

# SCOIL MOCHUA

## NEWSLETTER April 2024



### UPCOMING SCHOOL CLOSURES

- May: School closed for full week from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024
- June: School closed on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024
- School Closed for Local Elections on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024
- School closes on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June at 12 midday for the summer holidays.

For the full Calendar see our website [here](#).

Please note that the school will reopen after the summer holidays on **Wednesday August 28<sup>th</sup>** for all children from Senior Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> Class. The new Junior Infants will start the following day, on **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023**.

### NEW JUNIOR INFANTS (SEPT 2024) MEET-AND-GREET DAY

We are delighted to be in a position again to welcome our **incoming Junior Infants** and their parents into the school to meet their teachers and to explore the classrooms. This meet-and-greet day will take place on **Friday 17th May 2024**. To facilitate this, our current Junior Infants in Oak, Ash, Willow and Hazel will go home at **12pm on Friday 17th May**.

### WELLBEING WEEK

Well-Being Week was recently celebrated in Scoil Mochua from 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> April. During this week, the children attended Assemblies in the Small Hall to focus on various aspects of wellbeing – Gratitude, Mindfulness, Thoughtfulness, Friendships and Self-Care. Read all about our wonderful Wellbeing Week [here](#). Information for parents on wellbeing and how to support the wellbeing of your child is available on our website [here](#).

Many thanks to Ms Smith and the wellbeing team who looked after the staff and the children throughout the week.

### IAN DALY WALK-A-MILE-WITH-A-SMILE

During Wellbeing Week, we supported a cause that is very close to our hearts. Ian Daly was a pupil in our school when he developed cancer. He was in 5<sup>th</sup> class when he died. We remember Ian as a fun-loving, brave boy who loved life. His parents, Brian and Laura, have shown enormous courage and strength in creating an annual event that not only keeps Ian's name alive, but raises invaluable funds for Barretstown and Crumlin Hospital. This event is one that will be familiar to most of you – the annual Swim-A-Mile-With-A-Smile. In Scoil

Mochua, in an effort to include more children and really highlight the cause, we have turned the event into an annual Walk-A-Mile. In early April, classes from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> did a local walk, decked out in blue or yellow (both colours represent the charity). Many thanks to Ms Smith and Ms Daly who coordinated this event throughout the school, and many thanks to all of the parents who accompanied the classes on the walks. Thanks to your generosity, we raised €1,300. All proceeds will be presented to Brian and Laura and will go directly to Barretstown and Crumlin Hospital. Both organisations provided wonderful support to Ian and his family, and continue to provide support to so many.

### **FREE UNIFORMS – PARENTS’ ASSOCIATION (PA) SWAP SHOP**

The PA are hosting a Uniform swap shop on Tuesday the 30th April from 7pm till 8pm. They have a range of uniforms in various sizes available free of charge.

Also our new PE tracksuits will be on display that evening in ALL sizes for your viewing for anyone planning to order for September.

### **NEW PE UNIFORMS**

The new PE uniforms are ready to go from September and they look really smart, and are far more suitable for sports than our current one. They will also dry in a few hours, which I know will be a welcome change! To view them and have a look at sizing, please drop in to the school foyer at home time next week, or the week after the May break, from Monday 29 April - 3 May from 1.40 - 2.40pm, and again from May 13 - May 17th between 1.40 and 2.40pm.

Reminder: The children should wear tracksuits on PE days only, and full uniform on the other days.

### **SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO ARE RELUCTANT TO ATTEND SCHOOL**

School should be a happy, safe place for children, but it is not unusual for children to feel uneasy about going to school now and again. However, if your child begins to regularly experience strong feelings such as reluctance about going to school or have difficulty staying in school, it is important to notice this and respond quickly.

Working with your child's class teacher from the beginning is essential in supporting them while they feel like this. There is excellent advice in a new booklet developed by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS). This is available on our website at the link below.

<http://www.scoilmochnua.com/well-being1.html#reluctanttoattendschool>

### **ALL TOGETHER NOW**

In May, students in 5th and 6th classes will be participating in the All Together Now programme. All Together Now is composed of four lessons based on the SPHE curriculum for

5th and 6th classes in primary schools. The lessons take an equality and human rights approach to respect, inclusion and homophobic and transphobic bullying.

The CPSMA (Catholic Primary Schools Management Association) has approved the use of this programme in Catholic primary schools.

