

Reminder: Ballymurn 5k Fun Run

The 10th annual Ballymurn 5k fun run will now take place on Saturday 18th May with the race starting at 6.30pm. The children have been busy practising their laps and increasing their fitness for the event! If you had already registered for the original date you don't need to do anything further but if you still have to register please do so by clicking on this link <https://www.popupraces.ie/race/ballymurn-5k-fun-run-walk-2024/>



Hurling 365

Hurling 365 continues each Tuesday and Thursday morning. It is not too late for children to come along to 365 all they need to do is turn up on their designated morning. Tuesday morning's session is for Senior Infants to 2nd class, and Thursday morning's session is for 3rd-6th class. We have now secured the hall for wet/icy mornings so hurling 365 can go ahead in any weather. A huge thank you to the parents who volunteer to make this happen, and to Leanna for coordinating it all. If any other parent could help out, as volunteer numbers are quite low, please contact Leanna for further information.

Attendance

Well done to Ms. Ormonde's class who had the best attendance in school for the month of January with attendance of 99%. Each month we will celebrate the achievements of the class who has the highest attendance rate at school. There is a huge national drive to increase school attendance, as rates have really declined over the past few years. We have seen the same happen in our school and urge all families to ensure that children are in school every day, except in the case of illness, or an urgent family reason.

FAI Primary 5-Aside

On Tuesday 9th April we had a boys and a girls team travel to North End Pitch in Wexford to take part in the qualifiers for the regional. The girl's team made history for our school being the very first all-girls team to take part in the competition which is fantastic and a testament to the hard work being put into girls soccer by our local soccer club Ballymurn Celtic. We must also give a special mention of thanks to Ballymurn Celtic coach Vinnie Quirke for managing the girls team, it is very much appreciated. Teacher Ms Kehoe managed the boys team.

Both teams had a fantastic day out and played some amazing soccer but unfortunately neither team qualified for the regional finals.



Standardised Testing

Standardised Testing takes place in May. These are tests that must be completed by all schools and the results submitted to the Department of Education. All pupils need to complete these tests, and therefore we ask that every effort is made to make sure that your child is in school on the days these take place, as catch up testing has to be completed on an individual basis by our Special Education Teacher, which greatly takes from support time for students. The testing dates are as follows:

- English: 1st-6th Class: Tuesday 14th May
- Gaeilge: 2nd -6th Class: Thursday 16th May
- Maths: 1st- 6th Class Tuesday 21st May

Autism Acceptance and Appreciation Week

All pupils in our school celebrated autism acceptance and appreciation week last week. The whole school learned the song 'Perfect' by Ed Sheeran with Lámh signs and performed it together at assembly on Friday. All children wore colourful clothes on Friday to show their acceptance of autism and our assembly was a sea of colours as a result. Some of our 5th & 6th class pupils joined the Crescent Class for a buddy break where they engaged in the special interests of the pupils, chatting with them and playing with them. The kindness of our senior pupils is always so lovely to see. The pupils in every class also watched an episode of the latest season of 'Dizzy Deliveries' where they learned some more new Lámh signs. The children all watched videos to help them understand autism and the sensory challenges that can come with it, helping them to accept and appreciate autistic pupils. Well done to each and every pupil in the school for your participation in autism awareness and appreciation week.

Primary School Sports: Athletics

The annual Wexford Primary School Sports takes place on Wednesday 22nd May at Enniscorthy Sports Hub for pupils from 1st class upwards. Qualifying heats will take place in school next week at some stage from Tuesday onwards, depending on Rackard League fixtures. They will definitely be completed before the May break, so that entry forms can be submitted on time.

Attendance

A reminder to all about the importance of school attendance. We really want to see all pupils in school every day, unless they are unwell. Each month, the class with the highest attendance receives a prize. For the month of March Ms Sutton's 3rd class had the highest rate of attendance at 96.1%.

