

Scoil Aireagail Newsletter



September
October 2020

Message from Principal Liam O'Brien

As Principal of Scoil Aireagail, the most uplifting experience I have had, in this most unusual of years, was the sight of students returning to school in late August. Due to the excellent co-operation from students and parents and to the dedication of staff members, we have been able to get on with our core business of teaching and learning. It has been very rewarding to have the opportunity, once again, to see our students, to re-establish the close relationships that exist between teachers and students and to contribute to their wellbeing. This newsletter will give you a flavour of what has been happening in the school since reopening. Despite the limitations imposed on us, we continue to do our utmost to provide a holistic education where students have opportunities to develop and grow inside and outside the classroom. Be sure also to follow us on our Instagram page where you see regular updates on school activities.

Like all schools, we have had to adapt many of the aspects of school life that we take for granted. Unfortunately, we cannot host a conventional Open Night this year. In its stead, we have produced a video which will hopefully give prospective students an insight into the excellent education Scoil Aireagail has to offer. You can find the link to the video on the school website. Thanks to all the students and teachers who contributed to the video. Finally, I would like to welcome our new staff members; Ms. Dunphy, Ms. Law, Mr. Mackey (teachers) and school administrator Helen Coughlan, and last but not least, our first year students in 1 Gold and 1 Silver who have settled in very well to Scoil Aireagail.

Mentoring Programme: To help first years settle into life at Scoil Aireagail we run the Cairdeas Mentoring Program. On September 3rd a group of Leaving Cert students met with Jacinta and Rachel from Ossory Youth to participate in training. They showed the students how important their program is to help integrate first years into their new school environment. They discussed what being a good leader is as well as playing games to encourage the first years to mix. It was a fun and productive afternoon. Since their training the mentors have organized two fun classes with 1st years to help them get to know each other and build relationships. Big thank you to Ms. Leahy for organising the program.



Wellbeing

1st Years mark World Mental Health Day: To mark World Mental Health Day our first year SPHE students facilitated by their teacher Ms. Dalton studied the importance of mental health this week. They learned about mindfulness and did a colouring exercise to understand how mindfulness is applied.



Leaving Certificate Class of 2020

celebrate their results: Congratulations to all our Leaving Certificate students who received their results on Monday 7th September. Students returned to school to meet their teachers and staff who didn't have the chance to see them as a group since schools closed in March. It was great to see the students looking so pleased and happy with their results having overcome the extraordinary challenges posed by this year's Leaving Certificate. Given the difficult circumstances it was lovely that staff and students were able to celebrate this significant milestone together. Well done and best wishes to the Class of 2020 from all in Scoil Aireagail



Trips

Geography Field Trip

Our 6th year students went on a field trip to Kilfarrasy beach in Waterford to investigate the impact of coastal erosion. This is a compulsory section of the Geography Leaving Cert Course - worth 20% of the overall mark. The 6th Year students have been busy over the last few weeks writing up their field work booklets. They have to explain how they planned and gathered their information as well as the results, conclusions and evaluations. The field study is great fun, and also provides students with a hands on and practical learning experience. Thanks to Ms. Murphy and Ms. Maher for organising the trip.

Find us on
www.scoilairagail.ie
&
Instagram
[scoil_airagail](https://www.instagram.com/scoil_airagail)

Senior Art Students visit Butler

Gallery: Our Senior Art students took a trip into Kilkenny to visit Butler Gallery, a vibrant contemporary art gallery, in the historic Evans home. Students got to enjoy artwork by Irish artists including works by Tony O'Malley (1913-2003) who an Irish artist born in Callan, County Kilkenny. They also saw the photography exhibition entitled The Bloods by Amelia Stein. This was a most enjoyable and worthwhile trip for our Art students. Big thanks to Ms. Dalton who organised the trip for students.



TY News

Our TY students have got off to a great start and have had a very busy first term. Heres just some of the things they have been up to so far this year.

1. Organising the Poc Fada competition for 1st and 2nd years.
2. They are also participating in the GAA Future Leaders Programme and are on the first module of Event Management.
3. They have been busy completing an online course called "Make That Course" (they develop an online course that can be used to teach others a skill or about different topics".
4. Several students are starting Gaisce awards.

Big thanks to Ms. Naddy for her role as co-ordinator of the TY Programme in Scoil Aireagail.



Transition Years Self Defense

programme: Our TY class took part in a self-defense programme with Personal Safety director Alex Walsh. This programme helps students develop personal safety and awareness. They are learning to recognise and evaluate a range of situations and assess their own position within those situations. Students are taught methods and skills to be more aware and better protect themselves promoting their personal safety. Personal Safety and Awareness is an invaluable aspect of student development, beneficial to all students. The program aims to enable students to understand the benefit of effective communication, address anti-bullying, and gain new/improve personal safety skills & techniques.

Thanks to Ms. Naddy for organising and facilitating the programme with our students.

