

# RMDSNEWS

## ***Ranelagh Multi-Denominational School***



### ***From The Principal's Desk:***

### ***On behalf of all the pupils and the staff...***

*I want to thank you all for your support of the many and varied activities that go on over the course of a school year. It simply would not be possible to run our school without the voluntary support of parents and families and for that we are most grateful. Together with your continued financial support of the school, we are a thriving and vibrant school community.*



## From The Principal's Desk:



Sixth class leave us next week to go their various ways. We wish them every happiness and success and all our good wishes for the future. We said goodbye to Faye (S1) in May as she moved to Limerick. Now we say goodbye to Harry (R1) and Billy (R2), who are moving to Brussels, to Beatrice (R1) and Reuban (R3) who are moving to Cork and to Julia (R5) who is moving to St Conleth's. A temporary goodbye to Hugo (S1) who is going to New York for a term. We look forward to keeping in touch and to seeing them come and visit.

We also say goodbye to Joyce Cole who has worked with us here in RMDS as a special needs assistant. We shall miss her exceptional caring skills, her kindness and her absolute reliability. Ann Gallagher and Melissa Hanney also leave us. Both of these amazing young teachers have fine careers ahead of them. We are lucky indeed to have had the benefit of their energy and enthusiasm for teaching, and for getting wholeheartedly involved in the life of the school over the past two years.

Continually reflecting on and talking about teaching and learning is at the heart of the RMDS ethos. I believe that this is what really enables us to be a progressive and thriving school. That philosophy enables us to embrace challenges and ideas and to see them through to the finish. Some recent examples include the establishment of the choir, the embedding of Forest School in our provision, and the proposed ethos review next year. I think it is that kind of environment too that encouraged the children

to carry out their recent fundraising to raise money to provide a fort in the park. They raised nearly €2,500 in a few weeks by all sorts of means – cake sales, bob-a-job, attic sales, street parties, book events, drawing competitions, quizzes and competitions of various sorts. The 'fort' will happen, although it may be next year before it is finished.

*This is my last summer newsletter. I have been principal here in RMDS for 24 years and every day has been a joy.*

It seems like yesterday that I came here to meet Padraic Mulholland, Mary Clare Pigott and the other two members of staff at the time, Alice Hayes and the late Dorothy O Colmáin. While we have grown and changed in so many ways, the early spirit of collegiality, the commitment to the Educate Together ethos, the work ethic and the sense of joy and pride in being part of this school remains buoyant. I will be back for the first few weeks of term to assist with the transition process and to introduce Rosemarie Styne, our new principal, to RMDS. The staff, the pupils and the parents of RMDS are one amazing community. It is a job to cherish.

Joan Whelan



## Junior Infants



***We have come to the end of our time in Junior Infants, and we have had so many great times together that it's hard to remember them all.***

Some of our favourites included when the Sam McGuire came to school, when we did the heat experiments and melted chocolate to make buns and when we sang *Ámhráin na BhFiann* when the army came with the flag for 1916. We also sang songs when the Grannys' and Grandads' came and we ate cakes too. Other songs we learnt were *Light up Diwali*, *This Old Man* and "Earth is our Home" for Earth Day

We loved books this year – some of us especially enjoyed our planet maths books and the book fair was fun too. We loved getting homework. PE with Mr Fairbrother was great, especially going to the park. We enjoyed playtime on the roof garden and games like Tag and Sharks and Boatmen. We loved our buddies and say thank you to them for helping to mind us so well. Pet day, the Christmas Fair, the pantomime and Airfield were all great days too.

We are sad to say goodbye to Joyce. Joyce says that it was a great pleasure to work with Junior Infants this year. She really enjoyed the activities especially doing role play. Joyce wishes everyone good luck in Senior Infants.

As the class teacher, I have enjoyed every single thing we did in Junior infants. We have learned so much from one another when discussing topics in Core Curriculum and S.P.H.E.. We learned that we are the same in some ways, but also very different, and that all our strengths are celebrated here in RMDS. We also learned about other cultures and Religions around the world and their traditions and celebrations. Our morning activities time gives us a chance to work in small groups I have been very lucky to have such a great class and to the parents.

