

Scoil Aireagail Newsletter



September
October 2023

PRINCIPAL HELEN MCTIGHE'S MESSAGE

Dear parents/guardians and students,

As the leaves begin to change and nights get colder, I am delighted to welcome you to our newsletter. It's a time of year when we reflect on our journey so far and look ahead to the exciting possibilities that lie before us. I want to take the opportunity to emphasize the vital aspects of student attendance and motivation, both of which play a significant role in our students' educational experiences.

The importance of student attendance

At the heart of every successful school journey is consistent and punctual attendance. This year, we have been closely monitoring student attendance, and I'm pleased to report that we have seen a positive trend. However, it is early in the school year, and we must continue to prioritise this critical aspect of education and encourage your children to attend school consistently and on time.

Motivation: The key to success

In addition to attendance, motivation is a driving force behind student success. All students enjoyed a two-hour motivation workshop with *Rayse the Game* on Thursday 19th of October. The accompany Parent Pep Talk will take place via zoom on Thursday 26th October at 7.30pm. **Zoom link has been emailed to parents.** Motivated students are more likely to set goals, persevere through challenges and reach their potential. Here are some strategies to encourage and maintain student motivation:

1. **Set goals:** Help your child set both short-term and long-term goals. These goals should be specific, achievable, and tailored to their interests and aspirations. The pursuit of these goals will keep them motivated. **Block Two of evening study will begin on Monday 6th of November** and run until the Christmas holidays. All students welcome to attend.
2. **Celebrate achievements:** Recognise and celebrate your child's achievements, no matter how small. This positive reinforcement boosts self-esteem and motivation.
3. **Stay connected:** Maintain open lines of communication with the school. The dates of the parent teacher meetings are in your child's school diary. Working together as a team can help identify any potential barriers to motivation and address them promptly.
4. **Encourage extracurricular activities:** Participation in clubs, sports, and other extracurricular activities can boost motivation, as it provides an opportunity for students to build self-esteem and to pursue their interests outside the classroom. This term we have expanded our extra-curricular activities to include debating competitions and lunchtime computer, photography and chess clubs.

As always, I want to thank you for your unwavering support. Together, we will nurture a generation of students who are motivated, full of personality, and prepared to conquer the challenges of the future. Wishing you all a very happy Halloween.

Helen McTighe

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Our new first year students have had a busy term finding their feet and settling into Scoil Aireagail. They are being helped and supported by their 6th year Cairdeas mentors who meet with them for fun activities to develop positive relationships with them. Our first year parents and guardians were welcomed into the school on October 3rd to meet with all the staff for an information evening followed by a cup of tea and a chat.

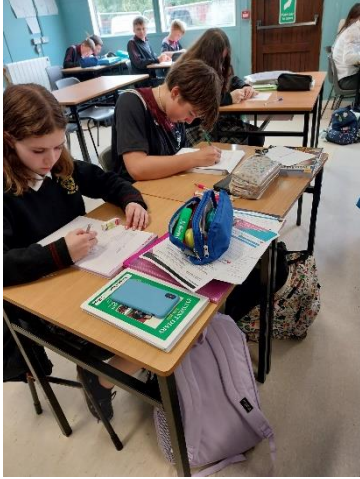




LEARNING AND TEACHING



In **HISTORY** class first years were busy learning about the work of an archaeologist, Students searched for artefacts and undertook excavation works on Cookies.



In **ART** class first year students got to learn about clay by designing and creating a clay tile.

2nd year **ART** students were introduced to artist Sheila Jordan who will complete a *residency in education programme* with them over the coming weeks. Sheila Jordan works as a mixed media artist and plans to do a ceramic project with the group. This is the beginning of an exciting teacher/artist partnership bringing arts and education together through the *Blast ETB funding project*.



Our 1st Year **BUSINESS** students were busy using their creativity skills to analyse and deepen their understanding of the key terms 'Opportunity Cost' and 'Financial Cost'. They first created a short story to apply their understanding of the concepts. Next, they created comic strips to bring their stories to life! A great mix of humour, creativity and understanding were on display.



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LEARNING AND TEACHING



Back by popular demand is our 'Tuesday Tunes' music slot where each week our **MUSIC** students record a live performance. 'Tuesday Tunes' showcases the amazing musical talent in our school. To view performances of Rihanna's 'Stay' and Adele's 'Rolling in the Deep' please scan the QR CODE.



