



St. Colman's NS

Leading the Way with First Aid Training

A team from Mullingar First Responders visited St. Colman's in October to give the children some valuable basic First Aid training. The volunteers, David Stafford and his team, piloted the initiative with talks in all classes from first through to sixth during four days of visits.

David was enthusiastic about this forward-thinking initiative as he would love to see the Irish school system come more in line with American schools where First Aid is taught as part of the national curriculum.

The team customised their talks for each class, giving more in-depth knowledge and information in line with their ages. For example, first class started with learning how to recognise an emergency and taking the fear out of picking up the phone and dialling 112. As he moved up the school through second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth classes, the educa-



tion got more detailed with David giving the team speaking about biology and the anatomy of the human body and the importance of trying to perform CPR or to run for a defibrillator because of the importance of keeping the heart working.

As part of the training, classes were told that every single child should know their eircode and that in the event of an emergency the caller will be asked for their eircode for the First Responders to locate the emergency. David has kindly agreed to come back in

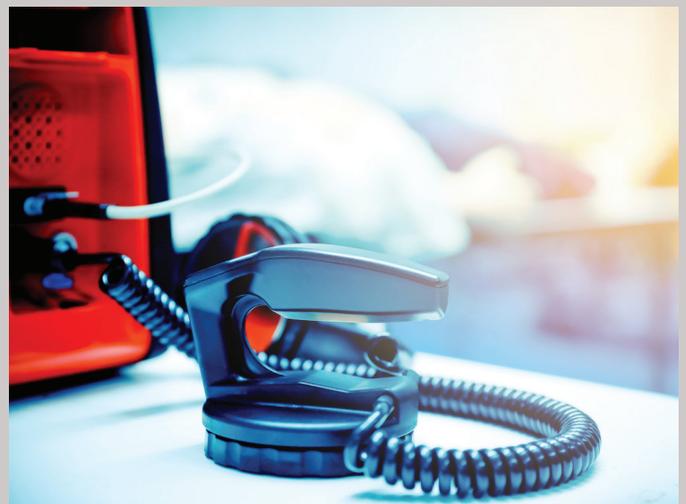
term three to provide more First Aid, CPR and defibrillator training with the sixth classes.

Mrs. Walters expressed her determination to get a defibrillator provided for the school and local community, through fundraising and sponsorship.

First Responders Make Generous Gesture to Get Defib Fund off Ground

As a thank you to David and the other volunteers on the team, the St. Colman's Student Council decided that funds raised through the Halloween Fancy Dress Day would go to the Mullingar First Responders as a token of our appreciation for their time.

However, the team were so heartened by the school's interest in the programme and our determination to fundraise for a defibrillator that they have asked that the money we fundraised in their name, totalling €524.35, be put towards a defibrillator that may be located at St. Colman's and made accessible to the local community. Further fundraising will take place to help us achieve our goal.





Active Schools Committee

Following a very democratic election campaign we are delighted to announce our Active Schools Committee has been formed for the year ahead.

Congratulations to the following pupils who will be representing their classes this year: Adam Waters, Ciara Corcoran, Isabel Devaney Reidy, Shane Plunkett, Ruairi Walters, Jackson Keenan, Eddie Leavy, Josh Carr Markey, Aoife Walters, Lukas Kuprenas and Isabella Miller.

Our Active School team have helped start our new 'Active

Breaks' initiative in the school playground, where classes are now being provided with a selection of new equipment for use at lunchtime.

A huge thank you to our Parents Association, who have helped fund new skipping ropes, hula hoops, bean bags, badminton rackets, an assortment of balls and giant Octoplay/Polydron sets.

These have been really well received by all the boys and girls and break-times are definitely more active as a result!



Student Council

Our Student Council elections will take place next week. The children are busy preparing their manifestos and speeches in the classes at present and we look forward to announcing our new representatives in due course. We want to say a huge thank you to our outgoing committee who have done tremendous work over the past year and their parting action is to start off our annual Christmas 'Children Helping Children' appeal which will benefit other boys and girls both locally and from Ukraine and Africa. All support is most welcome. For further details see our letter on Aladdin from November 9th.



Healthy Eating Policy

We would like to say thank you to parents and guardians for helping us implement the Healthy Eating school policy. Back in September we distributed lists of what is and what isn't allowed in the children's school lunches and we are delighted to have parents on board with this initiative. It's been a great success so far and no doubt the children are already reaping the benefits.