*It is with heavy hearts that we say goodbye to our lovely principal Ms. Whelan. Every morning we know that Ms. Whelan will be at the gate, and come in to say hello and ask us about our work. Ms. Whelan always has time to listen when anybody is concerned or worried. We know that even when Ms. Whelan is not here in the school that she will always remember us and that we will certainly never forget all the smiles, advice and kindness that she has shown us. We promise that we will keep working hard and being kind to each other, as we know that would make Ms. Whelan happy and proud.*

*We hope Ms. Whelan will come back in to visit for coffee and cake when she has time. We love you very much.*

*Therese Coogan, Joyce Cole and Junior Infants*



## Senior Infants



### ***When Ms. Brennan asked us what our favourite memories of the year were we had so many that we had to leave some out!***

Mr. Teddy's adventures to all of our homes each weekend was a lot of fun and created excitement every Friday as we picked out a name. Well done to Jack for being so patient as he had to wait until the very end for his turn!

Our absolute favourite art activities were making clay monsters and decorating them as well as making bird's nests and fairy houses in forest school. Speaking of forest school, we enjoyed it so much. We loved learning outdoors and especially getting hot chocolate each week from Caroline, our leader. The group that stayed in the class had fun too and got to do PE, fun Maths activities and circle time.

Alana Lily's mum helped us to improve our yoga skills. She thought we were amazing and we really enjoyed being part of the whole school yoga class in Linear Park on Earth day. Simon, the GAA coach, taught us a lot of new skills in Gaelic football and Mrs Ryan took us for PE and Drama each week.

We love singing so when we were thinking about our Senior Infant memories we ended up remembering lots of songs that we learned throughout the year. We know all the letter sound songs by heart, with actions, and we love singing Óró sé do Bheatha 'Bhaile

and Stocaí Beag! Learning how to waltz and playing rhythms with percussion instruments in different groups were special too.

We were busy making lanterns and head costumes to wear for the Christmas concert as we told the story of how the Chinese New Year is celebrated. We had such fun turning our classroom into a classroom of 100 years ago for the 1916 celebrations. Some people dressed up and Ms. Brennan was extremely strict with us that day! Our parents came in to see the classroom and to look at the books we made about School Life 100 Years Ago.

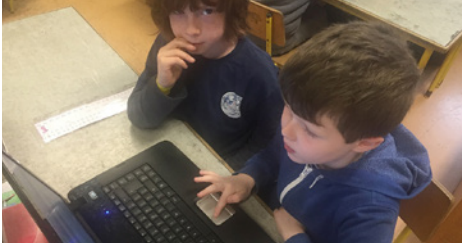
We remember trips to Rathmines Library where we listened to stories and entered a colouring competition, Imaginosity where we did a workshop about rockets, and our trip to see the play Stinky McRinky at Christmas. Gwendolyn joined our class this year and we said goodbye to Faye. We made a lovely book of memories for Faye to keep and we had a surprise goodbye party for her.

*We know Ms. Whelan is leaving our school this year. We talked about what she is like and what she looks like. We painted her and we wrote words to describe her. She is "kind, cool, tall, happy, great, friendly, fantastic, funny and sweet"!*

*Slán leat Ms. Whelan agus go raibh míle maith agat.*

Now we are looking forward to our end of term trip to the Zoo where we will "Explore Africa". Ms. Brennan is delighted with the way we worked so well together and how we took care of each other this year. Happy holidays to all!





## ***The summer term brought with it more exciting projects for our class...***

From hot air balloons to printed superheroes. Our imaginations were given free reign and all our work was completed skilfully and with great enthusiasm. We have really tried to develop our social skills in first class and we all agree that we love meeting new friends in our class and learning new things about each other. We have enjoyed playing in our groups at yard time as well.

We learnt all about butterflies, bees and investigated various animal habitats. Inside the walls of Rang a hAon we went on adventures all around the world while we learnt about all types of transport. We learned some new songs and revised old ones and our dance skills have come a long way too. Using the laptops was loads of fun and helped us to practice counting and adding in maths.

Recently we have been preparing for a busy summer of sports and outdoor activities by exploring different sports from around the world. We were very lucky to participate in a whole class yoga session where we met some warriors and animals. You should see our lion faces they are pretty scary...

