



Ard Rí Community National School

Ard Rí C.N.S, Balreask Old, Navan, Co. Meath.
Principal: Darragh Roe
Roll No 20352T



Newsletter February 2025

To start there is a little bit of policy stuff we need to go through...please read carefully!

Healthy Eating and Hot School Meals

Ard Rí CNS have a [Healthy Eating Policy](#).

Please provide your child with a small snack for 11 o'clock break. Healthy snacks we encourage are fruit, vegetables, yogurt, cheese and salad. Chocolate, sweets, biscuits and sugary pastries do not belong in a healthy lunch box. Do not send too much food as children will need an appetite for Hot School Lunch.

We have worked hard to put in place, what we feel, are the best Hot Lunch provider. There is negative information about Hot Lunches in the media. **The Lunch Bag** are fully transparent ([info sheet](#)). I often eat a Hot Lunch when there is one left over, they're grand! Parents must be positive and active in the Hot Lunch system. It is important you and your child regularly sit down to go through the menu and change the order as required.

It is part of the process that the lunch, eaten or uneaten, will go home in the box provided every day. This communicates to parents what has or hasn't been eaten and allows you to plan as appropriate.

If you have engaged fully with the system and your child still does not eat the food, please ask for support on ardrics@lmetb.ie.



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School Internet Safety- Acceptable Use Policy ([view here](#))

Pupils are not allowed to bring personal and internet-enabled devices into Ard Rí CNS, including but not limited to;

phone, smart phone, smart watches, devices with cameras or gaming functions, iPad, iPod, tablet, laptop, leapfrog etc.

There is currently a trend where children record themselves at school and share the video on social media. The school is not a public space. Children and staff do not give permission to have their image captured and used in this way. I must stress, smartwatches with cameras are not allowed at school.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and co-operation on this matter.

HSE's school health programme

The Department of Education have asked schools to share the following HSE letter with parents.

<https://www.arcticns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/HSE-note-to-parents-English-1.pdf>

The letter provides important information to parents about the HSE school health programme and explains a new statutory obligation on schools to provide information about pupils to the HSE.



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Some Dates for your Diary

<u>Bedtime Stories</u> Tuesday 25 th of February 6 to 6.30pm	Bedtime Stories is a fun event to promote a love of reading in our younger pupils. Children in classes Junior Infants to First return to school, in their pyjamas with their parent to enjoy a story and a cookie supper with their friends.
<u>Goodness Me, Goodness You! (GMGY!)</u>	During the month of February, children will learn about and celebrate <u>St Brigid Day</u> - St Brigid is a patron Saint of Ireland and the Humanist celebration of <u>Darwin Day</u> to commemorate Darwin's contributions to science.
<u>School Closure</u> Monday 3 rd of March 1.40pm	School will close for all pupils at 1.40pm to facilitate whole staff training in ' Restorative Practice '
<u>School Closure</u> Friday 28 th of March 12midday	School will close for all pupils at 12midday to facilitate whole staff training in ' Bí Cinealta ' (Be Kind- Anti-Bullying)



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Relationships and Sexuality Education

Teachers will be commencing the Relationships and Sexuality education programme (RSE) in the coming weeks. RSE is an integral part of the Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) programme. RSE provides children with opportunities to develop knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practical skills necessary to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships with self and others. In addition to learning about relationships, RSE invites children to explore concepts such as physical development and human sexuality. Topics are explored with children in a developmentally appropriate, spiral nature throughout their primary education.

The sensitive elements of the Relationships and Sexuality education programme are covered under the Strand Units, 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking Care of my Body' and 'Safety and Protection'. We will be completing these Strand Units with all class levels during Term 2.

This programme forms part of the SPHE curriculum which all primary schools are required to implement. Co-operation between parents and teachers is essential to the success of this programme. It is important that parents are aware of the content of RSE lessons and can discuss the content with their children. Your child may bring home worksheets which will inform you on the topics being covered in class and how you can reinforce the messages and/or content at home.

