

**Scoil Inse Rátha**  
**Déan do Dhícheall**  
**Newsletter March 2013**

**Dear Parents,**

We have reached the end of another term. Our students have worked very hard this term and we can all be very proud of all that we have achieved. Staff, pupils, parents and The Board of Management working together have helped us to have a successful term. Thank you to everyone for all their hard work.

**Confirmation:** Children from our 6<sup>th</sup> Class received the sacrament of Confirmation this month. They were a credit to our school and to their families. We are all very proud of them. They had a lovely day and the ceremony was very nice as well. Thank you to Ms. Cassidy, Mary Clifford and Fr. John Paul for preparing the children so well.

**4<sup>th</sup> Class play – Robin Hood:** 4<sup>th</sup> Class put on a play for their families recently. They are a very talented bunch and they represented the school really well. The singing, dancing and acting was excellent. Check out our website [www.littleislandns.com](http://www.littleislandns.com) for photos. Thank you to Ms. Uí Gheairr and Ann O’Keeffe for helping to prepare the children, and thank you to the parents and family members who came along to watch.

**Bóthar:** Our charity for Lent this year was Bóthar. We organised a Gold Rush and an Active Day to raise money. The children were encouraged to bring in their own money for these events. Jeremy from Bóthar brought two goats, Clodagh and Cuddles, to meet our students and he explained about Bóthar’s work. We raised €300 and we presented the cheque to Jeremy this week. This is enough money to send a goat to Africa to help a family and community in need to become self-sufficient. Well done to all involved and thank you for your support.

**Active Flag:** Our application for our first Active Flag is ready to go. We are an active school but there is a lot of work involved in just filing out the form. Thanks to the staff here who have embraced this initiative which is of great benefit to all of the children. We hope to have the flag before the summer holidays. Thank to Ms. Neville for coordinating this work.

**Digital Schools Award-E-Learning Plan:** We have been working on our E-Learning Plan as part of our work in The Digital Schools Award. Technology is a part of everyday life and we are trying to integrate it into as many parts of school life as possible so that our children will grow up comfortable with this type of equipment. This is tricky when the Department of Education doesn’t provide any support and when it is cutting grants. Thanks to your support of the work of our Parents Association we are able to keep going and provide these opportunities for our students. This month we purchased 4 more iPads with the help of our PA. Thanks to Ms. Lynch for her work in this area.

**Photographer:** Proof from the photographers recent visit to Junior Infants and 6<sup>th</sup> Class will be sent home after Easter.

**Enrolment:** There was huge demand for places again this year with over 40 children applying for places. Every child from Little Island or who has a sibling in the school was offered a place. It is a credit to everyone connected to our school that places in our school are in such demand. As advised last year, due to the large number of children in Junior Infants this year, there will be some mixed classes at the junior end of the school next year. We will discuss this at our Board of Management and let you know how this will work next term.

**Croke Park 2:** There has been a lot of talk in the media about the proposed deal with public sector unions. There is a huge amount of detail there for everyone to consider and it will affect all teachers in different ways. From your point of view, as a parent, it has the potential to have a huge impact on your child’s education. At the moment when a teacher is sick we can employ a substitute teacher to cover the class. Under CP2 some of this will be removed and therefore the class will have to split up between other classes. If more than one teacher is out then the size of the problem increases. We will always do our best for your child but on days like this the quality of your child’s education will suffer. This is not fair or workable for the children in our care. There are many elements of the deal that aren’t fair to teachers but the issue of substitute cover, for approved leave, for teachers is

something that should really concern you. I would suggest that your local TDs should be made aware of your concerns in this area so that it doesn't become a reality.

**Attendance:** The National Educational Welfare Board is responsible for monitoring children's attendance at school. We have to report to them quarterly to let them know if we have any concerns about attendance in our school and if any child has missed more than 20 days. Ms. Hennessy is looking after this area in our school this year. If your child has missed 15 days, or more so far this year, you will receive a letter from her informing you of this. It is very important to return the pink forms when your child is absent so that the reasons for the absence are recorded. The roll is called every morning and if your child is not there they are marked absent. If you have an appointment and your child will be late you need to let the school know in advance. In any event, in order to be recorded as present for the day, a child needs to be present for the majority of the day. The Roll Book is a legal document and can't be changed after it is filled in.

**Chess:** Our chess club has been running at lunch time over the last few months. A team will be picked from this club to represent the school at a tournament in Carrigaline at the start of May.

**Hurling:** Hurling training has been taking place at lunch time over the last number of weeks. We took part in the Mini 7s tournament recently and the boys involved represented our school really well. The Sciath na Scol competition takes place after Easter. We won this competition last year and as a result we have been moved up a few divisions. This will make it very hard for the boys but we have every confidence that they will do their best and make us all proud. Camogie training has begun after school on Thursdays.

**City Sports:** Trials took place recently for the City Sports that will take place in May. Well done to all involved. Training will commence after Easter.

**Collecting old phones and clothes:** We continue to collect old phones and unwanted clothes/textiles. We get money and gifts for this work that help towards providing useful resources for the school. Please remember us before you throw away clothes/textiles or phones.

**Cor Féile:** Our Junior and Senior infants took part in Cór Féile this month. It was a wonderful night and the children were brilliant. They sang and danced their hearts out and we are all extremely proud of them. Well done to all involved and thank you giving us such a great night. Check out our website for photos.

**Green Schools Committee: Walk for Water in Gougane Barra.** Our Green Schools Committee took off to Gougane Barra at 7.30am on Wednesday this week. They joined eight other schools on a guided tour around Gougane Barra which is where The River Lee rises. They had to carry three litres of water with them so they could understand what people in some countries have to do to get water. They were very well looked after. Thanks to Ms. Walsh and Laura Daly for their work in this area.

That's all for now. Some staff members were mentioned in this month's newsletter and thanked for their contributions but there are a million other things going on in the background that help our school to run smoothly. Thank you to all of our staff for all that they do for the good of our students. We look forward to next term and all of the wonderful experiences that it will bring.

Happy Easter!

All the best,  
Micheál Rea

### **Up Coming Events:**

**Mon April 8<sup>th</sup>:** reopen after Easter Holidays

**Thurs April 11<sup>th</sup>:** Principals and Chairpersons of all local school meeting to review common approached to enrolment practices.

**Tues 16<sup>th</sup> and Wed 17<sup>th</sup> April:** Book Fair in school. Books will be on sale from 1pm-3pm on both days.

**April 29<sup>th</sup> to May 3<sup>rd</sup>:** ACTIVE SCHOOLS WEEK.