One of the best parts of this term was getting to taste lots of treats from all around the world. We learned so much about different ingredients and measures... we will never forget that protein makes you Grow and carbohydrates make you Go!

We are very fortunate to have our mums and dads to help us with all our investigations and research projects. A special thanks to all mums and dads who read with us throughout the year and came on our very exciting class trips.

*Finally, a very special word of thanks from all in Rang a hAon to a wonderful lady who helps us every day, Ms. Whelan. All the children would like to thank you for all you've done for us throughout the year. For being a team leader, friendly, smiley, thoughtful, kind, caring, nice and magnificent every single day. You were the one who congratulated us on our best efforts with our write a books and also acknowledged whenever we tried our best. You hoped that we would get better soon if we had any injuries or illnesses.*

*Now we would like to do the same and say a very big thank you for all your efforts and for doing your best for all of us. We really appreciate everything Ms. Whelan.*



## Rang a Dó



## What a busy year we have had!

Some of the highlights include our visit to the Ark to see Joseph Coelho. He is the Poet Laureate from the UK. It was great fun and we learned lots about writing our own poetry. He signed our copy of Werewolf Club Rules. You can check out his poetry on youtube if you like.

We also learned about the famous author and illustrator Eric Carle and the collage technique he uses. Then we made our own pieces of work using this technique.

Swimming is nearly over. We have really enjoyed the lessons and we are now swimming like little fish!

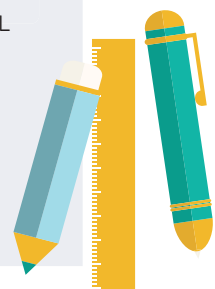
In English we wrote postcards and made lots and lots of lists. Our favourite was our list of 50 things to do in the summer. We all got certificates at an award ceremony for the write a book project and spent some time reading each others stories. Ms. Whelan was really impressed with our work. Our actual handwriting has really improved this year and we have started joined writing.

We loved sport for all day and of course the Sunday Sports Day.

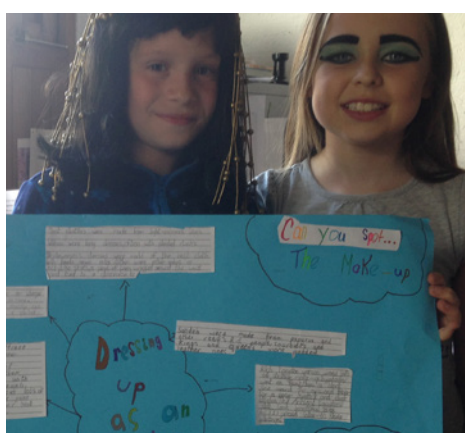
The year isn't quite over yet and there are still lots of things to look forward to – Causey Farm, The Blue Flag on Tuesday and our end of year party!

*We are very sad that Ms. Whelan is leaving. We hope she has a lovely time when she retires. We have written an acrostic poem for her.*

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## ***In Rang a Trí, we've had a fun filled, action packed, and exciting year, full of learning!***

We've worked well all year and always tried our best, even when things got hard. We've worked hard on our tables and the new maths topics introduced this year. D'fhoghlaimear a lán rudai nua as Gaeilge agus bhainear a lán taitneamh as cúpla amhrán, Phunc Anseo agus Chuile Rud Beo go háirithe. We worked together to create projects to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of the 1916 rising. We also researched Ancient Egypt and went to the National Archaeological Museum.

It seems a long time ago since we did our final Forest Schools session and we thoroughly enjoyed it especially working with tools. This term we were working with tools again, this time with The Science Gallery's Makeshop team. We soldered components on to an electronic circuit and created an LED torch.

During the year we learnt and played rugby during the rugby world cup, GAA with Simon, karate with Sensei Vincent, cricket with Leinster Cricket, Yoga with Joshua's mum, athletics with Ms. Halpin and for Santry (where our Under 10 girls got into the final) to mention a few sporting activities.

We have become regulars in Rathmines Library with our monthly visits. The final visit was definitely the best. We returned all our books to the library and then returned to the school with pops.

