

*Scoil Iosaif Naofa
Bothair an Chlochair
Cinn Mhara
Co. Na Gaillimhe*



*St. Joseph's N.S
Convent Road
Kinvara
Co. Galway*

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April Newsletter 2018

Dear Parents

Communication: If your child is going to be picked up by another parent or will be going home to another pupil's home please inform the class teacher by writing a note in the school homework diary.

Pupils in Junior/Senior Infants please bring in a note to the class teacher.

Please **do not** contact the school office as this is your responsibility.

In an emergency situation the school will facilitate.

Pick up: If you have to pick up your child early from school please do not do so during break times. Visitors to the school are not allowed into play area during these times. (Child Protection Procedures)

Breaks are 10.50am-11.00am & 12.30pm -1.00pm.

School Opening Time: School commences at 9.10am. Of late many pupils are arriving late for school. Pupils arriving late can be very disruptive.

Meetings:

Staff are generally available to listen to a quick issue in the morning and after school.

However should a parent need to have a discussion or meeting an appointment should be made at a convenient time for both parties. This ensures that issues can be resolved.

Classes begin at 9.10am and finish at 2.50pm and this time should not be interrupted.

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STEM in St Joseph's N.S.

So what is it all about? We love using technology as a tool to aid our learning and we are especially interested in developing our STEM capabilities. We have been learning the coding language Scratch for a number of years but now we are bringing it to life with an array of different robots which we can control through programming.

We have a strong history of innovation and achievement in traditional STEM subjects, this has been recognised through our awards of Digital School of Distinction and our retention of the Plaque of STEM Excellence since 2014.

We have identified that the next step in our digital progression is the establishment of STEM facilities in our school where pupils can explore using playful learning experiences and develop problem solving and critical thinking skills. Our vision of implementing this revolves around equipping the school with resources such as Dash and Dot robots, Lego WeDo 2.0 offering an innovative way for students to model reality, conduct investigations, and use design skills. The tools selected teach programming in an intuitive way – letting students bring their creations to life while sharpening computational thinking skills like logical reasoning, pattern recognition, and modeling simulations.

This is very much in line with the STEM Education Policy Statement 2017-18 which says:

“The foundations for STEM education begin in early childhood. From the earliest years through their play experiences and family environment, children engage with the world in ways that can promote learning related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Young children naturally engage in early STEM exploration through hands-on multisensory and creative experiences. By engaging in these experiences, young children are developing curiosity, inquisitiveness, critical-thinking and problem-solving capacities which are built on through their primary and post-primary school experience.”

We applied for funding to SAP Galway for purchase equipment to make this happen and we were delighted when we were told that we were successful. This has been kindly supplemented by funding from the Parents' Association. Since March we have welcomed Lego robotics, Dash and Dot Robots and Micro:bits to our school, along with 16 iPads to control them.

We have been having so much fun exploring what we can do with them. Please see our [Facebook page](#) where you can see more photos and some videos of our work so far.

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STEM Room Launch & Road to Code Event

On Monday May 21st we will hold the launch of our STEM Room and the 1st Road to Code event in the West of Ireland. Minister Ciaran Cannon, and Rory McGann, lecturer in Information Technology, Mary Immaculate College of Education are guest speakers on the day.

St. Joseph's National School in partnership with Wriggle Jr. are collaborating to support teachers in the use and development of coding in primary and post-primary schools.

We will have experts and educators on hand to demonstrate how coding can be introduced across the curriculum from Art and Geography to History and Maths. Get 'hands-on' with technologies such as Sphero, Wonder Workshop, Swift Playgrounds, BBC micro:bit, App Inventor, Lego WeDo, Augmented Reality and lots more.

We will host 120 teachers over the course of two workshops. Each workshop consists of 4 demonstrations; from pupils in the school, the Wriggle team and Stephen Howell (Academic Program Manager of Microsoft Ireland). Workshop 1 runs from 10am - 12 noon and workshop 2 from 1pm - 3pm.

The Wriggle Roadcaster will also be in use on the day, a cutting-edge 21st-century mobile learning classroom that aims to help develop digital skills around the country

Due to large numbers expected attendance is by registration only, for primary and post primary teachers through Eventbrite.