Also, the school's Hot Lunches programme has been rolled out again this year with every child in the school having the option



of receiving a hot lunch delivered to their classroom each day. We recently sent home a plastic lunch

box which is to be used each day for the children to bring home their hot lunch leftovers and box. The reasons for this initiative are two-fold: It will help us to reduce food waste in the school and will allow parents to monitor what their child is eating from the hot lunch and what the child likes and dislikes so that the parents can amend their orders accordingly. We hope this is beneficial to parents in terms of getting the best possible nutrition into their child to help keep them happy and healthy each school day!



Maths Week Adds Up to a Lot of Learning

St. Colman's celebrated Maths Week from the 16th - 20th October 2023.

The whole school was a hive of activity with all classes participating in fun, engaging, interactive and collaborative group Maths activities. From maths trails, maths art and board games to mathematics on the iPads the children had a great week of maths learning. The finale was on Friday with a maths themed dress up day. There were some very creative outfits! A great week was had by everyone! Well done and congratulations to all the pupils for your successful involvement and participation in Maths Week 2023! Maith sibh!



Dates for the Diary

Whole School Photos – 17th November

Parents Association Meeting – 21st November @ 7:30 pm

Cash for Clobber Collection – 27th November

Parents Association Meeting – 28th November @ 7:30 pm

First Communion preparation Mass – 3rd December @ 10:30 am

Christmas Fayre – 3rd December @ 11am

Enrolment for Junior Infants 2024/25 – Monday 8th January – Friday 26th January



Warm Welcome to New Junior Infants

The first half-term of school passed very quickly and, by now, everyone has settled into their new routines. Our junior infants are really enjoying their new experience in 'Big School'. Among the 52 boys and girls in the new junior infants classes were many with older siblings already in the school as well as lots of new faces and new families. School staff and management extend a warm welcome to all the new children and their families and Mrs. Walters and Mrs. Lyons, along with SNA, Helen, have ensured that they are all well settled in and enjoying their first year of primary school.





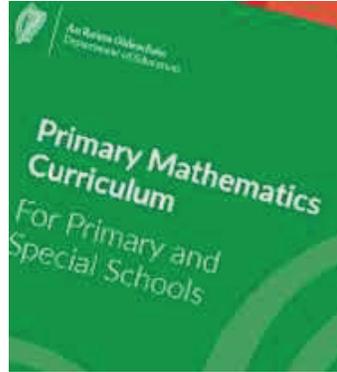
TEACHING AND LEARNING

New Primary Maths Curriculum

The Primary Maths Curriculum has been revised for the first time in over 20 years. This is a welcome development with the objective being to offer a more engaging, playful and inclusive learning experience for all pupils.

Primary schools are currently familiarising themselves with the new curriculum and will work towards its implementation from September 2024. The Department of Education are delivering support to all schools at present to help us prepare for this change and this will involve a school closure day for staff training in either term 2 or term 3.

We have not yet been provided with a date but we will advise parents as soon as we receive notice of this closure.



Ready Set Go Maths

In anticipation of the changes coming in the new Maths curriculum, our staff have undertaken training in the Ready Set Go Maths programme which is very much aligned with the vision and methodologies of the new curriculum.

Significant investment has been made by the Board of Manage-

ment in new Maths equipment to provide our infant classes with more opportunities to engage in playful learning and 'Maths Talk' each day.

This programme is currently being taught in Junior Infants and will be introduced to Senior Infants after Christmas.



Literacy

New literacy initiatives have been developed in the school in keeping with our ethos that 'a book is a dream which you hold in your hand'.

As a result of the successful book fair held in the school last year, over €2,000 worth of books were delivered to us in September helping restock the school library throughout the 19 classrooms and SET rooms.

Our new swap library is set to be in action before Christmas, with donated books gathered and sorted, book orders underway and wooden bookshelving being created by a local craftsman to complement our storyteller's chair.

DEAR (drop everything and read) time continues throughout the school as we continue to foster an environment where reading for pleasure is encouraged.

As part of our DEIS plan, one of our targets is to reestablish and affirm strong links with our County Library. The school is going to act as a middleman to organise membership for the children in advance of class visits to the library. It is hoped this initiative will support our ethos that reading is to be enjoyed by everyone.

Parents Association

We have had a great turn-out at our recent Parents Association meetings and preparations have now begun for our annual Christmas Fayre which takes place on December 3rd. We are actively seeking help to organise the event. Anyone interested in helping out can attend our next meeting on November 21st at 7:30pm or should contact the school either by phone or by email on reception@stcolmansns.com.