We really enjoyed the Write-A-Story project this year and we were delighted with the RMDS We Are Writers book which had all our stories in it. We have loved sharing our stories and acting out and writing reviews on some of the other stories.

This term the school has been trying to fundraise for a fort in the 'done up' Linear Park. Rang a Trí raised a large amount of money, with many of us setting up fundraisers such as, raffles, books sales and competitions of all sorts.

*Sadly, this year Ms. Whelan will be retiring. She's been our principal for twenty four years.*

*She's been an amazing principal; she's always kind and takes the time to listen.*

*She's very organised and solves problems well if we have them. We wish her all the best and are looking forward to meeting our new principal.*

It has been a fantastic year and we are looking forward to our summer holidays and a well deserved break!



# Rang a Ceathair



## During Rang 4 we did lots of projects such as...

Ancient Greece, Endangered Species, the 1916 rising and the Swans of Ireland. We had many trips to the library. We read lots of novels this year including "Seven Spiders Spinning", "Kensuke's Kingdom" and "Holes". We were given lots of new books by the Parents Association. We also had reading buddies in R1 and helped them with reading. We had lots of fun writing our "We are writers" stories and were very excited when we finally received the published version at the assembly in the GP room.

We had a few trips which included St. Patrick's Cathedral where we did a stained glass workshop and brass rubbings. We also are going on a trip to Clara Lara on June 16th and we're going to Dublinia to study the Vikings on June 21st.

In Visual Art, we did some Origami. One group learned how to do the paper folding while the others were at Santry Sports. Next day, Sadhbh showed the rest of the class how to make the Star box using the visualiser while some others offered individual support if required. We also worked with clay.

We acted a few legends and we did a drama called "Who Owns these Woods" all about conservation of trees and woodlands. We studied Buddhism. We did work on Pilgrimages also. We did a story about "Divali" for our Christmas Concert.

We did a rap called "Walk on the Moon" and a cool song called "Tòg Amach Mè". For our Christmas play we sang "World in Union" and "Light up the world". In March, we did a Céilí for Seachtain na Gailge where we did Irish dancing together in the hall.

We did a lot of sports this year including cricket every Friday in the Leinster Cricket Club. We also did GAA with Simon from

Ballyboden St. Endas. Denis Bastick and Michel Darragh Macauley from the Dublin team came in to our school with the Sam Maguire Cup. We also did a very enjoyable yoga session with Louise, a parent in RMDS.

We have been working on being kind in SPHE and as a reward for excellent effort our class was the first class to go to the newly revamped Linear Park. We enjoyed it very much and found it a treat since we hadn't been there for quite a long time.

Our school has a Green School Committee and this year we received the water flag. When we got it we sang the water song. It was great fun and we even got it recorded by Mr. Perera.

*Ms. Whelan is retiring this year. We will be very sad to see her go and miss her very much. We wish we could erase the day when she told us she would be retiring. She is always kind, supportive and understanding. She is always open to new ideas and thinking of how to make situations better such as Linear Park. She is always at the gate in the mornings welcoming everybody to school and saying goodbye in the evenings.*

*She is the best Principal and is always calm, relaxed, patient and understanding even when we mess up. She is never disappointed in you but always appreciates the effort you make no matter how big or small. She never gives up even in challenging situations and is always open to new ideas. She has a great sense of humour and always tries to lighten the mood.*

*It's so nice the way she remembers everyone's name and uses it when she is greeting people and she remembers all our birthdays as well. We wish her the best of luck in the future in whatever she does. She will never leave our minds and hearts.*

*She was one great principal.*



## Rang a Cúig



### ***This year was hugely eventful...***

It was the centenary of the 1916 rising, we got our water flag and the park has been developed. But the big news at the back of everyone's mind is Ms. Whelan is retiring. We were all so upset to hear the news because Ms. Whelan is fun, kind, wonderful and always up for the craic.

We have known Ms. Whelan since we started school and are sad she won't be with us as we finish. Ms. Whelan always thought about what the children were thinking and put herself in our shoes. We'll always remember Ms. Whelan as a kind and caring principal. We hope she enjoys her life outside school. We'll miss her smile and her fabulous sense of fashion(!). Her 1916 outfit looked great too. She is not one of those mean cross principals who get angry and I'm pretty sure if she was in 1916, she would not have slapped children. She brings fun to the school and makes learning a joy. She cares about every pupil. For example she replied to a letter from one person in our class about considering a Rang 7 here in RMDS.

