



Athenry Primary School

Campus A, Tuam Rd, Athenry, Co. Galway, H65 C860
Phone: 091 844 510 Email: office@athenryprimaryschool.ie
Website: www.athenryprimaryschool.ie

June 23rd 2025

END OF YEAR MESSAGE



Dear Parents/Guardians,

This year marked the beginning of a new chapter for us—a year of firsts, as two school communities came together to form one. As is known, amalgamations are never easy. They involve change, uncertainty, and adjustment and work. But they also offer incredible opportunity: the chance to build something different and that's exactly what we did in Athenry Primary School (APS). We blended staff and children, practices, cultures, traditions and now, as we approach the end of June, I'm very proud to say that we *are* indeed one community.

Our wonderful APS pupils played a key role in this success. I am very thankful for the energy, kindness, and resilience they have shown. They spread themselves across two campuses and adapted beautifully, making new friends, and welcoming change with open hearts. They have shown us what it means to be brave and open to change. Whether this was their first year in our school or their final one before moving on, they have helped shape the culture and spirit of our new school.

The staff of APS has gone above and beyond this year to make our amalgamation a success and positive experience for one and all. They have negotiated and collaborated across a dual campus, have had endless meetings, conversations and messaging and all the while working tirelessly to ensure that every student was supported in the best possible way and at the heart of all decisions made. It takes extraordinary commitment to not just teach, but to work towards a shared vision—and they did it with professionalism, patience, and pride. I am so thankful to them all. A special word of thanks to our Acting Deputy Principal Gavan Duffy and the exceptional postholder team and our two wonderful secretaries Eithne and Ann who have contributed enormously to the success of this first year.

To you, our parent body; your support has been vital in helping our new school take root. You have worked with us and walked with us every step of the way in such a supportive and caring manner and we are very grateful to you. A special thank you to Fr Charlie and Fr Benny also for the unwavering support and kindness they have shown to our school.

As you can imagine, managing a school community of 516 pupils and 46 staff across two campuses with no other admin staff on the ground is a very challenging role. I thank you for your patience and understanding and for trusting me always.

We hope to carry with us the lessons of this year into the new school year ahead: that change can be a catalyst for growth, that unity is built through understanding, and that a community isn't defined by its name, but by the people within it. And the people within our community are exceptional.



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The following are just some of the projects the staff and I have completed this year to accommodate change as part of the amalgamation process:

- We established a new Board of Management for the school
- We grew in student numbers and welcomed a 21st classroom teacher
- We applied for a review of our Special Education Teacher allocation and we were successful in gaining one additional teacher for September
- We opened our first Special Class for autism and the pupils named it 'Evergreen'. We are full for September and are relocating the class to St Therese prefab
- We developed a new yard for our Special class and named it An Gairdín
- We reconverted four rooms on Campus A into rooms for Special Education teachers
- We created an additional Sensory Room on Campus A and opened a new Sensory Room on Campus B
- We developed a third class yard on campus A and fully pedestrianised the front of the school as this is now a play space for our pupils
- We created a quiet zone on our yards for pupils with additional needs and for those pupils who wanted to read and relax during break
- We bought large cooperative games for the yards and will continue to develop our yards into next year
- We continued a project commenced by Mr Naughton and have installed a new modular build on our top yard to accommodate our growing numbers
- We have submitted an application to the DES for wheelchair accessible toilets
- We equipped every pupil from 4th to 6th with their own Chromebook
- We developed a new school website, a new Instagram account and a new YouTube Channel for APS
- We developed an AR library on Campus B
- We have written several key policy documents for our new school to include the BÍ Cinealta Policy
- The WIFI on Campus B was upgraded
- Through Aisling McKenna, we forged a link with John Paul Construction who have committed to completing several projects for us on both campuses
- We started our very first co-ed school band which was a resounding success on St Patricks Day
- We held weekly assemblies on both campuses and provided a platform for students to share their news and talents
- The boys School Staff transitioned to the Aladdin admin platform
- The boys transitioned to Drumcondra Standardised tests and the Scoil Chroí Naofa girls completed the Drumcondra spelling test for the first time
- The pupils participated in a host of sporting, musical, STEM, historical and local community events

It has been a year like no other for all the staff and myself personally as Acting Principal. Thank you for continuing to entrust your children to our care. It's a privilege. I wish you all a healthy and happy summer break and look forward to all we will accomplish together in the year to come.

Warm regards,
Cathriona Cronin (Acting Principal)



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Important Dates to Remember

School **finishes** at 12 midday, Thursday June 26th
School **reopens** on Thursday August 28th

Out and About in June

Junior Infants 2024 / 2025

On Friday, June 13th we welcomed next year's Junior Infants to the school, to meet our staff and their new classmates. All the new pupils seemed very happy and excited to start school on August 28th and we look forward to helping them with their transition to primary school. Please find a link below to a short YouTube video of some of the photos from the day https://youtu.be/Mi-mxXrAaXc?si=PQCdb_aDPV4OAYPB

Sixth Class Annual Bake sale

Our first APS bake sale was a resounding success. We have raised 2,000 euro in total and we are extremely grateful to our wonderful school community for supporting us as always. 1,000 euro will be donated to Cancer Care West and the remainder to the Parents Association who subsidise so many great activities for the children throughout the year.