Our Transition Year and sixth Year **GEOGRAPHY** students undertook a field study in Kilfarrasy beach. They observed and investigated the processes of coastal erosion active along this coastline. The conditions were perfect for such a study where storm waves were clearly evident. This study hugely improved students' understanding of coastal processes.



Congratulations to the class of 2023 who received their **LEAVING CERTIFICATE RESULTS** and who have now started on the next stage of their education and working life. We have had students who have achieved over 550 points. We take great pride in this, but we know that our students are more than the points they achieve. Graduates of Scoil Aireagail are articulate, confident, creative, well-rounded and more than a number. We are so proud of them all.



In September, our 6th year student of the year from the class of 2023, Ciara Walsh, and our school principal, Helen McTighe, and deputy principal Shane Fallon, attended the **KCETB STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARDS**.

We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Ciara on this tremendous achievement. Her journey in Scoil Aireagail has been marked by hard work, resilience and a genuine passion for learning. Ciara has not only excelled academically but has been an incredible role model and inspiration for her peers both on and off the camogie pitch. Well done, Ciara.





LEARNING AND TEACHING



JUNIOR CYCLE RESULTS

Congratulations to all the students who received their Junior Cycle results on Wednesday, October 18th. They have worked hard and overcome many challenges over the years. We are all proud of their achievements.



JUNIOR AND LEAVING CERTIFICATE OCTOBER HOUSE EXAMS

Our third and sixth year students are completing their October house exams this week. These exams help our students prepare for their final exams in June. Students will receive important feedback from their teachers following the exams which will allow students to identify their strengths and highlight weaknesses. This gives them the opportunity to take the necessary steps to continue improving.

SCOIL AIREAGAIL STUDENTS ATTEND STUDY AND MOTIVATION WORKSHOPS

On Thursday October 19th all our students attended workshops on Motivation and Study Skills facilitated by Ray Langan from Rayse the Game.

The mission of RAYSE THE GAME is to motivate, inspire and impact as many students, parents, and teachers as possible.

In his workshops Ray teaches his renowned 30-Minute Study Sprint and WHIZGRID note-taking method in a way that entertains and engages young people. This helps foster a growth mindset. Helping students go from anxious and overwhelmed to calm and confident is the aim of the workshop. With over 15 years and 10,000 hours experience in schools and classrooms RAYSE THE GAME has become the most in-demand motivational study skills programme in Ireland.





STUDENT LEADERSHIP



STUDENT COUNCIL

STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS 2023 2024

Chairperson: Michael O Shea (6th year)
Vice Chair: Amy Prendergast (6th year)
Secretary: Ruth Cass Hennessy (5th year)
Vice secretary: Megan Walsh (2nd year)
Public Relations Officer (PRO): Eoin Aylward (5th year)
Vice PRO: Caoimhe Corcoran (3rd year)
Treasurer: Holly Long (4th year)
Vice Treasurer: Cathal Coogan (4th year)
 Alanna Geraghty (1st year)
 David Walsh (1st year)
 Cameron Walsh (3rd year)
 Recce Drennan (2nd year)

Student Council Upcoming events:

- Our 1st, 2nd and 5th Years will be attending the Comhairle Na Nóg training in Langton's Hotel in Kilkenny.
- Meeting with Ms McTighe re action plan before publication to the whole school.



Scoil Aireagail Student Council would like to thank everyone who ran in the recent elections. There was unprecedented demand and congratulations to our newest and re-elected members. We have devised an action plan which consists of many fundraiser events, where we come together as a whole school community to raise money for both charities and our school. Our first event took place on Friday 13th of October where we asked everyone to wear green in support of both the Irish Rugby Team and mental health awareness week. We raised €200 which will go towards extra-curricular activities in our school. It has been proven that extra-curricular improve student's mental health. We also attended the KCETB Official Student Council Training Day held in the Springhill Court Hotel which helped all members understand their specific roles within the Student Council.

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STUDENT LEADERSHIP



SCHOOL PREFECTS

Student Prefects are selected in fifth and sixth year. They represent their class group and school at school events. They are selected by an interview process and seek to represent the school ethos.

Three key roles:

1. Prefect as a student leader and mentor
2. Prefect as an example to other students
3. Prefect as an ambassador for the school



SCHOOL PREFECTS 2023 2024

Fifth Year	Max O'Keeffe	Saskia Sutton
Sixth Year	Jagoda Kieczka	Kieran Crowley

SIXTH YEAR PREFECT REFLECTION

"At the start of the school year, Kieran Crowley and I were given the opportunity of speaking to the parents at our schools annual Open Night, getting to share our thoughts on the school, and how it has helped shape us into who we are today.

