



## MARYMOUNT N.S. THE ROWER.

Ní neart  
go cur  
le chéile

NEWSLETTER 1  
Term 1 2025



Dear Parents and Pupils,

I am delighted to officially welcome you all back for a new school year at Marymount N.S. It is wonderful to see our pupils and staff settling back into school life and looking forward to the months ahead. This year is an especially joyful one for us as we celebrate 60 years since Marymount N.S. first opened on this site in 1965. What a privilege it is to mark six decades of learning, growth, and community together. We have some exciting plans to celebrate this milestone, which I have outlined later in the newsletter.

A very special welcome to our new pupils, Jacob, Jim, Pat, and Zach, who have joined our school community — we are delighted to have you with us. We are also very pleased to welcome back Ms Lyng.

Our apologies that this newsletter is reaching you a little later than usual this year. September has been a particularly busy month, with everyone getting back into the rhythm of school life. We especially felt the absence of our invaluable Trisha at the start of the month, and it reminded us how fortunate we are to have such a dedicated secretary!

We are happy to share that our new infants are now well settled, and it is wonderful to see all of our pupils back together again. Last Thursday, we celebrated SNA Appreciation Day — a chance to acknowledge and give thanks for the incredible work our SNAs do every day. We are deeply grateful to them, and indeed to all of the staff of Marymount N.S., who work tirelessly to support and nurture every child in our care.

This newsletter also sets out some updates, reminders, and important dates to note for the year ahead.

Wishing all our Marymount School community and families a happy, safe, and healthy school year.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh,

Mary Mc Cormack

### 1. Celebrating 60 Years of Marymount N.S.



Marymount N.S. opened on this site in 1965. A complete refurbishment was carried out in 2010/11, with further additions since. There is a wonderful history attached to the school — one we would like to celebrate and preserve for future generations.

This year is particularly special as Marymount N.S. marks its **60th anniversary**. To celebrate this milestone, we are planning a celebration in December, during which we will also officially open our newly reconfigured **Autism and Sensory Space** and our **school library**. It promises to be a wonderful occasion, not only to mark these exciting new developments, but also to honour 60 years of education, pupils, staff, and families who have been part of the Marymount story. The school is a source of pride for our community, and it is fitting that this milestone is both celebrated and remembered.

In that spirit, we are revisiting the idea of creating a **history of Marymount N.S.** We hope to compile stories, memories, and reflections through audio recordings so that the experiences of past pupils, staff, and families will not be lost. Already, we have begun conversations with the Heritage Section of Kilkenny County Council, who have shared some exciting ideas on how this could be achieved.

We are in the early stages of developing a committee to lead this project. While it will not be completed in time for the December celebrations, we hope to launch the project then and continue developing it into the new year. Some staff and board members have already expressed interest, and we are also reaching out to the wider community.

If you, or someone you know, have expertise in production, podcasting, or recording — or if you simply have an interest in the history of our school and would like to help — we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email [therowerschool@gmail.com](mailto:therowerschool@gmail.com) to get involved.

## **2. Arriving at School**



As many of you are now aware, we have recently installed new fencing and a security gate system at Marymount N.S. We would like to sincerely thank parents for your cooperation and support with these changes. This development has been a very positive one for our school community. It greatly enhances the safety of our pupils, giving all of us — children and staff alike — a real sense of security and peace of mind. The new system

also provides the children with more freedom to play safely, as not all pupils can easily understand the boundaries of the lower walls, and their safety was previously at risk.

The school gates will open each morning at **9:00 a.m.** Ms McCormack or Ms Fennelly will be there to greet the children as they arrive. From 9:00 a.m., supervision is provided on the lower yard. At **9:20 a.m.**, class teachers will collect their pupils from the yard for class.

After 9:20 a.m., the gate will remain open for a short period, with Trisha monitoring arrivals. If you are dropping your child after this time, we ask that you wait with them until they have safely entered the school building. The school operates a camera and buzzer entry system at the front gate, which is monitored during school hours. If, for any reason, you have difficulty gaining access, please phone the school office on **051 423838** for assistance.

As always, we kindly remind parents that children should not be on the premises before 9:00 a.m., as there is no supervision in place prior to this time. School finishes at **3:00 p.m.** each day (**2:00 p.m. for Junior and Senior Infants**).

