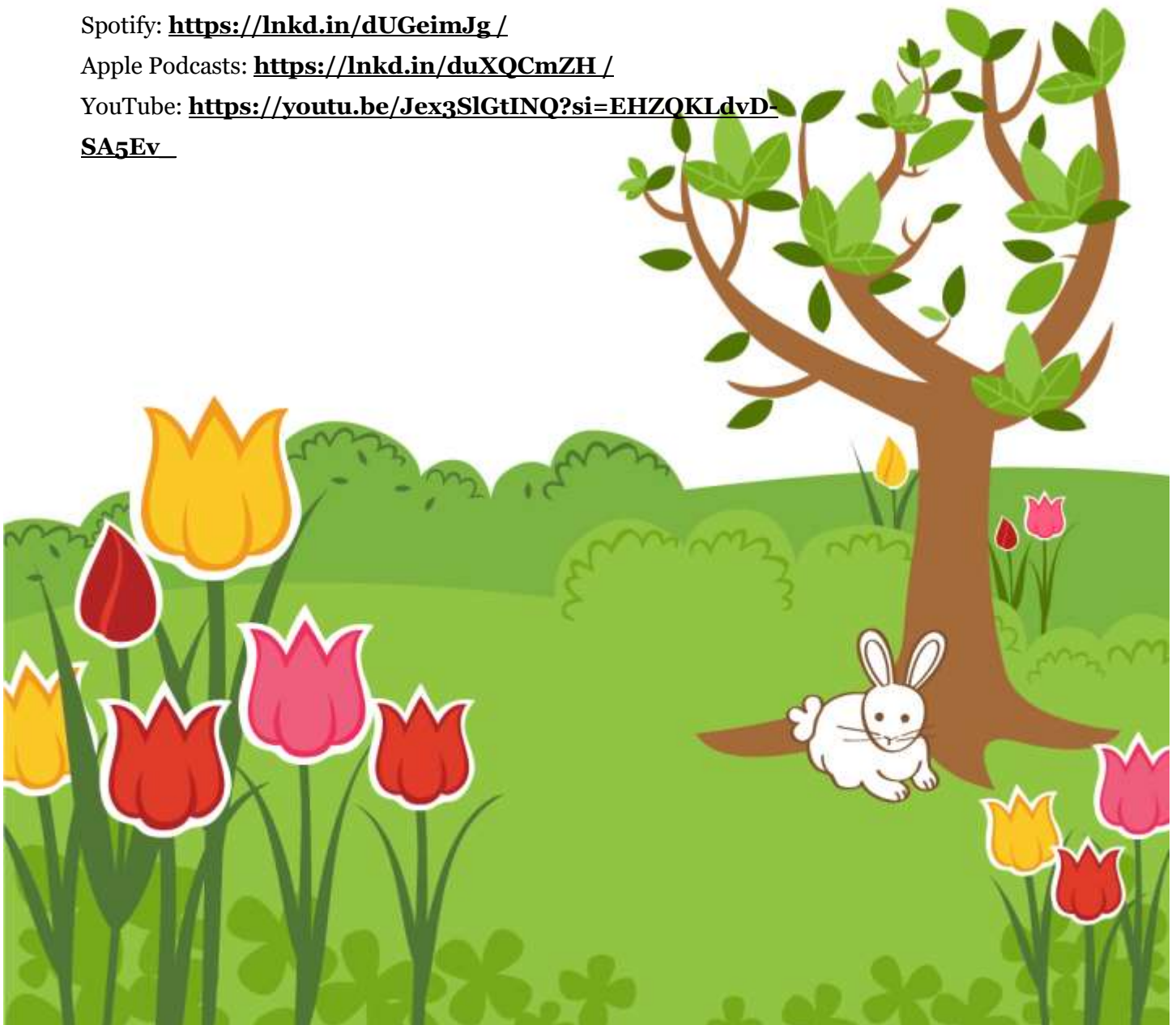
In supporting the Department of Education and Youth's School Attendance Campaign, the HSE has the following podcast available on all podcast platforms::

Podbean: https://lnkd.in/e_iaDjHM/

Spotify: <https://lnkd.in/dUGeimJg/>

Apple Podcasts: <https://lnkd.in/duXQCmZH/>

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/Jex3SlGtINQ?si=EHZOKLdvD-SA5Ev>



2. Child Protection and Anti-Bullying: Bí Cineálta Framework

The Board of Management (BoM) has adopted and implements fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary (Revised 2023). An annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment was completed at the BoM meeting 12/03/2026.