While it may have been daunting firstly stepping into the spotlight as 6th year prefects, we found it a great honour to be chosen by our teachers and a privilege to take on the role of leaders, representing the school and setting an example for our fellow students.

Being prefects has allowed us to greatly develop our confidence and communication skills, as we were also granted the pleasure of welcoming back Oscar-winning Colbert Fennelly, a former student of Scoil Aireagail.

It was a wonderful experience for us, one which I am certain will be of great help in upcoming endeavours. As we reach the end of the first term, I look forward to seeing how we will continue to demonstrate our dedication and fulfil our duty. I hope that we can continue to positively impact our schools caring environment and find ways to empower our fellow peers." **Jagoda Kieczka, sixth year prefect.**



CAIRDEAS MENTORING PROGRAMME

The Cairdeas programme is a mentoring programme involving 6th and 1st Year students. The 6th Year students act as mentors to 1st Year students during their first year in Scoil Aireagail. The programme is designed to assist 1st Year students in the transition from primary to secondary school. It also aims to promote and develop leadership capacities among the participating 6th year students.





EXTRACURRICULAR



HURLING

Junior hurlers got off to an excellent start to their junior hurling campaign with a comprehensive victory against Coláiste Abbain. There were some excellent displays of interplay with the final score of 4-21 to 4-8.



HANDBALL

Girls Leinster 60 x 30 U16 Doubles Handball

Two of our 3rd year students, Grace Fitzpatrick and Caoimhe Corcoran competed in the Leinster 60 x 30 u16 girls doubles handball at the start of October. They were unfortunate to lose out after a hard-fought game against a very good Grennan College team. The girls will use this experience next year when they are underage again. They now look forward to the 40 x 20 and one wall competitions they will compete in later in the year.



SENIOR SOCCER

Our senior girls' and boys' soccer teams have gotten off to an excellent start to the Kilkenny Soccer League securing victories in both their matches.

Their opening game was against Coláiste Pobail Osraí. The girls secured a decisive victory with a final result of 6 goals to 1. Abbie O'Keeffe scored a total of 4 goals, with Emma Dempsey, and Orla Sutton also scoring a goal each.

In the boys' game Eoin Aylward, Joseph Aylward and Michael Dunne and Adam Franks all scored great goals with Captain Jack Raggett securing the victory by winning and converting a last minute free kick. Final result Scoil Aireagail 5 Coláiste Pobail Osraí 3.





EXTRACURRICULAR



SENIOR SOCCER

The second game for both boys and girls were against Kilkenny City Vocational School (KCVS). Our girls dominated the game throughout with Abbie O'Keefe scoring a total of 4 goals and Orla Sutton scoring the 5th to secure a very solid final score of Scoil Aireagail Girls 5 KCVS 2.

Our boys began just as strong scoring early as Jack Walshe Raggett's pass cut open the defence and Michael Dunne was there to finish. Joseph Aylward added a perfect hattrick scoring with his right, left and head. Jack Walshe Raggett got in on the action with a well finished team goal before Michael Dunne added the 6th and final goal for the boys.

Well done to both teams on their teamwork and hard work so far in the campaign.

CAMOGIE

Our first outing this year involved our Senior team taking on Castlecomer in the Kilkenny Schools League. Scoil Aireagail proved too strong on the day for Castlecomer with a woman of the match performance coming from Katie Dempsey in second year. Final score on the day was Scoil Aireagail 5 - 6 to Castlecomer 3 - 5.

BADMINTON

Our badminton squad have been busy training every Monday and Tuesday at lunchtime in preparation for their matches next term.

BASKETBALL

Our Basketball players have been spending lunchtimes on Monday and Tuesday practicing drills for shooting, passing, ballhandling, rebounding and defence in preparation for their upcoming games.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in extra-curricular activities plays a hugely important role in the educational process. At Scoil Aireagail students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities, whether they be artistic, social, or sporting in nature.

Here is a look at the Extracurricular Activities which our students participate in each week:

EXTRACURRICULAR TIMETABLE 2023 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Basketball	Basketball	Hurling	Gaelic Football
Badminton	Badminton	Soccer	Handball
Camogie	Soccer	Computer Club	Photography
Student Council	Tuesday Tunes	Table Tennis	Book Club
Choir	Science		Film Studies
Ethos and Wellbeing	Table Tennis		Table Tennis
Table Tennis	Chess club		
Whist card games			





CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY



CREATIVE CLUSTER PROJECT

Scoil Aireagail will link together with 4 local schools to work on a creative project to bring Arts and Education together.