First Holy Communion

Our 2nd Class pupils will receive the sacrament of First Holy Communion in the Church of the Assumption and St. Malachy on Saturday next, April 27th. The school community extends their best wishes to all the boys and girls and we hope all families have a lovely day. Thank you so much to their class teachers and SNAs who have put so much effort into ensuring their big day will be a success. A huge well done to all the boys and girls who have been practising with Ms. Lawlor and Ms. Sheehan for the choir.

Parents Association Easter Raffle

A huge thank you to everyone who bought tickets for the recent Parents' Association Easter raffle. €1990.00 was raised which will be spent on items to benefit the children, and the running costs of the P.A. A very sincere thank you also to all of those who sponsored prizes for the raffle.

Rackard League

The girls Rackard League is due to commence next week and details will be sent out to parents before Friday.

The boys were defeated by a very strong Oylegate Glenbrien team last week and played Taghmon Camross yesterday which also ended in defeat for the boys unfortunately but credit to them they never gave up! The boys will now play in the knockout rounds of Roinn D, match details to follow.

Hot School Lunches

Since Easter, the children have received hot school lunches each day, which they have been really enjoying so far. It is wonderful initiative to see each child receive a hot meal free of charge each

day. A reminder to parents to discuss with children what items they like from the menu, and to submit menu changes by Thursday each week.

Absences -Leanna has sent a text to all families containing the link for our back to school form, which must be filled in each time your child returns following an absence from school. This link is also available on our website, [ballymurnns.ie](https://forms.gle/zeR2ZT9b9BnrScsr5), under the "Useful Information" tab. <https://forms.gle/zeR2ZT9b9BnrScsr5> As always, we must remind parents that we are obliged by law to report instances where children have been absent for a cumulative total of twenty days or more during the school year to Tusla.

School Tours

School Tours will take place on the following dates for each class. Leanna has emailed parents to online form to fill in (or you can click on the links below) to let us know if your child will be going on their school tour. When we have final numbers, exact costs can be worked out and will be issued to parents soon.

- May 31st: 4th - 6th Class Clara Lara <https://forms.gle/jykPJFgTfDGFVyZ16>
- June 11th: Woodfield House: Crescent Class, Junior Infants, Senior Infants and 1st Class <https://forms.gle/QTD9JTg2wxfxvTy1A>
- June 12th: 2nd and 3rd Class: <https://forms.gle/2sYaMzfqf9WVzfTx5>

Enrolment

Our enrolment process for September 2024 has now concluded but we are still taking enrolments for our mainstream classes.

Morning Supervision- School gates do not open until 9.10am, and no pupils should be on the premises before this. Morning supervision is outdoors, and on wet days, children must wait in the shelter until school opens at 9.20am.

Parking- Please remember to park with care on the street outside the school. Do not double park or block access to staff cars. The car park spaces provided are for staff use and the school bus only. We also ask that people please do not park directly opposite the school, as our bus for pupils with Special Educational Needs parks there. Please do not park in these spaces when dropping off or collecting your child from school. Please be conscious of how/where you park, taking the children's safety into account at all times.

Communication - Parents are reminded that if you have a concern/issue which you would like to raise with the school; you must make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher, through the school office.

Dates / Upcoming Events:

April

- 27th April - First Holy Communion 11am
- 29th April - Confirmation Retreat

May

- 6th -10th May - School closed
- 14th May - English Standardised Testing
- 16th May - Gaeilge Standardised Testing
- 18th May - 5K Fun Run 6.30pm
- 21st May - Maths Standardised Testing
- 22nd May - Primary Schools Athletics Day in Enniscorthy
- 31st May - Senior Tour Clara Lara

June

- 7th June - Confirmation 11am
- 18th June - Tuesday Sports Day
- 24th June - Monday 6th Class Graduation 7pm
- 26th June - School Closes at 12.15pm for Summer Holidays

Class Reports

Ms O'Gorman's Junior & Senior Infants

March and April have been really busy months in Junior and Senior Infants.

We we've had some really fun Aistear themes: 'The Dentist', 'The Farm' and we are now learning about 'The Garden Centre'. The children have done some beautiful pieces of Art around these themes, including building some models of their mouths, and they also entered a Green Schools Art competition entitled 'The Wild Life of Hedgerows'.

