

ST. FINTAN'S NS

Autumn 2025

A word from our principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I cannot believe that we have come to the end of October. That was such a quick half term. All the children have settled back to school so well after the summer break. The new Junior Infants are amazing and all seem delighted to be coming to school every day.

I will endeavour to greet children at one of our three entrances at least once a week so that if they are worried or upset about anything at all, they can have a little chat with me at the gate. Also, if they have any happy or exciting news, I would love to hear it.

Please read on to keep up to date with the latest school-wide information and news.

I would ask that you provide a little wash bag with a face cloth/hand towel in it for your child to dry their hands after using the bathroom.

Please ensure that all long hair is tied back. Head lice are in lots of classes. I will roll out bugbusters after the midterm break.

Thank you all for the voluntary contributions received so far this year. We are so grateful to you as this money is so needed for the effective running of our school.

Please note that applications for Junior Infants have been open since October the 1st. Application forms are available on our website www.stfintansns.ie.



Thanks to you, parents and guardians, for all your generous donations for the sponsored walk. We will continue to take any donations after the mid-term break. These donations will help fund sensory spaces in each classroom.

I would like to wish Ms Tuohey and Marian the very best of luck following their recent weddings.

Next term will be a busy one with parent/teacher meetings and Christmas preparations. This is always a lovely term, with lots of fun activities for the children in the lead up to Christmas.

Dates for your diaries

- **Parent teacher meeting will be held on Wednesday 19th and Thursday 20th November. Teachers will be in touch after midterm to arrange times.**
- **There will be no school on Monday 17th November to facilitate staff Child Protection Training**
- **We will celebrate World Children's Day on November 20th**
- **The children from 2nd to 6th will sing carols at Supervalu ON 16TH December**
- **Our Annual Carol Service will take place on Thurs 18th Dec**

We would ask parents collecting children from after school activities to refrain from parking in the staff car park. This is for the health and safety of the children.

Wishing you all a wonderful and safe Hallowe'en break. I hope the children enjoy trick or treating and dressing up.

Thank you for all your continued support. It is greatly appreciated.

Best Wishes,

Ms Farrell

Support Teaching in Our School

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It is our priority that every child should feel welcome and supported in school. Support teaching is part of how we do this. Support teaching might look like a second teacher supporting in class, or a teacher taking a small group of children, or one child, for additional support outside of class. This support can be for academic reasons, or for social, emotional or behavioural support. Over their 8 years with us, all children will receive some level of support.

Here are some of the key points from the Department of Education Guidelines on support teaching in schools. The Department use the term 'Special Education Teacher'.

✳ **Support for all**

Your child's class teacher is their main source of support. If more help is needed, a support teacher may provide in class, small group or one-to-one teaching.

No diagnosis needed

Children don't need a formal diagnosis to get support. Support is allocated based on need. Sharing professional reports with the school is helpful, but equally, a diagnosis does not automatically mean extra support. Teaching time is limited and is allocated carefully.

Flexible support

Schools use a step-by-step system, the Continuum of Support, to assess the level of the support different children will get. If you have concerns, please speak to your child's class teacher

Resources

All schools receive support teaching resources, but these are limited. We can't provide support to every child who may need it at all times. Instead, we use a flexible model, often working in blocks of intervention to make the best use of resources. Our support staff use their professional judgement to decide who receives support and when.

Support Team

Our support team this year is Ms. Byrne, Ms. O'Reilly, Ms. O'Meara, Mr. Dunlop and Ms. Maher. The Support Coordinator is Ms. Maher.

There are more details and parent guides at www.ncse.ie

Our Child Rights Journey - Going for Gold!

In St. Fintan's, we believe every child has the right to **Learn, Participate, and Enjoy** – and we're proud to say that our ongoing journey with **UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award** continues to shine!

In 2023–2024, we were thrilled to receive the **Bronze Award** for our wonderful progress in:

- Displaying *Children's Rights* throughout the school.
- Involving pupils in decision-making with the help of our fantastic Student Council.
- Creating classrooms where every child feels valued and enjoys their rights every day.

In 2024–2025, we built on that success and achieved the **Silver Award!**

- Together, teachers and children explored rights in different subjects.
- Worked side by side to decide what and how we learn
- Helped to create a school, both inside and outside, where everyone can fully enjoy their rights.

Now, in **2025–2026**, we're excited to announce that **we are Going for Gold!** 

This final stage focuses on three key goals:

1. Teaching parents and carers more about Children's Rights.
2. Helping children around the world to enjoy their Rights.
3. Connecting other school programmes to Children's Rights.

We've already made a wonderful start! This new *Child Rights* article will now appear in each school newsletter to keep you up to date with our progress.