She has a super sense of humour. She is so hard working and cares about everyone and everything. Ms. Whelan is always happy and jolly and never shouts at people. Ms. Whelan has a great commanding voice and we hope she will not lose it. Some of our

class joined the school over the past few years and they were very impressed when they say Ms Whelan at the gate every day. One of the many things we are amazed by is she can remember each of our 240 names, not to mention our parents' names. Another thing we think is incredible, she comes in every morning to each class to see if we are all in and ok. She remembers everything about each and every child, knows all our personalities like how Aifric and Laoise always volunteer to go on a message. She regularly comes up with new ideas to help improve RMDS, like the new write a book format this year. Ms. Whelan is always kind and supportive but still keeps everyone in line. We hope that you will visit the school after you retire and we finish with a poem:

*Ms. Whelan is a lovely principal  
And we hate to see her go,  
We hope she doesn't go too far,  
Just back and forth, to and fro,  
We hope we'll see you June next year,  
You bring happiness to our hearts  
And we hate to see us part.*

*So long, farewell,  
Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye*



# Rang a Sé



## As always it was a busy year in Rang 6...

The following paragraphs give you an idea of some of the highlights, including trips, PE, Art buddies and of course Ms. Whelan.

This year in art we did a lot of nice art pieces like the one that was inspired by Robinson Crusoe and William Turner. When it was the 'Chinese New Year' we painted blossom trees. We also made fairy houses out of clay for our buddies and then made a quiz to help them find them. We drew art pictures with chalk pastels last month, inspired by Edgar Degas. One of our favourites was our LOVE artwork for Valentine's; we all got the word for "love" in the 24 different EU languages. During the winter, we went to the National Gallery to see works from J.M.W. Turner.

While doing our projects on the 1916 rising, Mr. Fairbrother, Ms. Ryan and Mr. Murphy took us to Glasnevin cemetery. Jerry our tour guide showed us around the graves of famous Irish people like Eamon de Valera, Countess Markievicz, Michael Collins and others. What we all wanted to see was Daniel O'Connell's tomb. People say if you touch his coffin and make a wish the wish will come true. We also went to the GPO to learn more about the Easter Rising in Dublin.

We watched a video about how people lived during that time. After our projects, we went on a bus tour around Dublin learning and seeing the 1916 Sights. Thanks to the Parents Association who paid for the trip. While some of the class were at the Santry Competition, the rest of the class went to Kilmainham Jail. We learnt many things about the prison and saw where the leaders of the 1916 Rising were executed. We had so much fun in the park at the Royal Hospital afterwards. We walked home and got ice cream, Yum!

We went into town to meet Chris O'Dowd and Nick V. Murphy (The authors of Best-selling Book series Moone Boy). They answered questions and signed our Moone Boy books. We went to a play in the 'Ark' called 'Up to Speed'. It was a two-person show about two friends. Then we went to the park and had our lunch in the sun.

In P.E. we ran 3 kilometres in Dartmouth Square and learned the best way to train for running. Some of us represented the school in the primary school sports in Santry, where after weeks of hard training, Hazel won gold in the sprints by a long stretch. A relay team featuring Hazel, Molly, Julia and Aifric also won and came home with a big silver cup! In the last term, we started doing weekly cricket in LCC. The first school team was formed and has won all its matches so far! We have also done Basketball, Volleyball and Gaelic. The school football team has recently won the league coached by Mr. Perera. We are looking forward to sports day and sports for all day!



## Student Council

In RMDS every year each sixth class pupil gets paired up with a junior infant, or a buddy. We visit them in their class most Fridays. We help them with their work, we do art with them, we play with them and we take them places. At Halloween we brought our buddies on a Halloween parade after the Halloween raffle. We had so much fun walking around Ranelagh in our costumes with them, holding hands. At Easter we went to Belgrave Square and we had an Easter egg hunt with our buddies. They made our last year at RMDS very special. We will take away with us the memories we shared with our buddies, and we hope they make as many great memories as we have at RMDS.