START Competition

Ms Murray's 6th Class under guidance from Olive Forde Malone, this year entered the START Competition. The competition encourages primary school students to come up with interesting questions and to design and run trials to answer them in a scientific way.

"The competition is to challenge primary school students to create or simulate randomised controlled trials," says Dr Sandra Galvin, who coordinates the Health Research Board Trials Methodology Research Network, which runs the Start initiative.

Ms Murray's Class have been shortlisted as one of the top three entries and have been invited to Áras Moyola, NUI Galway on the 18th May. Their project entitled "Stop Fidgeting" investigated the question "Does silent fidgeting enhance pupils' concentration levels and ability to listen". You can explore their website on which they documented the method undertaken to answer their research question by [clicking here](#).

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The class are looking forward to their day in NUIG where they will take part in a series of interactive and fun workshops (11am to 1pm), all delivered by NUI Galway staff, showcasing the very best in science and clinical research.

There will be lunch provided for the children followed by an awards ceremony from 2-3pm to recognise the students achievements and to announce the winners.

The pupils will leave NUI Galway at 3pm, returning to Kinvara by 4pm approximately.

Well done: to Clodagh Murphy who came first in the Coole Championships dancing an Irish reel.

Well done to Lilly Tully who also won at the World dancing championship held in Scotland recently.

Comhghairdeas!

Some good news for Kinvara Community Games and pupils of St. Joseph's.

Swimming events were held in Tuam on Sunday 8th April and we had great Kinvara representation with 8 super swimmers. 6 made it to finals and managed to win 5 county medals.

Gold for Hannah Durkan in 50m Butterfly

Silver for Sarah Gunning in 50m Back

Silver for John Durkan in 50m Free

Bronze for Jack O'Shaughnessy in 25m Free

Bronze for Zoe Rodgers in 50m Breast

Big congrats to Hannah who goes forward to the All Ireland finals representing Galway. More congrats to our neighbour Daithi Linnane from Gort who also won gold to get to All Ireland too.

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Great success again for Kinvara athletes at the recent Galway Community Games X-Country event with all qualifying for Galway panels at the National Finals in May. There was a full house for the Geaney girls with Roisin on the Mixed Distance U14 team and Siobhan and Aisling qualifying for the U12 panel. Charlie Conneely and Matthew Meares qualified for the Galway U13 Cross Country team. Last year Roisin took silver as part of the Galway X-Country team so hopes are high for similar success this year. Well done all and best of luck at Nationals. Images of some of the action and the Kinvara team on the day below.

Kinvara Community Field event Sports day takes pace Monday 7th of May at the GAA Pitch. You must live in Kinvara Parish for these games.

Registration at 12 noon and events will start at 12.30pm sharp.

DARKNESS INTO LIGHT - KINVARA, morning of 12th May 2018 at 4.15am

On Saturday morning the 12th May 2017 Kinvara, will host its fourth Darkness into Light 5k walk/run at 4.15 am from St Joseph's N.S. for Pieta House .

All registration this year is online only and the website is www.darknessintolight.ie to register.

First Holy Communion:

The Parent's Association would like to invite all parents of the 1st and 3rd class children to a meeting on **Wednesday, 9th May at 8 pm** in St. Joseph's National School regarding the communion party to be hosted after the Church ceremony on Saturday, 19th May, 2018.

As you may know the school body hosts a small party for the children and their families to help celebrate their communion day each year. We have a very large group this year again and we really do need as much help as possible for the parents of 1st and 3rd students.

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The meeting will outline the type of help needed on the day and the night before and we aim to spread out the tasks to ensure we don't take up too much of people's day - we also welcome feedback and suggestions from the group regarding the organisation of the event. If you are not in a position to attend the meeting but are willing to help please email elsee@eircom.net to let us know. Thanks in advance.

Date to remember: First Holy Communion **19th of May 2018** St. Joseph's Church at 11am.

School Closure: The school will be closed Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th & Wednesday 9th of May.

Allergies/ Medication: please ensure if your child (ren) have any allergies or are taking medication that the class teacher is aware of this.

Is mise,

Dominic Gallagher (Principal)