TY Students rise to the challenge at

Ballyhass Lake: Our Transition year students travelled to Ballyhass Lake, Mallow for an action-packed day of outdoor activities. Students were encouraged to work together and support and encourage each other on the activities. Students really had a great day and were commended on their excellent behavior by staff. Thanks to Ms. Naddy and Mr. Walsh for organising the trip.



TY students revel in the magic of

Mahon Falls: Our TY students enjoyed a walking trip to Coumshingaun Lake and Mahon Falls on Monday 5th October where they got to experience the great outdoors and the magical scenery on show in the Comeragh Mountains. Spending time in the outdoors and in contact with nature has a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing so it is really important for students to

have a chance throughout the year to enjoy trips like this. Big thanks to Ms. Naddy and Mr. Walsh for organising the trip.



Poc Fada Competition: The Ty's and their teacher Mr. Walsh have been organising a Poc Fada event at lunch times over the last number of weeks for 1st and 2nd Years. 1st year winner was Oisín Reid and the 2nd year winner was Michael Slattery.

Olympic Handball Tournament: As part of the TY Physical Education leadership program both Mr. Mackey and our TY's have been running a junior Olympic Handball Tournament during lunch break the last few weeks. This initiative has given the transition years the responsibility to run and officiate the event whilst also creating some healthy competition among students and aiding in the promotion of physical activity and wellbeing in the school community.





Positive Behaviour

Initiative: In Scoil Aireagail we run a Positive Behaviour Initiative with 1st and

2nd year students to encourage and reward students who have shown leadership, hard work, involvement in sport/extra-curricular and generally have made a positive contribution to life in the school. We award students with a Certificate of Merit and a voucher every two weeks throughout the academic year.

Congratulations to the following students who were awarded Certificates of Merit for week ending October 9th.

1st Year: Erin Walsh, and Holly Long.
2nd Year: Alex Roche Fortune and Beth O'Keeffe

The next Certificate will be awarded on October 23rd just before our mid-term break.



Local Hurling

News: Congratulations to the **Ballyhale Shamrocks** on their recent

victory in the senior co. final. Well done to former students Colin Fennelly, Joey Holden, Conor Walsh, Patrick Hearne, Martin Davis, Casey Corcoran, Edmund Fitzpatrick, Paddy Mullen, Ronan Corcoran, Dean Mason and current student Sean Reade who were all part of the panel. Best wishes to Michael Fennelly in his role as Offaly senior hurling manager.

Congratulations also to **Dunnamaggin** on their fantastic victory in the minor hurling championship and to Colin Fitzpatrick, Sam O Shea and Nathan Stanton-Treacy who were on the victorious panel.

Not to be outdone **Mullinavat** won the Junior B county final with current 6th year Conor Walsh on the team and a whole host of past pupils on the panel. Some of last year's 6th years who featured were Michael Walsh, Michael Holden, Billy Delahunty and Declan Duggan. Team captain was Ryan Bland. **Carrickshock** have made the semifinals of the u13 championship. Best of luck to them when action resumes. Hopefully, it will be soon. Scoil Aireagail also had representation on the Lisdowney intermediate team in the form of P.E. teacher Darragh Mackey who had an exciting victory over Thomastown in the final. Less successful were Piltown who were captained by DCG teacher Kevin

Walsh. Thanks to Mr. Eamon Walsh for his contribution to this local newspiece.



Academic

Tracking: The Scoil Aireagail Mission Statement states... That we will provide a

structured, caring environment enabling each student to reach their full potential.... Access to more data showing students' academic progress from entry and at regular intervals allows teachers to monitor the progress of students more clearly and be able to get a better picture of their development... Using our online educational platform, VS Ware teachers will regularly record classroom assessment. This recording and monitoring of academic results will help our students to identify areas of strength, problem areas that need to be developed and set academic targets. Teachers are currently trialling the system with our 3rd and 6th Year to monitor their progress in the lead up to their Junior and Leaving Certificate exams. Having this information available will help motivate students to focus on their exams and deciding on future study and career paths. Thanks to Mr. Murphy SIP co-ordinator in the school for this update.

Student Council 2020/2021

Our student Council is back up and running again. Students from each class were encouraged to put themselves forward and volunteer to be class reps. In most classes it was great to see such great interest among students who volunteered to become class reps. Each class then voted in who they wished to become their reps. Here is a list of the student reps from each class. If students have issues or concerns that they would like to raise they can do so through their class reps. Thanks so much to Ms. Phelan for organizing and co-ordinating the Student Council.

Year		
First	Holly Long	Cathal Coogan
Second	Aine Woods	Kevin Prendergast
Third	Michael O'Shea	Tara Duggan
TY	Cormac McEvoy	Aoibheann Butler
Fifth	Shane Aylward Erin Slattery	Katie Doyle Donnacha Walsh
Sixth	Sarah Aylward	Colin Fitzpatrick



Key Dates

School re-opens after Midterm for all students on Monday, 2nd November.

School Closed Monday 30th November

Junior Cycle Training Tuesday December 8th
School closed for students

Christmas Exams 1st, 2nd and 5th Years
Tuesday 1st - Friday 4th December