Sports Day in Kenny Park

Our 6th class pupils organised an incredible sports day for all the pupils in the school. They set up and ran 16 fun stations around Kenny Park and the classes moved from station to station with gusto. At the same time, our infant classes enjoyed a cycling workshop with Mr Naughton and Mrs Duffy on our AstroTurf. Thanks to our amazing parents Association for funding ice creams for all the pupils to celebrate the end of a great year.



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Accelerated Reading

Well done to all our senior pupils for their enthusiastic participation in the Accelerated Reading Programme this year! It has been another very successful year where we have seen engagement with and interest in reading soar. The statistics speak for themselves; this year the APS pupils read:



Modern Foreign Language: MFL

A special word of thanks to Mrs. Kennedy for offering German classes after school to interested pupils from 3rd to 6th class over the last few weeks. Pupil engagement was excellent and we hope the children enjoyed the experience.

End of Year Celebrations



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We enjoyed a beautiful **end of year mass** for the whole school last Thursday in Athenry Church. Our mass was in celebration of our first year as an amalgamated school and also a time to say a fond farewell to our wonderful 69 Sixth Class pupils and Mrs Hallissey who is retiring this week after 19 years of incredible service to our school. We will miss them all dearly.



A **special Graduation ceremony** for our amazing 6th class pupils will take place in the hall on Campus B Tuesday the 24th at 11am. All Sixth Class parents are invited to attend. This will be the 6th class pupils' final day in school and much to their delight; they are not required to wear their uniform on this day! We are looking forward to seeing you there.

We are currently in the process of photographing all the classes in the school in order to have our **first APS whole school photo**. As we are such a large group now, Ms Murray is creating a montage of these individual class photos. We will post it on our website when complete.

School Summer Programme

The school is holding a 2 week School Summer Programme from June 30th to July 11th on Campus A. Cian Burke is the programme manager and he will be assisted by a team of teachers and SNAs. I am very thankful to Cian and the team for providing this wonderful opportunity to so many pupils this year.



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New Classroom

We have a new classroom under construction at the moment, to be ready for September. It will be home to one of our third classes and the third class pupils are currently deciding on its name!



New School Build

APS has been sanctioned a new 24 classroom building with an additional 4 classrooms for children with autism. Our current site on campus A is the location for the new build. Once the two Irish schools relocate to the Gael campus on the Monivea Road, the old Presentation Secondary School building and surrounding buildings will be demolished and works will commence on our new school building. The Gael campus building works are due to commence the far side of the summer as they have moved to Stage 3 in the process.

Plans for our new School are close to being finalised. I was hoping to be in a position to share these plans with you by now but unfortunately they have not been submitted for planning yet. The aspiration is that the school design will be submitted for planning over the Summer.

Preparation for September 2025

End of Year Report cards

All pupils end of year report cards are now available to view on Aladdin.

There is also an explanatory leaflet in relation to Standardised test scores, for your information.

Supplies List

As communicated in the last newsletter, all pupils will receive free books, copies and hot lunches again in September. A supplies list will issue to all families this week. The name of your child's teacher will be noted



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on the "Supplies List". Please send these supplies into school with your child on August 28th and please ensure that they are labelled. The usual €50 school costs fee remains for September, as this figure is used to cover photocopying, arts & crafts materials, school insurance etc. for the pupils

School Uniform

Stockists: GM Design wear, Claregalway and the National School wear Centre, Liosban, Galway. A grace period was given for old SCN and Athenry Boys School Uniforms this last school year. As of this Sept, all pupils are required to wear our lovely APS uniform and APS crested shorts. Our school uniform is an important part of our school identity and we ask all parents to support us here.

Bí Cineálta

A draft of our APS policy will be sent to you this week. We welcome your feedback as always and will send you a link to a Google Form to facilitate this.

School Uniform Collection

We are looking for donations of any uniforms that children may have outgrown or may not need any more. We would like to be in a position to help families out from time to time. Please drop to either Campus between now and Friday July 4th. Thank you.

APS Summer Camp

There are still places available on Miss. Currans camp which runs over the first two weeks of July. All details are in the flyer below.



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FOR INFANTS
UP TO
SECOND CLASS

€75

WEEK 1: 30TH OF JUNE - 4TH OF JULY
WEEK 2: 7TH OF JULY - 11TH OF JULY

SUMMER CAMP

9AM - 1PM

ATHENRY PRIMARY
SCHOOL

ACTIVITIES

SPORTS & GAMES
MUSIC & DANCE
and more!

CONTACT:
[SUMMERCAMPATHENRYPRIMARY
SCHOOL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SUMMERCAMPATHENRYPRIMARY
SCHOOL@GMAIL.COM)