As we are writing this report we are very excited and looking forward to our three days away in Delphi with Ms Ryan and Mr Fairbrother. It promises to be the best trip of all.

*Finally we want to say  
goodbye to Ms Whelan.*



*Ms Whelan is a very special person. She is very kind, caring, and most of all empathetic to everyone around her, especially the kids in the school. In sticky situations she always tried her very best to put herself in the kid's shoes. In her 24 years in RMDS she has been the backbone of this school and it will never be the same without her. Everyone will miss her giving her morning visits to the classrooms to say hello or a warm welcome on the way into school at 8:30 on the dot every morning. We truly hope the new principal is as compassionate, caring and dedicated to the school as she has truly been in the last 24 years. We know that her leaving will affect the lives of this tight community that she has worked so hard to build over the past years.*

***So now all we can say  
goodbye, good luck and go  
raibh mile maith agat!***



### ***It has been a busy year for the RMDS Student Council.***

In September, rang 6 elected Romy and Louis to attend Comhairle na nOg on our behalf. They also acted at the Chairpersons of the Student Council for the year. Comhairle na nOg is a youth parliament for Dublin City. We spent the day there and got to know a bit about being on a committee and the kinds of issues young people are concerned about in their lives. Bullying is one. We were interested in making Irish optional – it was an interesting discussion because some of the people in our group were from a gaelscoil.

Our first big event of the year was checking the progress of the linear park – we went over on a secret visit with Ms. Whelan and while we are disappointed that it took so long, we are pleased it is open now.

We led the Halloween walk around the village and we hope that maybe this started a new tradition for the school.

We also jointly organised the Spring Clean up with the Green school committee and with the Parents Association in April.

A highlight was the 1916 celebrations where we raised the flag. Kids from our school talked about their 1916 relatives and we asked everyone to dress up. It was a very successful day.

Thanks to Mr. Mulholland for helping us to organise the Hockey World and Soccer World Cup. These are two really popular events among the pupils. We think it is a good way for the different classes to get to know each other.

We finished up the year with the help of Megan, Isabelle, Zainb, Joshua, Rosie and Sadhb who helped to organise the summer hampers and sell tickets for the summer raffle. All of the student council have enjoyed working on behalf of the pupils in the school and making sure that our voices are heard.

*We wish you all a lovely summer.*

**The Student Council**



# Green School Committee



We ended our year on a great high with a whole school celebration in the yard on Tuesday 14th of June where the committee, in the company of TD Eamonn Ryan, helped raise our Third Green Flag on the theme of Water. Rang 2 led us in singing the Water song and Mark in Rang 6 read out his thoughtful poem on the subject.

The Water theme has been a two year project throughout the school. Throughout the project we had great involvement from committee members in all the classes, from all the pupils and class monitors, all the staff and from parents.



Classes completed lessons on environmental topics in various curricular areas. We had a full Day of Action in the school during which each family's 'Pledge for the Environment' was put on display in the hall. We 'Walked for Water' in Glendalough, visited the Inland Waterways Centre in Grand Canal Dock, learned about the water cycle and canal systems. We welcomed representatives from Green Schools Denmark who came to tour our school and attend a committee meeting. We organised a Recycled Halloween Costume competition, topped off with a whole school parade around Ranelagh Village, to much amusement among the locals. We also organised two inspirational recycled Christmas Decoration Displays in the school. We marked Earth Day with tree planting, a big electrical switch off for an hour and a huge yoga class in Linear Park.

Involvement in all these activities has helped develop a strong interest and commitment among the classes in all matters relating to the environment. On that note the committee would like to remind you that the theme doesn't end here. Please keep up the good work over the summer and keep striving to do your bit for the environment. When we add everyone's actions together the difference is huge!

*Have a great summer*

RMDS Green School Committee.

## Childcare



### This year was a very successful one for childcare.

Most of our sessions were full and our ad hoc places were well used during the year as well. We ran 3 great camps at Halloween, in February and at Easter. All of them were oversubscribed. Some highlights of the year included our baking, art & crafts, gymnastics and loads of outdoor activities, which the children enjoyed very much. We even had to spray the children with the hose during those few hot days early in June!