## **3. Safety at the School Gate**

- **Do not park on designated bus spaces, on yellow lines or in front of school gate - (even for a short time).**
- **Do not park in the 2 disabled access spots near the school gate.**
- **Adhere to the One-Way System.**
- **Be mindful of space required for buses to exit at the top of the island.**
- **Do not park at the entrance of Ballynunnery Lane (opposite school) or Kavanagh's Lane (beside school). These are public roadways.**
- **Please ensure those who are collecting your children are aware of the procedures.**

*Please co-operate with us in our efforts to keep all children safe.*

#### 4. Child Protection

As you are aware under the Children First Act 2015 and effective since March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018, each Board of Management has a statutory obligation to prepare a **Child Safeguarding Statement** which includes a written assessment risk of potential harm and the procedures in place to manage that risk. These documents have been forwarded to all homes and are on display on office noticeboard and school website. All must be reviewed annually by the Board of Management. Last review was carried out in and notification of same was forwarded to all relevant stakeholders and posted via Aladdin.

Under the Act, all teachers registered with the Teaching Council are **Mandated Persons** and have two **legal obligations**:

- To report any reasonable concerns of harm above a threshold to Tusla.
- To assist Tusla if / when requested.

**With new regulations in mind, we continue to ask that if you take photographs or videos of school events, in which a number of pupils other than your own are involved, not to post them on social media sites without permission from the children's parents.**

**Your co-operation in this regard is much appreciated.**

#### 5. Parent/Teacher Communication

The school encourages good parent/teacher communication. We value your input and are always happy to discuss your child's progress with you. If your child is experiencing any issue, such as difficulties with homework, this can be addressed via a written note or a phone call.



When a meeting is required, the first step is always to meet with the class teacher. The teacher is the professional working with your child on a daily basis and is best placed to implement any strategies needed to support your child or address any concerns.

Where such a meeting is required, parents are asked to please make an appointment through the school office (by phone) or send a message directly to the teacher via the Aladdin portal. Please state clearly what the meeting is in relation to (social, academic, behavioural, etc.), as this allows the teacher to gather the relevant information in advance.

If, following a meeting with the class teacher, the issue still remains, parents may then seek a meeting with the principal. This process helps us to work together more effectively in supporting every child.

#### 6. Board of Management

The Board of Management of Marymount N.S. consists of Liam Mulholland (chairperson), Laurence Walsh (treasurer), Mary McCormack (secretary), Áine Barron and Matt Bolger (parents' representatives), Maria Slater and Fr. Frank Purcell (patron nominees), Catriona Morrissey (teachers' representative).

#### 7. Parents' Association

The Parents Association are a vital and integral part of our school community.

The Board of Management and Staff are very grateful for the hard work and support of the Parents' Association. We have a large and vibrant committee but they will always welcome more volunteers and support.

The AGM of the Parent's Association will take place on **Wednesday October 8<sup>th</sup>** in the school hall at 8pm. It is important that all families are represented.

## 8. School Self-Evaluation (SSE)

School Self-Evaluation (SSE) is a national process undertaken by schools each year, guided by the Department of Education. Its purpose is to reflect on teaching and learning, identify strengths, and develop a School Improvement Plan to support pupils' learning.

Over the last number of years, we have focused on different areas of the curriculum as part of this process. In 2024, our focus was on **Well-being**, and we have continued to follow through on the plans put in place during 2024–25. Last year, we turned our attention to **Gaeilge**, exploring ways to strengthen the teaching and learning of Irish in our school.

Looking ahead, we plan to re-examine the area of **Numeracy and Mathematics**, particularly in light of the new Primary Maths Curriculum and its implementation. As part of this process, we will once again be seeking the views of both parents and pupils on how maths is taught in our school, and how we can continue to improve, especially with new approaches to teaching and learning. We would like to sincerely thank parents for your input into past surveys. Your voice is vital in shaping our school's plans, and your continued engagement helps us to ensure that SSE remains meaningful and effective for all of our pupils.

## 9. Finances



This is our second year being asked by the government to cover the cost of school books through the government grant, this year, the grant allocation has been reduced.

Unfortunately, it does not fully cover the cost of the books and the necessary subscriptions for our online teaching platforms, which are integral to the school programmes. As a result, the school has had no option but to ask parents to contribute towards stationery.

Please rest assured that every effort was made to keep these costs as low as possible.

School requirements not covered by School Book Grant:

- Art & Craft Materials.
- Photocopying.
- Aladdin Connect – messaging & online payments service.
- Online subscriptions.

In relation to book rental a significant number of books needed to be replaced due to loss or damage. Please be mindful that this places additional financial burden on the school.

We understand that many schools request voluntary contributions to help manage running costs.

To date, our school has not pursued this, but it is something the Board of Management continues to review in light of the financial pressures of running the school.

## 10. Parent Teacher Meetings

Parent teacher meetings will take place on the **11<sup>th</sup>&12<sup>th</sup> of November**.

Information regarding Parent Teacher meetings will be released after the Halloween holidays.

## 11. Homework



Our aim is for the homework to be focused and beneficial. It does not need to be labourious or lengthy and we will continue to prioritise the literacy and numeracy in our activities. It is also an important link between home and school. If a child is struggling with homework or it is taking an excessive length of time, please contact the class teacher. Class teachers will be forwarding an explanatory note outlining their homework plans/procedures for the year ahead.