Over the next two years we plan to run workshops in sculpture through Lego, stop motion animation, video production and editing. Music and song writing workshops.

Our Aim will be to create a short film to showcase the creativity in our locality.

The Theme of our project is 'Connections with our Community'.

Participating schools are Scoil Aireagail Ballyhale, St Beacon's Mullinavat National School, Scoil Phadraig Ballyhale National School, Duiske College Graignamanagh, and Graignamanagh Boys Primary school.

The Creative Cluster initiative provides a range of activities and resources, including workshops, training sessions and professional development opportunities for teachers.

These activities and resources are designed to foster creativity, innovation and problem-solving skills among students, and to help teachers incorporate creativity into their everyday teaching practices.

By working with our four local schools will allow us to collaborate and share resources to develop our students' creative and critical thinking skills.

To begin this project, we are looking for Lego.

Do you have any unwanted Lego at home?

Please donate to your school for our Creative Cluster Project.



Congratulations to the students of Scoil Aireagail who won prizes at the **IVERK SHOW**, arts and crafts tent. Winners included Sophie Colcough, Bridget Ferncombe, Grace Fitzpatrick, Matthew Murphy, Conor Duggan, Henry Long and Arthur Long. Scoil Aireagail also won an overall prize for display and quality work on display. Thanks to Sheila Norris from the Iverk show who called to the school to present a commemorative vase and prize winnings to staff and students involved. Well done to all.





CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY



CONNECTION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Scoil Aireagail has collaborated with Mullinavat Active Retirement Group to set up an inter-generational project where students from Scoil Aireagail facilitate tailored digital technology classes for members of our local active retirement community.

The result is a delightful blend of youth and experience where both parties come away feeling fulfilled.

Scoil Aireagail is a small, rural co-educational, multi-denominational secondary school in the heart of Ballyhale. It is a member of KCETB and shares its core values of care, community, respect, equality and excellence in education. Scoil Aireagail prides itself in providing an inclusive education where students are supported to become agentic in striving to reach their potential. It prides itself in providing excellent learning experiences but it also has a focus on the bigger picture.



CONNECTION WITH THE DISOSES OF OSSORY

The new Bishop of Ossory Niall Coll a proud Donegal man shared his life experiences when he came to visit both students and staff today in Scoil Aireagail. A group of 2nd year religion students held a meeting with the Bishop and asked him loads of questions in relation to his work as a Bishop and whether he always wanted to be priest. Bishop Niall was very generous with his time and answered every student's question. He shared his experience of meeting Pope Francis in Rome following his appointment and explained how that was one of the greatest experiences since become the Bishop of Ossory.



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TRANSITION YEAR



TEAM BUILDING ADVENTURES IN BALLYHASS ADVENTURE CENTRE

Our TYs enjoyed their induction trip to Ballyhass Adventure Centre in Mallow this week. Students and teachers took part in a variety of team building and individual activities including Zip lining, crate stacking/climbing, archery and aqua park obstacle course. It was a fantastic day for both staff and students. Well done to all for getting involved and giving it their all!



This term our Transition Year students participated in the **'EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES GAME' AS PART OF THE @YOUNGSPVPOFFICIAL PROGRAMME** where they explore the effect that different situations thrust on a family can have and looking at the support charities that St Vincent de Paul can offer.



AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE and transition year students had a wonderful time at the Ploughing Championships in September.



It's been a busy term for **TRANSITION YEAR BUSINESS STUDENTS** as they completed an Enterprise project. The project involved them collaborating in groups to research an entrepreneur. Next, they improved their digital literacy skills and created a PowerPoint, poster, and Kahoot quiz. Some teams got the audience to participate and took polls using Mentimeter. Finally, students got to present their findings to the class. The students worked on many key skills like communication, literacy, being creative and managing information and thinking. A valuable learning experience for all. Well done to all involved.

In **ART** class our Transition Year students carved pumpkins for Halloween.



Past Pupil and Oscar-winning effects animator Colbert Fennelly returns to Scoil Aireagail bringing his Oscar trophy

Excitement buzzed through the halls of Scoil Aireagail as the school welcomed back one of its most illustrious alumni, Oscar-winning effects animator Colbert Fennelly.

