

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



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

## **Newsletter May 2018**

Dear Parents,

**First Holy Communion:** Congratulations to all the pupils in 2<sup>nd</sup> class who made their First Holy Communion on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> of May. The children were a credit to their parents and teacher in the way they were turned out and in how they participated in the ceremony. I would also like to thank the school choir.

Sincere thanks to Mrs Murphy and Mrs Kelly for all their hard work in preparing the pupils for First Holy Communion. Thank you to all the team for making the ceremony so meaningful for the pupils and their families. Thank you to Hilary for booklets and Bernie McCormack for other preparation for the day.

First Communion day is a very special day and one that all of the pupils will remember. Thank you to Fr. Hugh Clifford for officiating at this lovely ceremony.

I would also like to thank the Parents Association and the parents of the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> classes who hosted a party for the relatives and children of First Holy Communion. Everybody was made feel most welcome and a great time was had by all. There was a wonderful atmosphere present on the day.

The school community appreciates all of the hard work that was carried out in the preparation of refreshments and reception area and the huge workload involved catering for so many people. The layout of the tables was a fantastic sight and once again this enhanced the welcome and warmth received by all.

The goodwill shown on the day is a massive asset to our community. Sincere thanks to all.

**Choir:** is often the heart of a school and it is very important for the School's Community. I would like to thank the children in the Choir who will performed for us on Saturday's Communion Mass and shared with us their wonderful talents and abilities. My very best wishes and congratulations to you all for bringing such enjoyment to so many people.

It was an absolute pleasure to accompany them. Thanks to all parents who extended some beautiful compliments to the choir.

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## **STEM:**

We were delighted to launch our new STEM equipment on May 21st, which was kindly funded by SAP Galway and the Parents' Association. As part of the launch, the school held their first Road to Code event in partnership with Wriggle Jr, an initiative aimed at training and supporting teachers to develop and promote coding skills in the classroom, bringing coding to life through the use of robotics.

The STEM Room was officially launched by Minister Ciaran Cannon, who has long been a supporter of technological and coding development in schools. Minister Cannon spoke of the Action Plan for Education, National Skills Strategy and the Digital Strategy for Schools, and the government's aim to "encourage and inspire more of our young people, and in particular our girls, to specialise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics during their education." Minister Cannon commended whole school community for their enterprising and very innovative approach to education and how the provision of STEM facilities in St. Joseph's enables the pupils to learn in a fun way the necessary skills and knowledge needed to participate and succeed in an ever changing world. Minister Cannon also spoke of the leadership and innovation within the school, stating that successful STEM education within a school requires strong leadership - leadership to foster creativity and learning, to support the growth of a culture within the school of scientific and technological innovation and this leadership is clearly evident in St Joseph's N.S. St Joseph's N.S. is a place where genuine innovation in education has become the norm and Minister Cannon thanked all of the teachers who have worked so hard to make that possible.

Dr. Rory McGann, Lecturer in ICT/Digital Learning, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, also spoke of the innovation that was evident in St. Joseph's N.S and outlined how the benefit of STEM education is not just the development of science, technology, engineering and maths, but the skills that are fostered in pupils, complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, innovation, team work. Dr. McGann explained how in an ever changing world these skills will be important for our pupils no matter what roles they have, what jobs, or what they engage in in later life.

Hayden Simpson Chair of the Community Involvement Forum, SAP Galway also spoke at the launch. SAP Ireland are proud supporters of St. Joseph's National School, Kinvara having backed many initiatives over the past three years; beginning with funding which supported the establishment of including a multi-sensory room for Seoda and progressing to supplying SAP refurbished laptops, and coding initiatives including GIRLSmart4tech and EU Code Week. The most recent SAP funding comprised of a grant of €8,000 provided to equip a STEM room in the

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school and provide finance to purchase robots which will support the continued learning of the pupils and support the development of 21st Century Learning Skills.

The vision of implementing this progression in STEM education revolved around equipping the school with resources such as Dash and Dot robots, Lego WeDo 2.0 and Micro:bits 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.

The Road to Code training event was an exciting opportunity to share this vision with the wider school community and with teachers from approximately seventy other schools. The training events were hosted by 6th Class pupils, Wriggle staff and Stephen Howell, Academic Engagement Manager, Microsoft Ireland.

Further photographs and videos from the day can be found on our school [Facebook](#) page. A special word of thanks to the pupils who helped out on the day and to the Parent's Council and staff members Rachel, Bernie and Louise who kindly set up tea, coffee and refreshments for attendees.

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### **St. Joseph's N.S Crowned Overall Winners of National START Competition.**

Ms Murray's 6th Class were shortlisted to showcase their randomised clinical trial Friday 18th May in NUI Galway, where they were announced as overall winner and presented with the START Trophy 2018.

Joseph's National School, Kinvara and the only other Galway school, Glinsk National School, Castlerea were joined by two other primary schools at the competition in [NUI Galway](http://www.nuigalway.ie), one from Kerry and one from Westmeath.

As part of their prize Ms Murray's class were brought to Arás Moyola, NUI Galway and participated in many different workshops, from Kitchen Chemistry, to the Bug Doctor, Cell Explorers and many other activities laid on by various Science departments in NUI Galway.

A special word of thanks to Olive Forde Malone who assisted in introducing the competition and the idea of clinical research to the class and also helped with the implementation and write up of the research.

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The judges, researchers and staff of NUI Galway all complimented the class highly on their presentation, Professors from the highly esteemed universities of Oxford and Edinburgh spoke very highly of the levels of both oral and written presentations made by our sixth class. In fact, they both equated the works of our pupils to that of third level students. The maturity of questioning and interest in discovery was quite amazing. Our pupils were a credit to themselves and to our school. They really enjoyed the third level experience which will stand well to them in the future.

Now in its third year, the Schools Teaching Awareness of Randomised Trials (START) competition aims to educate students about why we need randomised trials to improve healthcare nationally and globally.

The competition is run by the Health Research Board – Trials Methodology Research Network (HRB-TRMN) at NUI Galway, to celebrate International Clinical Trials Day, and the anniversary of the first clinical trial which was carried out in 1747 in the British Navy.

Primary schools around the country were invited to create their very own fun randomised clinical trial earlier this year.

Dr Sandra Galvin, HRB-TMRN Program Manager at [NUI Galway](https://www.nui-galway.ie), said: “This initiative has really captured the children’s imagination and creativity but I also think we can learn so much from their approach.

“Trials can be complex and challenging for people to understand, and yet here we have children rising to this challenge so well.

“START is about breaking down the barriers in the understanding of trials, and helping understand the power trials have to improve healthcare for all.”

Speaking about the competition entries, Dr Mairead O Driscoll, Interim Chief Executive at the Health Research Board, said: “These kids have come up with a research question, taken a scientific approach to problem solving and then reported what they found clearly. All they need to do now is influence the right people to introduce change! All the participants are quite remarkable and if the future of health research is in their hands, I am very comfortable.”

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**EWB:** The school is obliged to report the names of all children who are absent for over 20 days to the Education Welfare Board (E.W.B.). Parents/Guardians need not become unduly worried in circumstances where these absences can be satisfactorily explained due to illness, bereavement or family circumstances.

Please ensure that all absences are explained to the class teacher. Please do not call the school if your child is not going to be in school. A note on return to school will suffice.

**Welcome to:** Ryan Waters to joined the school recently.

**School closing early:** Please note the school will close at 12.30pm for all pupils on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> of June-staff have a child protection course.

**Summer holidays:** The school will close at **12 noon** for the summer holidays on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> of June.

**Is mise,**

*Dominic Gallagher  
(Principal)*