The lesson plans for All Together Now include slides, scenarios, discussion questions and other tools for teaching pupils. Pupils are taught about types of identity-based bullying (based on the nine grounds of the Equality Acts and the DES Action Plan on Bullying.) They are also taught about bullying behaviours such as verbal, physical, cyber or social isolation.

For more information on the programme, visit our website at the link below.

<http://www.scoilmochnua.com/well-being1.html#alltogethernow>

### **SCIENCE WEEK**

Another fantastic Science Week was enjoyed in Scoil Mochua between the 15th and 19th of April. A jam-packed schedule full of experiments, coding, Beebots and the much-anticipated Exploration Dome was organised. Thanks to all the teachers who guided the children through lots of fun learning experiences. A special thank you to Ms. Finegan who put a huge amount of work into organising this event.

### **NEURODIVERSITY WEEK**

This week in Scoil Mochua we are celebrating the strengths and talents of people who think and learn differently. We want to highlight that it's ok to be different and we should accept and appreciate everyone.

We will be having a **non-uniform day on Friday 26th April** to raise funds for Aslam, the Autism Friendly School project we are part of. We feel this will help to raise awareness for Neurodiversity and hopefully raise the profile of the Autism Friendly Schools Project - details on our website [here](#). Each class has been assigned a colour to wear on Friday. Junior Infants will wear yellow, Senior Infants- blue, First class- green, Second-red, Third-yellow, Fourth-blue, Fifth-green, Sixth-red. We are asking for a donation of €2 per family. Buckets will be available in all classrooms. Many thanks for your support with this initiative.

### **READATHON**

Once again our annual Readathon was a wonderful success with the children reading a total of 8,464 books and collecting €10,085 in sponsorship. A most enjoyable Readathon Assembly took place on Tuesday 27th February with children from 3rd and 4th classes providing us with entertainment on the day. We were absolutely delighted to be able to welcome representatives from our chosen charities to our school and on the day we presented cheques for €1,000 to the Celbridge Community First Responders, €1500 to Cystic Fibrosis Ireland and €1500 to The Irish Red Cross Gaza Appeal.

Congratulations to Cliona Costigan from Room 21 who won the first prize in the Readathon Draw and got a €150 voucher for Bikeworx. Congratulations also to all 25 other prize winners in our raffle. We would like to acknowledge the fantastic support of all parents during the Readathon. We urge you to continue to encourage reading as an enjoyable activity in your homes. We will be continuing to encourage reading here in school by using the remainder of the sponsorship money, less the Readathon expenses, to add new and exciting titles to our class libraries and to further diversify our collection of class novels.

### **INTERNET SAFETY**

Please continue to check out our Internet Safety Tip of the Month on our website <http://www.scoilmochua.com/internet-safety.html>.

Please be advised that many of the issues we deal with in the senior classes are related to the use of devices at home. We strongly discourage the use of devices in bedrooms at night. The children are young, and despite all of our best efforts, mistakes can be made when the children have the freedom to explore social media platforms unsupervised in the evenings. Such mistakes, while unintentional or impulsive, can cause hurt. If we all play our part, we believe we can reduce the upset and worry caused by the use of devices.

### **SACRAMENTS**

Well done to our Second Classes who received the **Sacrament of Penance** in school on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April. Many thanks to Fr Joe for making it a lovely affirming experience for the children.

The children will make their **First Holy Communion** next **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April**. Each class will have their own ceremony on that day. Preparations are well underway in the classrooms, and we are very much looking forward to celebrating their special day with them. A separate email has issued to the parents of 2<sup>nd</sup> class children with further information. Times for the ceremonies are as follows:

- 11.30am: Room 12 - Mr. Hannify's class
- 1.30pm: Room 11 - Ms. Curley and Ms. Gubbin's class
- 3.30pm: Room 10 - Ms Kenna's class

**Confirmation** will take place for 6<sup>th</sup> class children on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**, at 11.30am (Room 21), 1.30pm (Room 19 ) and 3.30pm (Room 20). We wish the children well for this important occasion, and we look forward to supporting them throughout. A separate email has issued to the parents of 6<sup>th</sup> class children with further information. To mark the special occasion, there will be no school for 6<sup>th</sup> class children on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

County Photos will be in the school to take photos on the first school day after each of the sacraments, so all children should come in dressed for the photo.