The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Ms Anne McCabe

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Ms Rachel Harte.

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's BNS also wishes to inform you that its annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta: Anti-bullying Policy and its implementation was completed at the Board Meeting on the 12/03/2026. This review was conducted in accordance with the Department Of Education and Youth (DEY) Bí Cineálta Guidelines and Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.



3. Restorative Practice Journey

As part of our ongoing Restorative Practice journey, St. Joseph's BNS uses restorative practices to support positive behaviour and relationships across the school community.

Restorative practices:

- Focus on building, maintaining, and repairing relationships
- Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions
- Help pupils understand the impact of their behaviour on others
- Support learning, growth, and reconnection with the school community

Restorative practices used in our school include:

- Check-in and check-out circles
- Restorative conversations using agreed language and questions
- Problem-solving and reflection
- Opportunities to repair harm and rebuild trust
- Peer support where appropriate



We are practicing using restorative language in our everyday interactions in school. This journey of building and maintaining positive relationships is helping us to assimilate a way of being in our school community: a way of knowing, caring, listening, feeling and accepting with accountability and growth and without blame or shaming.

For March we focused on **bravery**. The classes worked in groups and reflected on why being brave and speaking up is important. The pupils explored what bravery might look like: raising a hand to answer a question, making a new friend, admitting a mistake or attempting a challenging maths problem. They learned that each small act of courage and bravery builds confidence and resilience. The boys looked at how bravery relates to our previously identified school values/themes of **fun, fairness, friendship, teamwork, and kindness**.

Using Restorative Practices every day in school has given us all the skills to bring these values (chosen by the boys) to live in a conscious and consistent manner. Taking a restorative approach is helping to bridge any gaps between what we want to do and what we actually do in practice.



4. Educational Trips and Tours

Dream Space Microsoft invited our 2nd class pupils to visit and engage in a digital skills experience that inspired their creativity.

Dream Space Microsoft is developed by and is led by teachers who worked closely with our boys in the workshop providing experiences that matched their school context and complemented the curriculum.

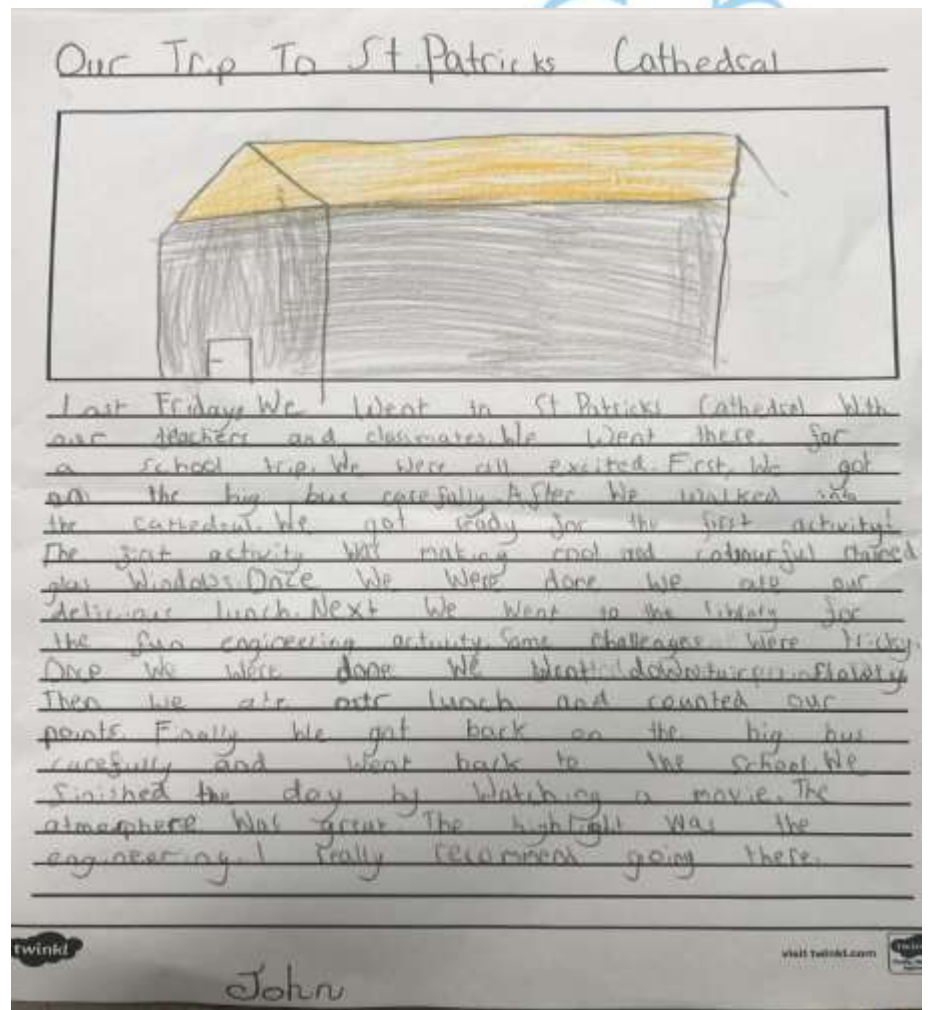
The boys were encouraged to develop their logical, computational, coding & programming skills through fun & engaging team activities.