Recently, after the introduction of the new Primary Maths Curriculum, we found ourselves with many unused maths books. Rather than let them go to waste, we were delighted to donate these books to schools in Chad, West Africa, through a special link with St John Vianney Church in Artane. What a great way to help other children enjoy their right to an education!  

Looking ahead, we hope to link our **Student Council** and **Green Schools Committee** in new projects – such as collecting food and clothes for people experiencing homelessness at Christmas time. We're so proud of how our school community continues to learn, share, and grow together on this journey.

For more information about the **UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award**, visit:

👉 <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/>



Student Council

The first meeting of the Student Council for this school year took place on October 6th with Ms Burke. We were delighted to welcome back a number of returning members, as well as to thank and bid farewell to those who have completed their two-year term of service. In addition, we are pleased to announce the appointment of 13 new members, each bringing enthusiasm and fresh perspectives to the Council.

The Student Council continues to represent pupils from 2nd to 6th Class. Following the success of last year's peer voting trial in 6th Class, this year's Council members from 3rd to 6th Class were democratically elected by their peers. This process reflects our school's ongoing commitment to the promotion of Child Rights and to fostering pupil voice and participation in school life.

We were very impressed by the high standard of campaign speeches and the maturity and thoughtfulness demonstrated by all students throughout the election process. Congratulations to every pupil who put themselves forward as a candidate.

During the first meeting, members shared a wide range of constructive suggestions and innovative ideas, many of which are already being considered and actioned. We look forward to another productive year ahead and to seeing the positive impact of the Council's work in the school. Watch this space!



Green School Committee Kicks Off the Year with the Costume Swap/Donate/Take!

The newly elected Green School Committee has hit the ground running! Right after elections, our team jumped straight into planning the annual Costume Swap. It was a huge success. They sorted through tons of costumes and helped everyone find something new for Halloween. Not only did it save families money, but it also helped keep perfectly good costumes out of the landfill.



It was such a fun way to start the year and it really showed what we can do when we work together to make our school a little greener. The Costume Swap is just the beginning; we've got lots of ideas to keep our school community eco-friendly all year long!

The polytunnel was installed this September, the green schools committee are going to take charge of sourcing equipment to run it. We hope to have our winter vegetables sowed after the midterm!

Junior Infants

The Junior Infants have settled so well into big school! We are so proud of how everyone has adapted to their new routines and how excited they are to learn every day.

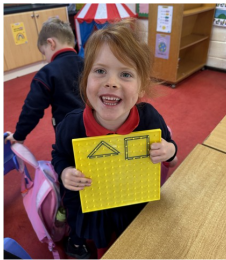
This month, we have been busy exploring all things autumn. We took our learning outside the classroom on an autumn walk, where we spotted colourful leaves, flowers and other signs of the changing season. We also made some lovely clay hedgehogs with our 6th class buddies.

In Maths, we have been learning all about 2D shapes. The children had great fun creating their very own shape monsters using circles, squares, triangles and rectangles — they turned out fantastic! They also participated in maths week and took part in a range of fun, hands on activities to explore number and patterns.

We have also been busy exploring the theme of '*Homes*' through Aistear. The children have been constructing different types of homes using blocks and polydrons. They have also been creating beautiful arts and crafts based on the home. In our role play area, the children have enjoyed acting out home life in the kitchen, preparing some lovely meals for us!

We're now looking forward to our Halloween walk and can't wait to see everyone's amazing costumes! We hope you all have a safe and fun filled Halloween together. 🧛





Senior Infants

We have had a fantastic first term here in Senior Infants. We have been learning about lots of interesting things including The Home and The Construction site. We were lucky enough to watch the building site in operation on Carrickbrack Road and recreated it in the classroom. We have also been working really hard on showing kindness to one another and being a good friend. We channelled our inner Kandinsky to create some beautiful shape art. GAA is in full swing, and we are really enjoying our weekly sessions. We also took inspiration from our school garden and sketched the beautiful sunflowers.





First Class

Ms Foley's class recently took a trip to Farmleigh house which we then wrote a story about. We went on an autumn walk through the beautiful gardens where we found lots of autumn leaves of different colours. Then, we created artwork using our lovely leaves.

We love reading so had reading 'show & tell' where we all got to bring in our favourite storybook from our house. We told our friends why it was our favourite book at the moment, read a few pages and then answered some questions!

We are getting excited for the Halloween celebrations in room 5!