A number of parents have again kindly offered to run an after-school Christmas Craft Club for our 4th class pupils over the next three Mondays. All crafts made over the three weeks will be offered for sale at the Fayre. This is a wonderful initiative and we would like to thank all involved.

BoM

As outlined in our letter on the 27th of October, the 2019-2023 term of the school's board of management finishes on 30th November 2023 and we would like to thank the current parent nominees Barry Kelly and Anne Casey for their contribution to the board over the past four years.

Marie Leavy and Peter Keegan were elected for the coming term at a meeting held at the school on Monday the 13th of November. We wish them both well in their new roles. The new term will begin on 1st December 2023.

Annual reviews of our Anti-Bullying Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement were completed at our June and October meetings respectively and can be viewed on our website and in the entrance lobby of the school.



Cumann na mBunscol

St. Colman's Camogie Team

Camogie training in St. Colman's resumed in the past few weeks under the guidance of Helen Kelly, Deane Ennis, Margaret Collins and Aisling Walters. The coaches are absolutely thrilled with the level of interest and enthusiasm shown by the girls. We welcome back our more experienced players who are just finishing up their club season and who bring a wealth of knowledge to the team leading by example with their training and their skill. Also a very warm welcome to our new players who, inspired by the heroic efforts of last year's St. Colman's Camogie

Team, have joined this year. We have a very able and enthusiastic bunch of girls who have put on the football boots, picked up the camán and have been out training in St. Colman's after school on a Wednesday evening from 2.30-3.45, in the hope that they too can and will represent St. Colman's in the Cumann na mBunscol for the year ahead. The coaches are thrilled with the amount of effort and dedication to date and we look forward to getting out on the playing pitches for competitive matches when they start back in the coming weeks. Well done for doing St. Colman's



proud by flying the flag on the camogie pitch. Girls from Fourth Class to Sixth Class are welcome; come and contact any of the coaches mentioned above; we always welcome new players and

we're delighted to see the power of women and girls in sports continuing; including those who have never played before but are brave enough to come out and give it a try.

St. Colman's Boys Football Team

The boys football team has been very active this term. We have had excellent participation in our training sessions and the Cumann na mBunscol competition has started. We have a large panel from fifth and sixth classes and are progressing well. The enthusiasm and skills on show at each match are very high so it promises to be an exciting year ahead!



St. Colman's Girls Football Team

Last Thursday, the St. Colman's Girl's Football team played their second match in the championship against St Etchen's NS in Coralstown, Kinnegad.

We were unfortunately pipped at the post this time around, losing by a few points, however, our girls displayed great determination and skill

until the final whistle. With one chance left for our girls to qualify for the semi-fi-

nals, we remain positive and continue to train hard. We wish them the very best of luck!





Cumann na mBunscol

St. Colman's Boys Hurling Team

The St. Colman's Boys Hurling Team have been diligently training away over the past several weeks. The team comprises over 30 boys ranging from fourth to sixth class. Despite the school competitions not starting until after Christmas, the boys have been demonstrating great enthusiasm and attendance at training where they have been expertly executing a variety of hurling skills including striking, catching, lifting, hooking and blocking in preparation for the Cumann na mBunscol championship. Watch this space!



St. Loman's Players Visit with Flanagan Cup

On the 12th of October the boys and girls were delighted to welcome members of the victorious St. Loman's senior squad to the school with the Flanagan Cup. St. Colman's is well represented on the St. Loman's panel and it's always great to see our past pupils doing so well. Visiting us on the day were captain

Ronan O'Toole and past pupils Fola Ayorinde, Rory Matthews, Shane Mulderry, Seanaí Bracken and Shane Dempsey. The St. Loman's lads now take on Naas in the Leinster senior club championship semi-final and we wish them the very best of luck in the rest of their Leinster campaign.



WESTMEATH SCHOOLS CROSS COUNTRY SUCCESS



Congratulations to all our pupils who competed in the Westmeath Schools Cross Country at Belvedere on October 18th, many of whom came out with medals. Well done to everyone who took part - you are all winners!



Halloween Dress Up Day

Our 'Halloween Dress Up Day' fundraiser was originally in aid of Mullingar First Responders, but funds are now going towards a new community defibrillator at St. Colman's. The boys and girls and their parents pulled out all the stops and had a fantastic, fun-filled day. Children were mystified when there was a strange announcement over the intercom by none other than Batman asking them to keep an eye out for The Joker, who was reported to be on the premises. Everyone will be glad to know that The Joker was finally apprehended!