We've been learning about Money in Maths, and although cash isn't as common as it once was, I'd really encourage parents to give children the opportunity to use some coins in the shop for real life experience of using cash.

In Irish, we covered the themes 'Lá le Pádraig'(St. Patrick's Day), 'An Cháisc' (Easter) and 'An Teilifís'(The Television). The children's ability to converse as Gaeilge is really coming on and they are to be commended for their hard work in class. We had a super Seachtain na Gaeilge and did loads of lovely activities and Irish dancing.

For P.E., they are really enjoying their hurling sessions with Tracey and athletics with Sinead. We've also completed the Stay Safe programme. In Science, the children have learned all about the strands of Light and Forces and done various experiments in this area.

In English, we have commenced work on procedural writing, and continue to do lots of free writing, and practising our letter formation and dictation. We are working on the comprehension skill of 'making connections', and have recently worked on some lovely stories to develop this skill, such as 'The Bear Who Came to Babysit' and 'Five Minutes Peace'.

We're hoping for some lovely weather for the remainder of the year, so that we get the chance to go outside much more.

Ms Lawlor's Senior Infants & 1st Class

Our themes in learning have been focused on Spring time and the children enjoyed learning all about the farm and young animals over the past few weeks. We had a very busy farm and farm shop in the role play area. The children grew some seeds which have sprouted so they hope to take them home this week. In art the children have created beautiful cherry blossom trees and daffodils.

Last week we celebrated Autism Awareness and Appreciation Week. The children really enjoyed learning some new Lámh signs on Dizzy Deliveries and they also sang Ed Sheeran's song *Perfect* using their lámh signs. We also enjoyed learning more about the ocean during Marine Week. The children made a display of what a clean ocean should look like.

The children's hurling skills are improving week by week and they also began athletics coaching last week too which is great fun. In music lessons we've been learning all about rhythm and the children have been performing some songs such as *The Radetsky March* using our rhythm sticks.

If there are any used cereal boxes at home I'd gladly take them for future art and craft activities!

Ms Sutton's 2nd & 3rd Class

2nd and 3rd class have been busy with lots of activities over the last two months. The class really enjoy reading and we completed our class novel *Fantastic Mr Fox*. We also watched the movie afterwards which we found very interesting as it was very different to the depiction of the story in the book.

We have been enjoying *Battle of the Books* where we read two picture books at the end of each day and the class pick which book is their favourite. We will narrow the books down to our favourite picture book which we will read to the infant classes.

In our Maths lessons we worked on *Area* and we estimated and measured which object has the greatest/smallest surface area. The children covered various objects with unifix cubes and counted how many blocks it took to cover each one. We also have been acting as Maths Detectives to spot words to help us with our number and word problems. We will continue working on daily tables games to practice the speed and knowledge of our tables in a fun way.

During *Seachtain na Gaeilge* the class learned the Haka as *Gaeilge* and they really enjoyed performing for the school. We also learned the National Anthem and according to the children they have been singing it with confidence in Wexford park. *Seachtain na Gaeilge* was full of fun activities including a *Céilí* which was full of energy and laughter.

In History, the class really enjoyed learning about the story of *The Wooden Horse of Troy*. We had lots of interesting discussions about the battle between the Trojans and the Greeks. The class wrote letters through the eyes of the soldiers and tea stained them to make them look old and authentic. We are lucky to have Ms Mooney with us at the moment and she is very busy with fun experiments and hands on activities. She is working with the class on Capacity this week so there is lots of water activity, they will also be growing their own seeds in class.

Of course the biggest event for 2nd class is our First Holy Communion and we have been busy preparing every day with the help from 3rd class who are experts from last year. We are very excited for Saturday. The children really deserve to have a lovely occasion and I wish everyone a wonderful day.