## 12. Uniform

Thank you to all those for cooperating with our school uniform. As already highlighted the official uniform is a plain navy tracksuit or shorts, The formal shirt/ trousers/ pinafore is still an option.



Outdoor Play: Our junior students are great excavators and have loved playing in our sandpit. We had been told by some parents that they found the sand was making runners/tracksuits very dirty. They do love the sand play so we would suggest an old pair of runners if your child is one of those wishing to dig!

Senior Yard: We hope to keep using the lower pitches as long as we can so would again suggest older runners/ pull ups to protect their uniforms and the carpets!

## 13. You are what you eat !!.

Our school has a 'Healthy Eating Policy' up and running for many years now. Children are actively encouraged to bring wholesome and healthy food for snacks/lunch each day such as, sandwiches, fruit, yoghurts etc. The following items are actively discouraged from Lunch Boxes – crisps, sweets, bars and fizzy drinks etc.



**We earnestly request your co-operation with this policy.**

**We also ask that pupils bring home all wrappings so as to reduce our litter so please keep wrappings to a minimum and eliminate where possible.**

**Hot School Lunches are in place, if you have any difficulty with ordering please contact the office.**

## 14. Labelling.

**Please ensure all children's belongings;** clothes, schoolbags, lunch boxes, etc. are **labelled** to

 Name
 Name
 Name
 Name
 Name

avoid confusion as a lot of the children have the same or looks exactly the same items, and to avoid losing them especially at P.E., Swimming etc. We already have children missing items of clothing. Can you please check your child's uniform to make sure they have the correct jumper/ cardigan, tracksuit top or half-zip. They may have inadvertently picked up the wrong one! If you feel your child has a mislaid item, you can check out **Lost Property** which is kept in a specified area on the lower corridor for a short time. The school does not have the storage facilities to retain them in the long term. We currently have a few mislaid half zips.

***There is a small tag on the inside of the school half zips please use this to put child's name on if not already marked with their identity.***

## 15. Home / School Communication.

**Aladdin Connect input is required from parents to the Class Teacher is required when:**

- A pupil has been absent (we require this documentation for recording absences for the NEWB)**
- A pupil wishes to leave during school hours
- A pupil needs to be excused from P.E. lessons



## 16. Leaving School Early

For safety and insurance purposes if you wish to collect your child before the end of the school day you are asked to sign them out at the office.

## 17. School Policies

School Policies such as Child Protection/Code of Behaviour/School Rules/ Healthy Eating/Homework/Special Education and the various administration / curricular policies are all available on [marymountns.ie](http://marymountns.ie). Please contact the office if you require a hardcopy.

## 18. Health & Safety

**Administration of Medicine:** If your child uses an inhaler or update to any allergies please ensure you have informed the school office via email at : - [therowerschool@gmail.com](mailto:therowerschool@gmail.com).

## 19. Mobile phones

No pupil has permission to bring a mobile phone to school. If you as a parent/guardian deem it as an absolute necessity for your child to have a phone due to after school commitments the following procedures need to be followed.

- 1) A letter outlining the reasons your child requires a phone to be brought to school is to be forwarded to the principal.
- 2) The phone must then be handed into the office that morning and may be collected by the child at 3 p.m.

If any child is found to be in breach of this policy the phone will be confiscated and will only be returned to the parent/guardian. We appreciate your cooperation in regard to this matter.



## 20. Smartphone

### **'KEEPING CHILDHOOD SMARTPHONE FREE'**

#### **CHILDHOOD'S TOO SHORT TO BE SPENT ON A SMARTPHONE'**



The Parents' Association of Marymount N.S., with the support of the Staff and Board of Management (BOM) have introduced a 'Voluntary Smartphone Free Agreement'.

A survey of our parents carried out in November 2024 – indicated that 87.5 % of those that replied were in favour of such an agreement to be put in place.

The agreement is one where the parents of Marymount N.S. voluntarily agree not to purchase or provide a smartphone for their child until they have finished their time in primary school.

Details will be issued again soon with the option to of signing up to this agreement.

## 21. Bí Cineálta/ Be Kind – Our Anti Bullying Procedures

Our new Be Kind policy has been in place since the beginning of this school year and is available to view online at : <https://marymountns.ie/>

We sincerely thank parents and pupils for their input in shaping this important policy. At Marymount NS, the safety and well-being of our students are always at the forefront of what we do. We recognise the serious and lasting impact bullying behaviour can have on the lives of children. That is why we are fully committed to both preventing and addressing bullying in our school community.

If you have any concerns regarding bullying and your child, please do not hesitate to contact your class teacher.