Educational Trips and Tours

3rd class went to St. Patrick's Cathedral and the Marsh's Library for Engineer's week. John, a 3rd class pupil, has written a fantastic piece on the trip. Well done John.

The stained glass window art activity and the engineering challenges were a big hit with the boys!



Visit to the National Museum

The 6th class boys enjoyed a visit to the National Museum this term where they learned about and handled artefacts from the Stone Age. They saw a long boat, entirely crafted from a giant oak, skeleton remains and many pieces of gold jewellery, all discovered in many areas of the country. Such visits give real meaning to history lessons.



5. Parent Partnership in Learning – Engineer’s Week.

Ms. Patricia Ferreras, a practicing civil/structural engineer who has worked on projects such as the Dublin Port Tunnel and the IADT building in Dun Laoghaire visited our school for Engineers' Week. Patricia is the mother of Dorian in 4th class and we really appreciate her giving time to our 5th and 6th class pupils.

Patricia gave an interesting workshop to our senior boys on the skills involved in engineering and demonstrated the many uses of different types of engineering.

The boys experimented with applying the knowledge they had gained to build paper towers using their skills and knowledge with some interesting results.

In Ms Bleahene's class Louis & Issac's group was ruled the best tower after withstanding a very robust earthquake test!



6. Parents' Association:

Be Part of Our School

Community!