Ms Kehoe's 4th & 5th Class

It has been another busy two months in the fourth and fifth class classroom. In March we had a busy week with Seachtaine na Gaeilge activities. We celebrated Irish culture and the language through games, dance and learning. Ms. Ormonde brought the pupils for an Irish Dancing lesson. The pupils practiced the 'Walls of Limerick' and 'The Bridge of Athlone' in the lesson. During assembly on the Friday of Seachtaine na Gaeilge all classes put on a performance connected to Irish culture, 4th and 5th class sang 'Isle of Hope, Isle of Tears' after learning about emigration in Ireland through the years.

We also learned about the Renaissance in history. We looked at how it started in Italy and some of the very famous artists and sculptors like da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael. The pupils carried out some of their own research on iPads and it is displayed in our classroom.

The Living Arts programme has come to an end. To wrap it up we were invited into an exhibition of the pupil's work. We took a trip to Wexford to the County Council first where there was art on display in the galleries by Irish Artists. After, we went to the Arts Centre in Cornmarket where the pupil's could see their work. It is beautifully displayed in the Centre and it is open for all to go to see it over the next few weeks. The official opening of it is this Saturday the 26th of April.

The pupils are enjoying GAA sessions with Tracy every Thursday morning still. We have also started an athletics session with Sinéad on Friday mornings. It is great to have lots of activity now that the fine weather is here.

In English we have moved onto explanation writing the pupils have explored space and volcanoes so far. Next week the pupils will research topics of interest to explain and write about.

Earth Day has just past so we have began revising Global Warming and the impact it has. We have just begun a mini class project on the subject and aim to have a nice display on the topic in our classroom to raise awareness about it.

We are getting busier preparing for the Confirmation also. Fr. Finn has visited the pupils and we have our trip to Ballyvaloo for a retreat scheduled for next week.

Ms Sheehan's 5th & 6th Class

In English we continued our narrative genre we explored some poetry and developed our discussion genre. In March we enjoyed Seachtain na Gaeilge and there were some great gaelgoirs in the room! We played lots of fun games learned new songs and poems and wrote about their lives.

In maths we have been learning about percentages and problem-solving. We have also been learning about circles, directed numbers and at the moment kids are doing very well with mathematical rules and properties.

In SESE we explored the history of the Greeks and the Romans. We have been looking at Marine life learning about the oceans and the children have enjoyed webinars last during Marine week.

The children continue to take part in the Marathon challenge: they are now completing 18 laps a day so they will all be fit and ready for the upcoming 5km next month.

We had a trip to see our art exhibited in the Wexford arts centre last Wednesday. It was amazing and well worth a visit if you are in Wexford. 😊

Ms Ormonde's Crescent Class

The Crescent Class have been busy, as always, over the past two months. Two of the children in our class, Evie & James are making their First Holy Communion this week and as a class we have been helping them to prepare by practising songs and completing art projects. We are all very excited for your big day on Saturday and look forward to celebrating with you.

In class our theme has been 'dinosaurs' this month and we have been making dinosaur footprints, cleaning messy dinosaurs during sensory play, listening to dinosaur stories and learning facts about the size dinosaurs once were. In March our theme was 'spring' and the children were planting seeds, going on Easter egg hunts and making spring animals using junk art.

We have also had Chiara back for music therapy sessions over the past two weeks and we have been absolutely loving this. Our in-house pianist, Cristian, is learning some new tunes from her and we are all engaging with instruments such as drums, guitar, ukulele and lots of varieties of shakers.

Message from Bus Éireann & The Department of Education Re: School Transport Applications

Information for families regarding School Transport Application Process for 2024/25 School Year

New applications for the 2024/25 school year

The Bus Éireann family portal is now open for new applications for school transport services for the 2024/25 school year. New applications are considered as:

- Students who will be attending junior infants in primary school or first year in post-primary school for the first time in 2024.
- Students that did not apply for school transport in previous school year(s).
- Students that may move home address or will be attending a new school in the 2024/25 school year

The closing date for new applications is **Friday 26 April 2024**. Any new applications made after the closing date are **considered late applications**. A late application may mean that a ticket is not available.