Past pupil of Scoil Aireagail, Colbert worked as the technical environment lead on Avatar: The Way of Water which won the coveted Academy Award for Best Visual Effects. He returned to his alma mater to inspire current students and reconnect with his roots.

Colbert, who was welcomed by senior prefects Jagoda Kieczka and Kieran Crowley, and spent the morning at the school, engaging with students and staff, both past and present. In Jagoda's speech she congratulated Colbert on his outstanding achievement saying: "We are immensely proud of you and thank you for inspiring us to reach for the stars. May your success continue to shine as a guiding light for all of us. Let us continue to dream big and believe in ourselves".

Colbert took part in a whole school Q&A session which kept students mesmerized, sharing anecdotes from his own journey and offering valuable insights into the world of animation. He advised students to surround themselves with friends who had similar values to themselves. Colbert was joined by past staff members Annette Muldowney, Joan Power and Maureen Roche, all of whom supported him hugely during his time in Scoil Aireagail.

Colbert Fennelly's return to Scoil Aireagail will be remembered as a momentous occasion in the school's history, a testament to the powerful combination of dreams and hard work, and a source of inspiration for the Scoil Aireagail family who gathered together to celebrate one of their own.



Scoil Aireagail Open Evening

On Thursday 14th of September 5th and 6th class students and their parents were invited to Scoil Aireagail's open night to explore the school and see all that it has to offer. The night was a great success, with students and staff alike putting in a great amount of effort to showcase the school.



Students and staff enjoy an ice cream in the sun thanks to our Parents Association

On September 8th, our students and staff enjoyed an ice cream in the sun! Special thanks to the Parents Association for sponsoring the ice cream in support of our ongoing focus on well-being.



FREE Studyclix PLUS access for all students at Scoil Aireagail

We have set up FREE Studyclix PLUS access for all students at Scoil Aireagail. Studyclix.ie is Ireland's most popular study website and helps students revise using questions, videos, notes and quizzes. To avail of the offer, students can create or login to their own personal account on Studyclix and enter the code provided to them in school to be upgraded to the PLUS access at no charge.

studyclix.ie
makes exams easier

Instagram: Scoil_Aireagail
Twitter: @Scoil_Aireagail
Facebook: Scoil Aireagail
Website: www.scoilairagail.ie

Evening Study

Scoil Aireagail offers Evening Study to all students in the school and runs from 4pm-6m Monday, Tuesday, Thursday.

The Evening Study Programme is an ideal opportunity for students to develop a good study routine and avail of a quiet distraction free environment to maximize their study time regarding doing their homework and study. This is of immense benefit to all students to assist with their individual learning and completion of school related tasks. Structured supervised study is an integral part of any students' success.

Ongoing Development

Scoil Aireagail has already secured significant investment in upgrading of equipment and resources. This will continue across all subject areas to ensure students have access to the latest facilities. Building works are now underway to build our new classrooms and Autism Support Classroom. We are excited to see the progress of these new classrooms and can't wait to move into our new home in a few months time. Thank you for your patience and support during this transition period. We promise it will be worth it.



Clothing Collection - Parents Association

The Parents Association are organising a clothing collection in aid of our Wellbeing Programme (including ice-cream!). Bags will be collected from the school on the **Tuesday 7th November**. This is a change for anyone to do a clear out over the mid-term break! **Shoes, curtains, duvet covers are also accepted.**

Upcoming Meetings:

Ger Long (Parents Association Rep and lecturer in SETU, Waterford) will speak to 6th year students and their parents about '**Options after the Leaving Certificate**' on Tuesday, 7th November at 7.30pm.

3rd year students and their parents information evening about the Transition Year Programme 2024 on Thursday 9th November at 7.30pm.

Parent Pep Talk from Rayse the Game will take place on Thursday 26th at 7.30pm via zoom. The link has been emailed to all parents.

Senior Hurling County Final

We would like to wish teacher Dean Mason and all of our past pupils playing with the Ballyhale Shamrock team the best of luck in the County Final this weekend when they play against O'Loughlin Gaels.

Key Dates

School re-opens after Midterm Mon, 6th November

In November, We Remember 6th - 10th November.

Science Week 12th -19th November

5th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
Thurs, 16th November

School Closed Mon 27th November Junior Cycle Staff Training

School Closed Fri 8th December

Christmas Exams 1st, 2nd and 5th Years
13th - 19th December

School Closes for Christmas Friday
22nd December