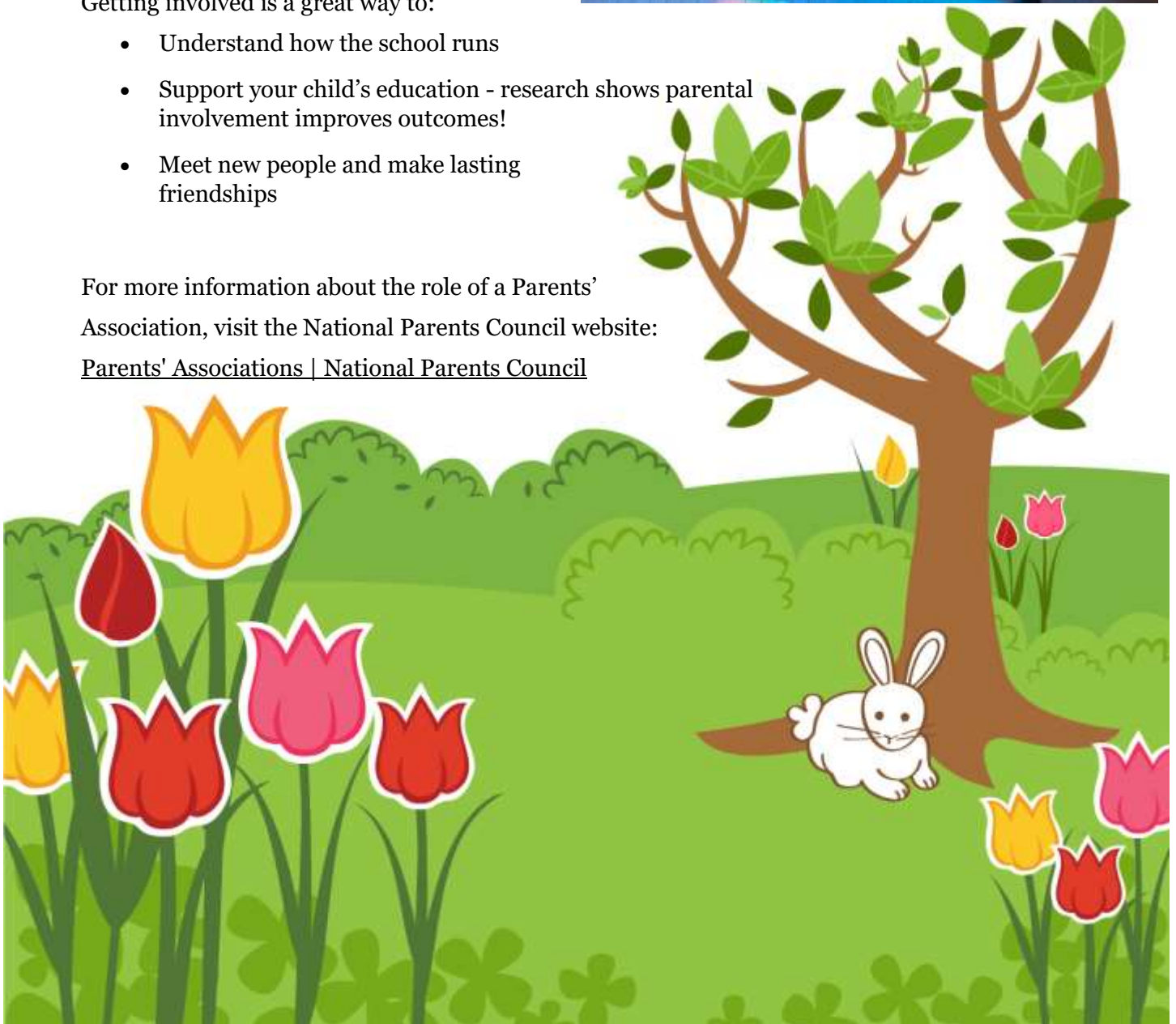
Every parent or guardian of a child in St. Joseph's BNS is automatically a member of the Parents' Association and warmly invited to attend our meetings, held every 4–6 weeks either in the school or online throughout the school year.

Getting involved is a great way to:

- Understand how the school runs
- Support your child's education - research shows parental involvement improves outcomes!
- Meet new people and make lasting friendships

For more information about the role of a Parents' Association, visit the National Parents Council website:

[Parents' Associations | National Parents Council](#)



7. Parent Association (PA) News

The Parents' Association would like to express a huge thank you to everyone who came along to dance the night away at the Spring Social on the 13th of February. It wasn't just great fun and together we raised a massive €5,443 which will go directly to supporting the boys in school. Huge thanks must also go to the following local businesses for their extremely generous donations of the brilliant prizes we had in our raffle:

- Dundrum Blooms, Florist
- Green Man Wines
- South Dublin Vets
- Fiacła Dental Clinic
- Steven An Salon
- The Pet Parlour
- Sandy Nails



PA Presentation of Commemorative Hoodies for the class 2026

Thank you to our parents for the lovely hoodies for our 6th class pupils – they love them!



8. World Book Day and Joeys' Readathon

World Book Day was all about inspiring children and young people to have fun with reading. The boys received their €1.50 book token and spent a lot of time researching which book they might choose.



We had a quiz for our 3rd and 4th class pupils in the Parish Hall. It was great fun and very competitive.

The top 3 teams won Easter Eggs which they are waiting patiently for on Easter Sunday!



Report by Luke, Fionnan and Oscar, 4th Class.

On the 22nd of January we participated in 'Joeys Readathon'. We read all day, from 9am to 2:30pm. Each class participated and we read in a tag system to make sure not a minute was missed.

In between all of that, Ms McCabe unexpectedly announced D.E.A.R Time (Drop Everything and Read). It was lots of fun. We could go anywhere in the classroom to read. Some boys read close to the radiator, a few boys sat on our class trampoline, all to make ourselves more comfortable and to enjoy it even more. On the day, some boys read fictional books, while others read non-fiction. We had an entire day to read whatever we wanted.