Ms Mc Ginn and Ms Treleaven's class have had a wonderful start to the school year and have even managed to fit in their first school tour of the year- a trip to Farmleigh! The children had a brilliant time and were really impressed by the size of the house and the beautiful gardens. On their return to school the children wrote their first stories about their trip which they have also illustrated beautifully. Many thanks to the parents who accompanied us on our tour. We have also been enjoying great GAA sessions with Mark which have been full of energy and enthusiasm. Now it's time to start our Halloween preparations in Room 6. Lots of fun ahead!





Second Class

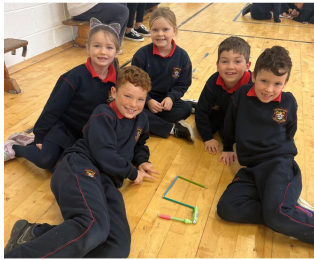
We've had a busy start and a great few weeks in Rang a 2! The boys and girls have hit the ground running & are working really hard and settling in brilliantly. Here are some of our September & October highlights!

We had a ball during Maths Week. The Corridor Quiz was a firm favourite of ours. There was stiff competition between the 4 classes but great camaraderie too. The atmosphere in the hall was electric. We definitely had some mathematicians in our midst!

The two 2nd classes went on a lovely nature walk and collected some leaves. We put our creativity to good use back in the class when we made some incredible leaf animals. We created some masterpieces!

Our Spooky Sponsored Walk was a great success. The first half of the walk was a breeze but as the morning wore on and little legs began to tire, it became more of a challenge. The final stretch tested their endurance. Despite aching feet and tired faces, the children dug deep, encouraged each other and showed incredible perseverance. It certainly was a day to remember!

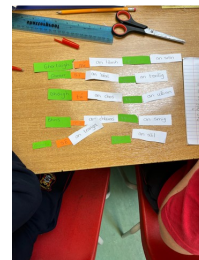




Third Class

Ms Flynn's third class have been learning about sentence structure in Irish and English. As Mouse from Fingal Co. Co. Is coming in this year to do work on biodiversity, we looked at food chains in the local natural environment. We also painted with natural paints like the Stone age people!

Both third classes did a maths trail and maths quiz together for maths week.

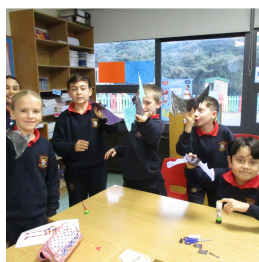


Fourth Class

Ms. Smith's 4th Class have had a great start to the new school year. They've welcomed their class mascot, Socks, and a few lucky boys and girls have already had the chance to bring him home and write about their adventures together. The classroom is full of colour thanks to the children enjoying lots of fun art activities that have really brightened up the place. With Halloween around the corner, they've been busy making paper mâché bats and writing spooky stories. Using laptops and iPads, they've turned their stories into digital books on Book Creator so that everyone can enjoy reading them. They also really enjoyed Maths Week and all the fun activities, like stations, daily puzzles as well as the 3rd & 4th class Maths quiz which finished the week off nicely.

We have had a fabulous first term here in Ms. McHugh's 4th class. We have taken an interest in Irish myths and legends and refining our writing, aiming to publish a few gripping stories by the end of the year. We had a great time hanging out with our buddies in senior infants and even walked

10km around Howth summit! Maths week for us was full of great games and quizzes too. Finally, we put our artistic skills to the test and created scary bats and Tim Burton inspired portraits for Halloween this week! We have so much more to look forward to this year, but for now, have a lovely midterm break!



Fifth Class

5th Class have had an exciting start to the school year! We kicked things off with a fun STEM challenge, where groups competed to build the tallest tower using only a few pieces of paper – teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving were all put to the test! We also enjoyed a trip to the Seán O’Casey Theatre to see the play *Bullied*, which gave us lots to think about when it comes to friendship, kindness, and standing up for others. Each day, we take part in Marathon Kids, running laps around the track on the yard and steadily adding up our kilometres. It’s wonderful to see everyone getting active, having fun, and building their fitness along the way! Maths Week was also a great success! The children enjoyed a variety of Maths games and took part in an energetic Maths quiz in the hall – it was fantastic to see so much enthusiasm and teamwork in action. Well done, 5th Class, on a fantastic first half-term!



Sixth Class

6th Class trip to Sutton Golf Club

On Friday 12th September 6th class were invited down to Sutton Golf Club. Ciarán Cussen met us and introduced the children to some important members of the club – Vice Captain Mark Hogan, Lady Captain Karen Keogh, Grounds keeper Simon Lewis & Club Pro Paddy Devine.

It was a brilliant morning learning all about the club history, the ecology of the surrounding area and the children even got a chance to practise their putting skills on the putting green.



Linda Maher

Linda is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters