



Athenry Primary School

Campus A, Tuam Rd, Athenry, Co. Galway, H65 C860

Phone: 091 844 510 Email: office@athenryprimarieschool.ie

Website: www.athenryprimarieschool.ie

APS Newsletter – Issue 3

Our New Motto: *Life is better when we work together*

Social Media

Please follow us on our very active Instagram account @athenryprimarieschool or log on to our website at www.athenryprimarieschool.ie

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We hope that by now, everyone has settled back into the rhythm of school life after what is always a busy September. The children are engaging enthusiastically in their learning, new routines are beginning to feel familiar, and the school is once again buzzing with activity!! This term, we are also proud to introduce our new motto: **“Life is better when we work together”**—a phrase that we feel truly reflects the spirit of our school community. Thank you so much for the support you showed Eithne during the Industrial Action earlier this month. Your kindness and solidarity meant a great deal. We’re absolutely delighted to have her back in the office, and it’s wonderful to see the team whole again.

September and October are full of important dates for your calendars. Our **Parents’ Association AGM** will take place on **Wednesday, October 15th at 7:15 pm in Campus A**, and we warmly encourage as many parents as possible to attend. **Our term 1 staff meeting** will also take place on **October 15th** and pupils will go home at 1:15pm on this day. The **Board of Management** will meet on **Tuesday, October 8th**, and the same day has been designated for a **whole staff Autism training day**, which promises to be a valuable professional learning opportunity for all of us. Looking further ahead, **Holy Communion** will be celebrated on **May 16th**, while **Confirmation** is scheduled for **April 25th**.

For our **sixth class pupils**, this is an especially exciting time as they prepare for the next step in their educational journey. The **Common Application Portal for Secondary Schools**, a new system being piloted this year, will open on **October 1st** and remain live for three weeks. Applications can be made through **gov.ie**, and a translation feature has been included to support families whose first language is not English. The Department of Education and Youth will be issuing an information pack to schools in the coming weeks, and we will share this with you as soon as it arrives. In addition, we remind parents of upcoming events such as the **Coláiste an Eachreidh Open Night** on **Wednesday, September 24th at 7:00pm**, the **Clarin College Open Night** on **Thursday September 25th from 5.30pm** and the **Presentation College Open Evening** on **October 2nd from 4:30–7:00pm**.

The summer months saw significant improvements across our campuses. On Campus A, our modular build—St. Francis Prefab—was completed in late August and has already become a much-loved learning space for Ms. O’Connor’s 3rd Class. Meanwhile, our Evergreen Special Class relocated to



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the St. Therese prefab, with thanks to our caretaker, Jack, who worked tirelessly to prepare the new area. In addition, Mrs. McGrath has developed a wonderful sensory room adjoining the classroom, providing a calm and supportive environment for pupils who need it most.





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In terms of policy, our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk assessment is available to view on our school website. We thank you for your contribution to our BÍ Cineálta (Anti-Bullying) Policy. It will be presented to the BOM for ratification at our upcoming meeting. We are currently working with pupils to develop child-friendly versions of both, which will also be shared online once completed. A new Code of behaviour for APS will be developed this year to coincide with new guidelines to be disseminated to all schools by TESS (Tusla Education Support Service).

We have many new projects in the pipeline which we will share with you over the next few newsletters.

SPORT

Sport and physical activity remain central to school life at APS, and we are fortunate to have such a skilled and dedicated coaching team. We are delighted to announce the continuation of hurling and camogie training this year. Mr. Cian Burke will lead hurling sessions on Wednesdays on Campus B, while Mrs. Darrelle Burke and Ms. Niamh Fox will coach camogie on Fridays. Pupils from 4th–6th Class who play with a club are encouraged to bring their own hurls, helmets, and boots.

Younger classes will soon benefit from the appointment of a Games Development Officer (GDO) from St. Mary's, who will coach infants to 3rd Class in hurling and Gaelic games.



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In addition, Mr. Gavan Duffy and Ms. Mary Melville will continue to train our Gaelic footballers on Campus B on Tuesdays and Thursdays, while Ms. Katie Lambe will provide both Gaelic and soccer sessions to senior classes on Campus A over the course of the year.

Throughout the year, our teams will compete in various blitzes and competitions. While some of these events have restrictions on age and the numbers as well as a very competitive element, we remain committed to ensuring that all children have opportunities to develop their skills and represent the school. We look forward to an enjoyable and active season ahead as we enjoy our national games

Our cross-country runners have also been training hard recently—thanks to Mr. McDonald and Mr. Duffy—and on September 30th, 24 pupils from 3rd–6th Class will represent APS at the 2025 Galway AAI Cross Race Country Championship semi-finals. The finals will take place on October 7th.

In addition, all classes will enjoy various sporting workshops over the course of the year to make sure everyone keeps active.

APS JERSEYS

We're absolutely thrilled to unveil our very first APS jerseys and singlets, proudly sponsored by Emmet Byrne of Byrnemech. A huge thank you for the generous support—it means so much to us. These new kits mark a special milestone for APS, giving our athletes a fresh identity to wear with pride at competition. Our lady footballers were the first team to showcase them at the INTO Mini 7s last Friday and didn't they look great!! We can't wait to see so many of our pupils out on the track and on the field showcasing the new APS colours.



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Log onto our Instagram page for more photos.....

MUSIC

We are delighted to share that band practice will begin shortly for our senior pupils on both campuses. Our incredible band will comprise 240!!! pupils this year and involve multiple staff under the guidance and direction of our Band Co-ordinator, Miss Murray. The school band is an important tradition at APS, and we are looking forward to their participation in two key community events: the Turning on of the Christmas Lights on at the end of November and the St. Patrick's Day Parade on Monday, March 17th after 11am Mass.

READING CORNER

This year, we are also delighted to have approximately 340 pupils participating in the Accelerated Reader Programme, coordinated by Shane Kelly. Mr. Kelly has invested considerable time over the last year updating and expanding our school libraries across both campuses. His efforts ensure that pupils have access to books that reflect their own interests and requests, and reading targets have been set to keep pupils motivated and inspired throughout the year.

Beyond the classroom, many classes have already taken part in a variety of sporting events and educational workshops since our return on **August 28th**. These experiences play a valuable role in broadening learning and enriching school life.



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PARENTS ASSOCIATION 2025 2026

As always, our **Parents' Association** plays a vital role in the success of our school. This year, we will be establishing a new Association, and we encourage all parents to get involved. The first meeting will take place on **Wednesday October 15th at 7:15 pm in Campus A**. We look forward to meeting many of you there and working together on projects and events that benefit the whole school community.

With so much already achieved in these first few weeks, and so much more to look forward to, we are excited for the months ahead. Thank you, as always, for your continued support, encouragement, and involvement.

Kind regards,

Cathriona Cronin (Acting Principal)



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OUT AND ABOUT GALLERY





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