There were books by Rick Riordan, Roald Dahl, David Walliams, Adam K, J.K. Rowling and many more. It was a great day. We loved it. To make it even better, every boy brought in 1 or 2 euros for us to buy new books for our class libraries. This means more choice and more books to read.



There are lots of free audio books on YouTube and Spotify including books by Dav Pilkey, Julia Donaldson, David Walliams and Roald Dahl.

The following is a link for infants classes and up to 2nd -
Free audiobooks –

<https://youtu.be/V7DMPxCv974?si=fYSTXnz6EAQjbDwA>

Our favourites are:

The Gruffalo

<https://youtu.be/QhhUE1qe3GA?si=Ngexq5vn1NoLpwE>

Artemis Fowl audiobook links

<https://youtu.be/xs9aRxdsJ2s?si=dtjxWY1bcEBrkk-b>

Astounding Broccoli Boy Audiobook by Frank Cottrell Boyce

<https://youtu.be/7JlpLqu2DMo?si=5zdUzAN-nqhPsOTO>

We also dressed up as our favourite characters in our favourite books. It was a fun day for all!

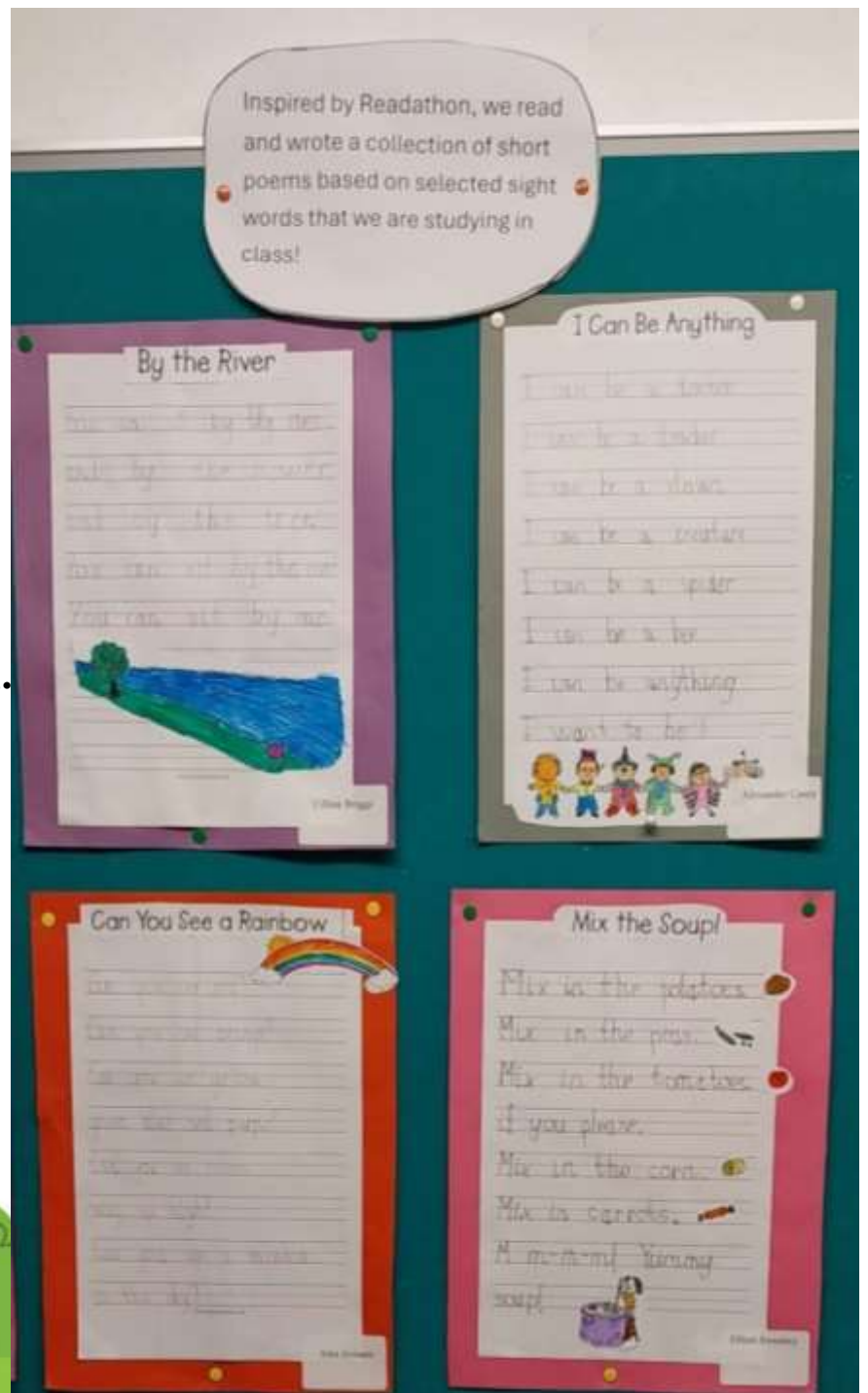


Infant Creative

Writing

inspired by

Joeys' Readathon.