Thank you for your continued support in helping us ensure Marymount is a safe, respectful, and caring environment for all.



## **22. Assembly**

Our weekly assembly is an important part of school life, with birthday celebrations, presentations by our Green Schools committee and Students' Council, curricular and extra-curricular awards. It is important for us to stay connected!

## **23. X – Twitter Account**

 Please stay connected with us by following all our news and activities on our Twitter account - @therowerns.

## **24. School Bills**

We appreciate that this time of year can be expensive for parents especially for those trying to pay for a few children. Please feel free to pay any school bills in instalments if required, and for anyone experiencing any difficulty in addressing the costs, contact the principal in confidence to discuss.



## **25. Birthday Invites**

We would ask for your cooperation in not distributing birthday invitations in school. This has been our school policy for many years. Due to data protection the school cannot give out names or contact numbers that may be required for birthday lists. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## **26. September SESE Trips**

Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes enjoyed a wonderful SESE trip to the Wexford Heritage Centre with Ms Cody & Ms Fennelly, where they learned valuable history lessons about the Vikings. The pupils explored exhibits, took part in activities, and have since been working on follow-up projects inspired by their visit.

Meanwhile, First, Second and Third Classes, with Miss Lyng and Mrs. Morrissey, visited Kennedy Park Arboretum. Their trip focused on nature and the environment, and the children gained many new insights during this very informative outing. We are especially grateful to the staff of the Arboretum for giving so generously of their time to provide this free trip.

## **27. Parents' Association Marymount NS Fundraiser Lotto**

We, the Parents' Association, would like to sincerely thank all parents and the wider community who have supported our school lotto since it began in March last year. The lotto is a wonderful way of helping to support our school, and we are very grateful for your continued participation.

The current Lotto Jackpot amount stands at **€1,575** and there are also fantastic prizes to be won nationwide in the upcoming Halloween draw. You can take part using the following link:  
<https://www.ourfundraiser.ie/org/marymountns>

We would also like to give a special word of thanks to Trisha in the office for her work in promoting the lotto and presenting the weekly prizes. Your support makes a real difference and is an invaluable help in keeping our school well-resourced for all of the children.

**Regards, The Parents' Association.**

## **28. Students Council**

The aim of the Students' Council is to provide students with greater involvement with decision making procedures of our school and to have their voice heard. The council will meet several times a term. Our new council will be formed in the coming weeks

## **29. Gaelic Football**

Girls and boys from 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class will get the opportunity to represent their school on the football field. The inclusive nature of the game allows all pupils to develop their Gaelic football skills. A big thank you to our coaches Ms. Sheehan from Inistioge and Ann Delahunty, Ms. McCormack and Ms Cody from the Rower. Without these teachers giving up their time we would not be able to facilitate these sports in our school. A huge well done to all the girls and boys taking part.



## **30. Swimming**

Fourth & Fifth class pupils will begin their swimming lessons in the Apex, New Ross on Friday 7th of November and will complete a seven-week course.

## **31. Croke Park Hours**



Staff of the school are required to carry out thirty-six extra hours per year to deal with some of the following: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) / Induction / Policy development / Planning / Staff Planning. This is in conjunction of own staff planning and preparation. We are required to share the use of the hours with the school community. To date we have held all of school hours on staff meeting (some schools close early for these meetings) staff planning and Special Education planning.

## **32. Staff of Marymount N.S.**

Principal: Mary Mc Cormack (Special Education Teacher)

Deputy Principal: Roisin Fennelly (6<sup>th</sup> Class)

Assistant Principal: Bríd Moloney (Autism Class)

Assistant Principal: Caoimhe Doyle (Junior & Senior Infants).

Aoife Lyng (2<sup>nd</sup> Class Girls & 3<sup>rd</sup> Class).

Catriona Morrissey (1<sup>st</sup> Class & 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Boys).

Audrey Bolger (Special Education Teacher)

Joanne Cody (4<sup>th</sup> Class & 5<sup>th</sup> Class).

Secretary: Patricia Hynes.

SNA's : Selina O'Carroll - mainstream, Ann Delahunty - mainstream, Louise Chapman- Autism Class  
Niamh Whelan - Autism Class.

Bus Escorts : Helen Fitzpatrick & Ann Katus.

Ancillary Staff : Lory O'Neill, Helen Fitzpatrick



## **DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR:**



Parents Association A.G.M – Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> of October at 8pm in the school.

School Closing on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> of October for a week for midterm break.

Returning Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> of November.

Parent / Teacher Meetings – Tuesday and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> of November.

School Closure - Child Protection Procedures – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

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*Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, with your invaluable help and co-operation we look forward to making this year a productive and happy one for all children attending Marymount N.S.*

*Mary M<sup>c</sup>Cormack and Staff.*

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