



Scoil Mochua

February 2023

School Closures:

February: School will end for all pupils at **1.40pm on Wednesday 1st March** to facilitate a staff meeting with members of the Inspectorate as part of the Department of Education's Whole School Evaluation (more information on this evaluation below)

March: School closed on **Friday 17th March** and **Monday 20th March** for St Patrick's Weekend.

School closed on **Tuesday 21st March** to facilitate staff inservice on the Primary Language Curriculum.

School closes for the Easter Holidays at **12pm on Friday 31st March** and re-opens on **Monday 17th April**.

Our full calendar is available here <http://www.scoilmochua.com/school-calendar-202223.html>

1. Multi-Cultural Week

We are excited to announce that Scoil Mochua is hosting its first ever Multicultural Week from 27th February to 3rd March. This will be a celebration of the increasing cultural diversity in our school and community.

We will kick off the week with African drumming sessions for 5th and 6th class children facilitated by AfroEire. Junior Infants to 2nd class will attend an assembly where children will speak about their different cultures, languages and traditions. Projects and photos representing all the countries represented in Scoil Mochua will be displayed in the Multipurpose Room. All classes will be invited to engage in a flag and fact hunt. Children are invited to wear clothes that represent their culture to school on Friday the 3rd of March. See the homepage of our website for further information www.scoilmochua.com

Parents or students, if you would like to get involved or have ideas on how we can enhance this experience for our school community, please get in touch via email multiculturalweek@scoilmochua.com

2. AsIAm – Autism Friendly School

We are delighted that Scoil Mochua is participating in the AsIAm Autism-Friendly Schools Pilot programme. Please read on for further information:

AsIAm, in cooperation with the Joint Managerial Body and Irish Primary Principal's Network, began conducting an Autism-Friendly Schools Pilot with 118 National and Secondary Schools across Ireland. Participating schools were supported in reflecting on their practice, identifying challenges and solutions, creating an inclusive culture and building knowledge and understanding of autism amongst staff and students.

The project aims to support schools in the provision of inclusive educational placements for autistic children and young people alongside specialist provision. It is designed to reaffirm

good practice and support those wishing to foster a school culture that is inclusive of autistic students. The project will cover the following areas:

- Teaching and learning
- Inclusive school culture
- Leadership and management
- Staff professional development

We will continue to update the school community on this programme as we engage with the training. We are determined to be an inclusive school, ensuring that every child feels valued and achieves success in a happy school environment. We understand that inclusion requires ongoing work and commitment, and support from the whole school community. Inclusion is a journey, one that we are happy to travel.

3. Punctuality

Reminder: Children can arrive to school any time from 8.50am – 9.10am. **Teaching will start in all classes at 9.10 sharp so we encourage all children to be in their classrooms at this time.**

4. Readathon

We are in the middle of our much-loved Readathon – it **ends on Friday 3rd March**. It was great to see such enthusiasm for reading around the school before the mid-term. Please encourage the children to read as much as they can at home. We cannot emphasise enough the importance, and the benefits, of reading. It develops the imagination, improves fluency and creative writing skills, and opens whole new worlds to the children. Thanks for your support.

Thursday 2nd March is **World Book Day** and the children (and teachers) are invited to come to school dressed up as their favourite character from a book.

The Parents Association are organising a **Book Swap** next week – Tuesday 28th Feb and Thurs 2nd March from 1.40pm – 3pm. This will take place in our lovely new reading room, or Literacy Chill Out Zone, located above the big PE Hall. Signs will direct you on both days. Entry fee is 50c – and you can take away as many books as you like for that price. You are welcome to donate books that are in good condition in advance of the swap shop (send them in to the class teachers), or bring them along on the day. Please see the homepage of our website, and the PA social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram for more information. A huge thanks to the PA for organising this event – we have no doubt it will create more excitement for reading, as well as recycling lots of books. All proceeds will go to the Readathon fund, which will support the chosen charities and replenish class libraries.

5. Whole-School Evaluation (WSE)

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education is carrying out an evaluation in Scoil Mochua on the week of 20th February. The purpose of the evaluation is:

- To evaluate key aspects of the school's work
- To monitor the quality of learning and teaching and the learners' overall experience in the school
- To identify and affirm good practice in the school

- To provide advice about the quality of education

The inspector(s) will observe teaching and learning and will meet pupils in classrooms. Meetings will also be held with teachers, the school principal, the Board of Management, pupils and some parents. Further information on inspection for children, young people and for parents and guardians is available at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d3832-guide-to-inspection/>

As part of the WSE, a survey will be emailed to all parents. We would appreciate your support in completing this survey as it will inform the feedback which the Inspectorate will provide to us.