### **GRADUATION**

6<sup>th</sup> Class Save the Date: The 6<sup>th</sup> class children will graduate from Scoil Mochua on the evening of Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June. Further details to issue nearer the time.

### **SCHOOL TOURS**

Details of all school tours will issue after the May week off. Payment links for the tours will issue thereafter. Many thanks to Ms Finegan for organising the tours.

### **FREE SCHOOL BOOK SCHEME**

In line with the new Government policy on school books, parents no longer have to pay for school books or copies. This is welcome news for all, and long overdue. We will be sourcing all school books, copies, folders, journals, mini white boards etc. for the coming year. Information on this scheme is available [here](#).

We will continue to charge a much-reduced fee for School Charges. This will be standard throughout the school and will cover the following:

- Photocopying - €15
- Art and Craft Materials - €15
- ICT - €15
- Pupil Insurance (24 hour) - €9

The total for all children will be €54, which represents a significant reduction. All other materials that previously fell under the heading of School Charges will be covered by the Government grant. We will issue a payment link for the School Charges in due course.

### **REMINDER: WEBSITE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

Our wonderful and informative website, [www.scoilmochua.com](http://www.scoilmochua.com), is available for instant translation into many languages. Please see the small drop-down box at the top left of the homepage (Select Language), and choose your language of preference. The entire website will be automatically translated to that language. This allows for a more inclusive website and we hope it will allow many more people to access it.

Many thanks to Ms Smith for her tireless work on keeping the website up to date, informative, fun and attractive!

### **ARRIVING TO SCHOOL SAFELY**

We encourage children to walk, cycle or scoot to school. It is healthy, green and a great way to start the day. Please remind children to be careful when crossing the road. We have a zebra crossing beside the school, and a separate crossing with a traffic warden (the lollipop lady). If children are approaching the school from that side, please remind them that they should cross the road either at the zebra-crossing or with the lollipop lady. The zebra crossing is ideally located for those who have to enter via the gate at the green. Children should avoid crossing the main road at an earlier point in an effort to make the journey slightly shorter.

## **SCHOOL GARDEN**

Lessons with Tom and Rachel, the gardeners, resumed with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> classes last week. Teachers and children alike are enjoying learning all about gardening, biodiversity and sustainability from Tom. Weekly lessons are scheduled with the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class children, with other classes invited to explore and enjoy the garden with their teachers.

Thanks to all of the parents who volunteer on the Gardening Team. New parents are always welcome. Various evenings are organised where you can come along, with or without your children, and help out with weeding and general maintenance. Give as much or as little of your time as you can. Please contact the PA Chairperson Aisling Whelan, if you are interested, at [pa@scoilmochua.com](mailto:pa@scoilmochua.com), 0857102299

## **SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION (SSE)**

School Self Evaluation (SSE) is designed as a process of collaborative, internal school review that is focused on school improvement. We are currently working on two areas, which are at different stages of the SSE process:

- Well-being: We are in the third year of our Wellbeing SSE and are on step 5 "Put Improvement Plan Into Action".
- Digital Learning: We are in our first year of our Digital Learning and are on step 2 "Gathering Evidence". We will be seeking pupil and parental feedback soon to create our new targets.

For more information and updates on our SSE click [here](#).

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

To keep up to date with our busy school life, please visit our website regularly [www.scoilmochua.com](http://www.scoilmochua.com). The homepage is a wealth of information on events that are upcoming, and includes photo galleries of the wonderful events that have taken place, such as the Multicultural week.

Follow us on **Twitter @ScoilMochua** and **Instagram Scoil\_Mochua\_Celbridge**.

## **A NOTE FROM THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION**

*We would like to thank everyone for returning our volunteering forms and are still accepting voluntary contributions. It's not too late to volunteer, just let us know via the link on the PA webpage on the school website, [here](#). We also have a community Whatsapp group to keep people in the loop. Details on how to join are at the above link.*

*We are lucky to have a new fundraising team who are working their magic to secure funding for our outdoor areas. If you have any ideas, experience or contacts to support this project please get in touch.*

*We are hosting a Uniform swap shop drive on Tuesday the 30th from 7pm till 8pm. Also our new tracksuits will be on display in ALL sizes for your viewing for anyone planning to order for September.*

*Thanks, Aisling Whelan, PA chairperson*