9. Sport, Athletics, Games and Being Active!

Cross Country Race: Terenure College

After two rainy postponements, we were finally blessed with a fine spring day for the Terenure College Cross-Country Races on Friday, February 27th. Every boy from 3rd to 6th was given the opportunity to represent the school as we all had some good training under our belts thanks to Gary. Gary is our Athletics Ireland coach who turns up in the school yard on Wednesday mornings come rain, hail or shine! With up to 200 boys in each race, the competition was very tough with plenty of friendly rivalry from neighbouring schools! From 3rd class Luca got the day off to a great start, holding on for a win after a lung bursting run, leading all the way. We finished with 9 top 10 finishers, including 4 from Ms. Murtagh's class and close on 200 boys completed the run. Our other winner was Ms. Waine who was delighted as her daughter won the 4th class girls race! A special word of thanks to Mr Philip Wallace, Principal of Terenure College and his fantastic team of helpers for running such a great event. Well done everyone! [Photo Gallery click here.](#)



Sport in our Community

We want to thank our sports coaches who contribute so much to keeping everyone fit and on their toes.

Our athletics coach, Donegal man Gary Crossan, is very popular with the boys who are always delighted to see him arriving on his bicycle at 8:50 am and enjoy his no-nonsense sessions even on frosty mornings! A fine distance runner himself, Gary was the leading Irish finisher in the Dublin City Marathon on a number of occasions. He completed a six week block of sessions with 3rd & 4th classes before Christmas and has just completed his six weeks with 5th & 6th just before Easter break. This will be good preparation for cross-country events and Santry athletics coming up next term.

Our tennis coach, Eve McGinn, comes all the way from New Zealand! She gave 3rds & 4ths a great block of classes in the school yard before Halloween and 5th & 6th class will have the opportunity to have lessons in Terenure Sports Club after Easter.

And of course we do love to head up to Bushy Park for our active PE and Science/Nature lessons – roll on the good weather.



Our local GAA clubs, Faughs and Templeogue Synge Street TSS, also provide the school with coaches. This year we want to thank Jen & Heidi from Faughs who provided hurling coaching up the February break. We now have Derry Noonan as games promotion officer with Faughs who will coach our boys right up to the summer break.



Kevin O'Donovan the games promotion officer, from TSS has helped our younger classes to upskill in football!

Thank you Kevin for your continued support over that past few years.



We also have Ariel Robles from Leinster Rugby who coaches our classes in tag rugby. In the next term we also hope to have Fintan from Leinster Cricket for mini cricket.

Boys from 3rd to 6th also get the opportunity to have 8 swimming and water-safety lessons every year in Templeogue College pool. Great for our mental and physical wellness!

Our 3rd class pupils are just starting swimming and water safety classes, so dear parents, now might be a good time to fit in a practice session at the pool where the boys can practice changing into and out of swimming gear and practice remembering all their swimming gear.



Soccer

We have had a competitive run in the league with our school soccer team. We have had some tough battles but were ably led by our captain Robert Carroll. We are proud of our efforts and resilience. The team has shown serious dedication with over 30 players coming to training week on week. We have a couple of games yet so hopefully we can get the elusive win.



Tennis

The Leinster Primary Schools' Tennis League is underway and we have a team of 6 boys with 2 substitute players representing St Joseph's.

Thank you to all the boys who came to the selection/practice sessions in Terenure Tennis Club. It was a great show of support for our school and we appreciate it.

The Leinster Primary Schools' Tennis League is scheduled to take place from 2nd March through to finals day 21st May 2026.

Mr Karl O'Brien a parent in St Joseph's is organising and coordinating the teams involvement in the competition. We wish them the best of luck and most of all hope they enjoy the competition.