6. History Artefact Exhibition

Thanks to local historian and former Principal of Scoil Mochua, Tony Doohan, we have a wonderful History Artefact Museum in the school. Tony started the museum, and it continues to grow to this day. Many of you will have seen the cabinets filled with treasures around the school. Mr Richie Hannan looks after the artefacts, and he ensures that they are used to enhance the teaching and learning of history in the classrooms throughout the school. Pre-Covid the local Silver-Thread Club were invited to the school, and they interacted with the artefacts, telling the children about their childhood memories using the items in real life.

This week, Mr Hannan's 3rd class will invite the 3rd and 4th classes to the Small Hall, where the children themselves will exhibit a range of the artefacts, explaining to the classes what the items were used for, and how they were used. If your child comes home with stories of delph hot water bottles, old-style telephones, etc., please ask lots of questions!

We continue to welcome items of interest to add to our museum. Please contact the office, info@scoilmochoa.com if you have an item you wish to donate to the teaching and learning of future generations in Scoil Mochua!

7. School Musical - Aladdin

Every 3 years a group of 4th, 5th and 6th class children take part in the school musical. This year is one of those years! We are currently in rehearsals for a performance of Aladdin Jr that will take place from 23rd-25th May. The musical is a whole-school effort with collaboration between staff, parents and the wider community. Local businesses provide sponsorship and spot prizes. Parents sell tickets, make props and costumes and help to promote the show. Most staff members are involved in some way or another. The result is an event like no other! Watch this space – you are in for a treat! Many thanks to the team of talented teachers involved in this production: Leanne Smith, Gavin O'Grady, Amy Douglas, Lorna Bradley, Jenny Corr – this list will grow as we approach show time!

Help needed with Sound System: We are hoping to upgrade our sound system in advance of the musical. We need advice and guidance on this. If there are any parents out there who have knowledge or expertise in this area, or who can point us in the right direction, please contact Leanne Smith, one of our teachers who has been doing some research into sound systems – lsmith@scoilmochoa.com.

8. School Garden

Work is nearing completion on the extension to our School Garden, and we are hoping that Tom, the School Gardener, will be able to begin working with classes in the garden soon. We will update you when the work is complete.

9. Eco-Committee

We are very proud of our Eco-Committee, which is made up of a group of children with a keen interest and passion in **sustainability and environmental awareness**. Under the guidance of Ms Aislinn Finegan and Ms Leanne Smith, the children attend regular meetings where they share observations, concerns and ideas. Minutes of all meetings are published on a dedicated Green Schools page on the school website for all children to see <http://www.scoilmochnua.com/green-school.html>. The committee members spread their message of environmental awareness and individual responsibility by sharing minutes of their meetings with their classmates, and visiting younger classes. They ensure good practice in the school by running Eco Patrols, co-ordinating the recycling and making weekly announcements over the intercom. They run various events throughout the year such as a Clothing Drive, Battery Drive, Bake Sale and Spring Clean. They are currently undertaking an audit on water usage as they intend to apply for the school's third green flag next year. Thanks to the children on the Eco-Committee, and their teachers, for all their hard work and dedication. Our future looks bright!

10. Seachtain na Gaeilge

We have lots of fun activities lined up for Seachtain na Gaeilge, **13th – 16th March**, culminating in our fabulous parade around the Willowbrook Green on the Thursday morning. Further details to follow nearer the time. Please note, the PA will host a Coffee Morning on Thursday 16th March before the parade, so why not drop the children to school, pop in for a cuppa and a chat, and then head out to cheer us on and add to the noise of the parade!

A Note from the Parents' Association

A big thank you to all those who have made contributions to the PA. To date monies received have funded Christmas Fun & Santa's visit, foyer displays, cycling safety programme, support for activity weeks, parent Coffee Mornings and in the coming term will go towards Easter fun, Communion and Confirmation celebrations, more coffee mornings, road safety and Multi-Cultural week to mention a few!

The PA welcomes new members throughout the school year. Some people come on board and become committee members, others are available from time-to-time to help out during school time, or in the evening time. Members are only ever asked to help when they can. It is a great opportunity to get to know other parents and staff members, and visit the school at special times of the year such as Christmas and Halloween.

We understand time and energy is precious so ideally, the PA would like to have a rep from every class in the school, as this would lead to fast and efficient communication, and it would mean that all classes have an official voice at the table. As a point of contact we then have a way to share upcoming events, engage particular groups when appropriate etc. Whether you want to be that voice, or you would like to meet more people from the school community,

whether you have lots of time to spare, or hardly any (!!), contact pa@scoilmochua.com to express an interest. Or indeed any ideas on how to communicate with you all is welcome...follow us on social media to stay in the loop!

Looking forward to seeing new and old faces at our next PA Meeting on the 7th March @8.30pm, our upcoming "BIG book swap" and at our Green Coffee Morning on 16th March at 9am.

Thanks,

Aisling Whelan, PA Chairperson