There has been some concern in the media over updates to the Post-Primary School RSE curriculum. You can familiarise yourself with the content of the Primary School RSE lessons at:

<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/RSE%20in%20Primary%20School%20Parent%20Tips.pdf>

<https://www.curriculumonline.ie/primary/curriculum-areas/social-personal-and-health-education/sphe-rse-toolkit/>

The Ard Rí CNS Relationships and Sexuality Education policy has recently been updated:

<https://www.arcticns.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/RSE-Policy-2023.pdf>

If you have any concerns, please email us on arcticns@lmetb.ie .



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Green School Update

Our Green School Committee have been busy working as Picker Pals, keeping the school grounds in good order. We remind all pupils to work together on keeping Ard Ri litter free. All classes are now monitoring the correct use of bins to ensure effective recycling throughout the school.

We are currently working on the Water theme of the Green School programme. The Water theme looks at developing awareness around water conservation and how to effectively manage this important resource in our school sand at home. Our student committee came up with the slogan '**Stop the drop, keep the environment on top!**' All classes will have the opportunity to take part in a Green Schools Water Poster competition in early February.

Chess at Ard Rí CNS

We had great success holding an in-school chess tournament for all interested pupils from 2nd to 6th Class before Christmas.

Four Ard Rí Chess teams attended an inter school chess tournament on Wednesday 29th January. The Féile Fichille (Chess Festival) tournament is a one-day event that encourages participation in chess in Primary Schools. It was great to see teams representing Ard Rí CNS at the Féile for the first time and hope all pupils had a fun filled day.

Pupil Council Update

At the most recent meeting of the Pupil Council it was decided to introduce the following award systems:

1. **Cinneáltas Award** to celebrate children who go the extra mile to spread kindness.
2. **Eco-warrior Award** to recognise children who are dedicated to the Green School initiatives we are running in the school.

The Council are delighted to announce we will be supporting the [Our Shoes Appeal](#) We will give preloved shoes a new life by sending them to in-need children in Southern Africa. More info to follow.



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Dear Minister,

'There is work to be done' - school principal tells new minister

A Meath primary school principal said schools in the county should welcome the prospect of a local minister for education.

Darragh Roe, principal, Ard Rí Community National School in Navan is urging Minister McEntee to engage with local school leaders directly to ensure no time is lost in achieving real progress for the children of Meath.

"There is work to be done! For us, providing facilities for our rapidly growing community is front and centre. Ard Rí Community National School is 15 years old this year. We opened with seven children in 2010. We now have 361 children, learning across 15 classrooms tucked away in temporary accommodation at the back of Navan Rugby Club. While we have an upbeat outlook on life, our facilities are stretched beyond belief. We sought additional modular rooms from the Department of Education three years ago. We have been putting in partitions and coming up with interim solutions for space since then. There is nowhere near enough space for children to play, nowhere to teach children with additional needs, no universal access toilet, there is no flow through the building and unbelievably, a simple and inexpensive plan to create a central corridor, with storage and a second special education room has just been shelved by the department.

"While we are fighting for scraps at Balreask Old, we are awaiting planning permission for a state of the art new build at Academy Street, Navan, where we will share a campus with our friends from St Ultan's Special School. This vital two-school project faces delay after delay. The minister will be aware of the increase in demand for Special Classes, especially in the Navan area. Once built, Ard Rí CNS will provide four classrooms for children with autism. This will be a welcome relief for 24 families in the Navan area. The current scheduled delivery date for this new campus is 2027. I would like to challenge the incoming minister to cut the ribbon on this new build within this projected time frame."

Mr Roe, said he hoped Minister McEntee would appreciate the scale of change currently underway in Irish primary schools nationally.

"Society is changing and school leaders welcome updates to curriculum and pastoral approaches to better address the evolving needs of our pupils. However, the pace of change in our schools needs to be managed so that school leaders can maintain a steady ship for children and staff. Schools are more complex than ever before and schools are crying out for supports of external professionals like Psychology, OT, SLT to begin to meet the needs of our diverse communities," he concluded.

Ard Rí principal, Darragh Roe, Tánaiste Micheál Martin and Cllr Aisling Dempsey talk to pupils of Ard Rí CNS, Navan in December.