10. The Sacrament of Confirmation

Congratulations to the pupils of 6th class who received the Sacrament of Confirmation at a special mass led by Fr. Dave Brannigan on March 26th in St. Joseph's Church.

Special moments included:

Renewal of Baptismal promises where Fr. Dave asked the boys the same questions their parents answered for them years ago when they were baptized.

The laying of hands when Fr Dave stretched out his hands over the boys as they stood with their families, praying and calling down the blessing of Spirit of God.

The anointing with Chrism where Fr Dave made a sign of the cross on each boy's forehead as they stood with their sponsor. Fr Dave said the words 'Be sealed with the Holy Spirit'. As the boys left the altar they were smiling knowing they had received the gifts of the Holy Spirit: Gifts that Fr Dave said would help them in life should they choose to use them.



"The Spirit brings
Love, Joy, Peace, Patience,
Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness,
Gentleness and Self-control."



The Confirmation was a memorable experience for all and we would like to thank Fr Dave, John, Collette and the volunteers in St. Joseph's Parish for all their hard work leading up to this special day. Thanks also to Ms O'Donoghue, our wonderful pianist who played beautifully in accompaniment to the boys singing. Also a special thanks to Rory and Anton our talented 6th class pianists who wowed us with their performances. The 6th class choir sang beautifully and received a well-deserved spontaneous round of applause for their rendition of The Cloud's Veil by L. Lawton.



A big shout out of gratitude to the 6th class teachers Ms. Harte and Ms Bleahene for getting the boys ready for this special time in their lives while making it fun and meaningful for them. Also thanks is due to those working in the background: Mr. Ring, Mary and Jerry who kept a watchful eye on all and fixed any glitches along the way.



The boys looked very smart on their Confirmation day, especially in their school blazers, thanks to the PA who helped with the Blazer Rental scheme and fitted the boys for their blazers.



11. Well-being and Creativity

In February we celebrated Well-being and Creativity Week, a special time dedicated to encouraging creativity while exploring different aspects of wellbeing. The boys had a wonderful week filled with fun, imagination, and new experiences that supported both their emotional and creative development.

Throughout the week, the children participated in a variety of engaging creative workshops. These included play therapy, art, drama, yoga, and forest camp activities.

Each workshop offered the boys the opportunity to express themselves, build confidence, and discover new ways to relax, reflect, and connect with others.



A particular highlight of the week was the Samba drumming experience in the hall. Samba drums were set up for the students, and each class had the chance to experiment with rhythm and sound. The boys worked together to create and perform vibrant musical pieces, filling the hall with energy and excitement. Creativity and wellbeing also extended beyond the classroom through daily creative and wellbeing homework. The boys embraced these activities enthusiastically, spending time making art, performing drama, baking and cooking, creating imaginative items from recycled materials, and even playing musical instruments. These tasks encouraged the children to share creative moments with their families while continuing to explore wellbeing in fun and meaningful ways.



During the school day, there was a strong emphasis on play, creativity, and positive wellbeing strategies. The pupils were encouraged to practise mindfulness, gratitude, kindness, and thoughtfulness in their daily interactions. The aim was to create a supportive and uplifting environment where every child could feel happy, valued, and inspired.

Each day also included fun whole-school activities that brought plenty of laughter and excitement. These included daily jokes, a Teddy and Oodie Day, Crazy Hair Day, Talent Shows, and Comfy Slippers or Socks Day. These light-hearted events helped to build a sense of community and added to the joyful atmosphere throughout the week.

There were also daily raffles with prizes for both staff and students, which added an extra element of anticipation and celebration each day.



Over the intercom, Ms McCabe shared inspiring wellbeing messages and helpful information with the school community. She also surprised everyone with a few “drop everything and dance” moments, encouraging students and staff to take a break, move, and enjoy the music together. These spontaneous dance sessions helped to lift energy levels and create a vibrant and positive atmosphere around the school.

Wellbeing and Creativity Week provided a valuable opportunity for the boys to explore wellbeing in new and imaginative ways. The activities encouraged collaboration, self-expression, fun, and connection, making the week a memorable and enriching experience for everyone involved.



Forest Learning! By Toby 6th class.

For Creative Well-being week, we got a taste of forest school. We started off the fun day when we met Ruairí, his dog Ashdubh and Aidan, a student of his weekly forest school situated in the Dodder area.