All applicants - Payment/medical card details - closing date 7 June 2024

This year, families can apply and pay /enter medical card details in one step from the date the portal opens. This means new and existing applicants can pay/enter medical card details from now until 7 June 2024.

The Bus Éireann family portal is now open to accept payments/medical card details **until 7 June 2024**. Payments made after the deadline date **will be deemed late**. A late payment may mean that a ticket is not available.

The portal will close from 7 June 2024 for a 3-week period to allow Bus Éireann time to plan for the new school year.

Payments/medical card details must be submitted for:

- new applicants, and;
- pupils who have previously applied/availed of school transport and require a seat on a service for the 24/25 school year.

Children (who are eligible for school transport) and who possess valid medical cards (GMS Scheme) are exempt from paying the annual charge however, their medical card details must be submitted to Bus Éireann. Bus Éireann are now accepting medical card details until 7 June 2024. Medical card details received after 7 of June deadline are considered late.

Customer Call Centre

Bus Éireann has put in place a dedicated customer care call centre to assist families specifically with School Transport queries during the busy summer period. Families that have queries can contact the call centre on: LoCall 0818 919

Families can also contact Bus Éireann their website: www.buseireann.ie/schooltransport by submitting a query via: <https://www.buseireann.ie/inner.php?id=769>,

Updates on the application process can be found on Gov.ie/schooltransport and on buseireann.ie/schooltransport

Eligibility

Children are eligible for transport at primary level where they reside not less than 3.2 kilometres from and are attending their nearest national school, as determined by the Department/Bus Éireann, having regard to ethos and language

and at post-primary level where they reside not less than 4.8 kilometres from and are attending their nearest post-primary school/education centre as determined by the Department/Bus Éireann, having regard to ethos and language.

- Children who are eligible for school transport and who have completed the application and payment process on time will be accommodated on school transport services where such services are in operation and where capacity exists.

- Children who are not eligible for school transport, but who complete the application and payment process on time, will be considered for spare seats that may exist after eligible children have been facilitated; such seats are referred to as concessionary seats.

- Because of the nature of concessionary transport for non-eligible children and the priority of providing places for eligible children, there may be an excess of demand over supply for concessionary places, in these cases Bus Éireann will allocate tickets for spare seats using an agreed selection process.

- In addition, temporary alleviation measures will continue for the 2024/2025 school year, this means that transport will be provided, where such services are in operation and where capacity exists, for pupils who are eligible for transport to their nearest school and are attending their second nearest school/post primary centre and who apply and pay on time.

Ticket Charges

For the 2024/25 school year charges of €50 per student at primary level and €75 per student at post-primary level will apply, with a cap per family of €125. Eligible children with a full medical card and children who are eligible for SEN transport services remain exempt from the annual ticket charge.

School Transport Scheme Review

A review of the School Transport Scheme has been completed. This review was conducted with a view to examining the current scheme, its broader effectiveness, and sustainability and to ensure it services students and their families adequately.

The School Transport Scheme 2030 report has now been published, which marks the largest review of the School Transport Scheme since it was established in 1967. The Government is committed to working to achieve the report's recommendation of expanding access to the scheme so that an additional 100,000 pupils can be carried by 2030. Throughout the review, the value of the School Transport Scheme to both families and in supporting wider Government policies has been very apparent. In summary, school transport not only plays an important part in supporting children's access to education, but it also aligns to wider Government objectives.

Overall, the recommended changes to the future operation of the Scheme concern:

- expansion of the current eligibility criteria,

- addressing current operational challenges
- charges and grants and
- over time, moving towards better integration with public transport to ensure optimum value for money to the Exchequer

A phased implementation of the review's recommendations will commence in September 2024. This will include a shared effort between my Department and the Department of Transport to pilot and introduce greater integration of the roll out of transport networks with school transport routes, with a view to expanding provision of transport and reducing the reliance over time on individual car trips for school journeys. It is intended subject to resources to commence implementing the revised eligibility criteria in the 2025/2026 school year.