The first place we were brought was a hazel tree where we were able to try some catkins, an edible but not so delicious cluster of flowers.

Ruairí showed us the Dutchman's pipe, a poisonous plant that can swallow flies and other small animals.

We then got to go on a quick adventure through the forest and down a steep muddy hill which was extremely fun. After doing this I would recommend wearing waterproofs and bringing a spare pair of clothes.

The next thing we learned was about the seasons and the Summer and Winter solstice. Winter is the 21st of December and Summer is June 20th.

To finish off the fun experience, we got to swing each other around in two hammocks that Ruairi taught us to put up. After doing this experience, I would recommend it to all people who love and want to learn about nature.



12. Credit Union Quiz

Despite the terribly wet weather our 4 school quiz teams turned up to the Knocklyon Primary School Hall for the annual Credit Union Quiz generously sponsored and organised by Heritage CU Rathfarnham. We very much appreciate the time and effort it took families to get there and are proud of how our boys conducted themselves during the quiz.

There was strong competition at all levels but our boys showed resilience and determination, and scored well in all areas. They didn't take home any silver ware, but they still had a lot of fun. Best on the night was our senior team: Toby, Cian and Dylan led by Leo. They finished 4th out of the 28 teams with 53 out of 72 difficult questions based on a broad range of topics including chemical symbols, Nobel prizes, GDP, Dogman, Taylor Swift, Peppa Pig, etc.

Our thanks to everyone who helped make this an enjoyable occasion especially Michelle, Laura and Rita from the Credit Union.



13. Student Council Report

The Student Council has been busy working on several projects recently. We organised the board games available for the older classes and asked for donations, receiving a fantastic response from many families. We will use the money raised from our Halloween fundraiser to buy some new games. As part of this, we spent time budgeting and deciding which games we can afford with the money raised.

We have also begun preparing for Cultural Diversity Day. Each class has been assigned a country, and after Easter we will host a day where classes will display and showcase their countries, celebrating the many cultures in our school. We're really excited for this event and hope that it goes well.

The Student Council also participated in reviewing the School's Code of Behaviour and gave input into changes that could be made. The discussion was lively and covered all points in the existing Behaviour Code.

The boys acknowledged the need for the code to keep us safe and that all should be reminded of the simple rules such as walking indoors, walking in line and putting bikes and scooters neatly away.



14. Green School Report

The Green Schools team has been very busy over the last few months. In between the many, many, many rain showers, the boys have been working hard towards gaining our 10th Green Schools Flag for St Joseph's.

Over the past two years, we have focused on ways to improve our activities and knowledge for our flag theme, *Global Citizenship, Food and Biodiversity*. We planted flowers including daffodils and crocuses. We painted our Bug Hotel and filled it with twigs to attract insects. Our bird feeders are made out of recycled materials that the boys collected. We attached a twig or pencil for the birds to sit on while they have a snack!

We had our Green Schools visit and inspection in February from a member of Dublin City Council. We showed off our lovely work and hope to hear back soon about securing our next Green Schools' Flag !



15. Seachtain na Gaeilge

An tseachtain seo chaite bhí ócáidí faoi leith ar siúil sa scoil le haghaidh Seachtain na Gaeilge. Ár mbuíochas do Ms O' Riordan a rinne rince "Ballaí Luimní" leis na ranganna. Freisin do Ms.

Larmer a d'eagraigh an "Hooley Mór" le ceol agus rince ó ceoltóirí a tháinig ar cuairt chugainn agus cúpla ceoltóirí sár-mhaith atá againn sa scoil. Ar an Aoine bhí Tráth na gCeist dháthangach againn agus bhuaigh foireann Liam D le cabhair ó Levi, Peter & Colm.

Seachtain na Gaeilge was the perfect opportunity to embrace the Irish culture and everything that represents our country.

Activities ranged from Irish dancing and a 4th class céilí, a Tráth na gCeist for rang a cúig agus rang a sé and a concert 'An Hooley Mór' for the whole school to end a great week. Boys from Junior Infants to 6th class performed poems and songs as Ghaeilge. A few boys also demonstrated their trad music prowess on the tin whistle, concertina and mandolin. We were also very lucky to have a visiting trad band who played, and the boys happily clapped along with them.



The Happiest Days are our School Days. 😊

Enjoy the Easter Break!