We are looking forward to a busy July summer programme – application forms are available outside the office now and places are limited. Our Summer Camp will run from the 4th – 29th July. We will be open for childcare in the afternoons until 5pm so if you are interested get in touch. We are now taking names for September as well. Please get in touch by email [childcare@rmds.ie](mailto:childcare@rmds.ie) or phone 085 1156506 for more information if you are interested.

It's that time of the year where we say goodbye to some old faces. We would especially like to say goodbye to Senior Infants who attend the early session and who are going into rang 1. We wish them well. Thanks to all the parents for their support throughout the year from all the childcare staff, Mishily, Leanne and myself. **Hope you all have a great summer and look forward to meeting some old and new children in September.**

Caroline Carroll- Percival  
Childcare manager



## From the PA

The RMDS PA would like to extend their enormous thanks to the entire school parent body for their support over the 2015/2016 school year. We had a very busy and hugely successful year, and this is accredited to all who joined the committee, volunteered their time in running various events and especially to those who turned out on numerous occasions to support the PA events.

The PA endeavour to involve the parents in school life, be it through fundraising events, or just fun events! We aim to provide a social platform for parents to get together and catch up. Where we can combine this with fundraising, which we often do, we usually have a very successful outcome! As well as the social and fundraising aspects, we also like to include a social awareness project and an informative session for parents in our programme. We also focus on enriching the school calendar for the children, and events such as the Cinema Night and Sports Day are firm favourites with the children.

Taking a look at the busy year, we were delighted to have been able to achieve so much, and to have covered such a broad range of activities. We began with our Welcome Coffee Morning in September. The sun shone, and we had a morning of good coffee and lovely baked goodies in the yard. A great opportunity to introduce the new parents to the PA, as well as to welcome existing parents back after summer break. We use the coffee morning to highlight the PA AGM, also in September, and to encourage (persuade!) new members to join the committee.

Our first official school event was brought to us by Lisa Godson. The Syrian refugee crisis was dominating the headlines, and Lisa presented an opportunity for the children to get involved and support the Human Appeal aid agency. The agency put out an urgent call for Hygiene Packs, and the children of RMDS responded with incredible enthusiasm. We collected in excess of 300 packs which were transported to the collection point by Tommy Kenny (Josh and Sara's dad). Well done to all on in incredible effort.

The Parents Quiz night followed in November. Nick Kelly, as MC, put on a great show, including some very tough rounds and of course, the sing-out round – always a hit! This year the winning teams earned art supplies, class trips, and books chosen by the students for R4, R3, R1 & Senior Infants. Well done to all of the winning teams, and thank you to all who supported a super night!

The Parents Association took over some of the Executive fundraising roles this year in line with the governance restructuring. As well as the seasonal raffles, we embraced the 2016 Christmas Fair with a massively successful outcome. A super sub-committee was formed to head up the various areas, and they all worked tirelessly to achieve our fundraising goal for the Linear Park development. So, so many parents helped out on the day, working shifts on stands, baking, cooking and just generally attending. Too many to mention, but special thanks to Niall O Donnchú, Naomi Masterson, Niamh Skelly, Margaret Bleutt, Ivana Bacik and Katy Hanley who took on the bigger tasks. Please do come forward early in the new term if you would like to play a role in the 2016 RMDS Xmas Fair (it is never too early to talk about Christmas!).

The Parents Informative evening in January 2016 saw the brilliantly tech-savvy Emmett Kelly come to the school to talk to the parents



about Internet Safety. As a parent of four boys, Emmett was able to highlight the many problem areas that parents face in this fast moving space, and to offer possible coping solutions. Notes available via the class reps.

February welcomed back the Cinema Night to the School – a highlight in the school calendar for the children. We screened 5 movies in the various class rooms, and served refreshments in the hall for the parents. Thanks to Kieron Walsh who provides a super movie selection, and also to Tim Gill who steps in as AV technician on the night. This year, we put the money raised towards sending 5th and 6th classes on a 1916 coach tour in April. Dualway Coaches collected the classes from the school and dropped them back after the tour. The guide was highly praised by teachers and students alike – a really worthwhile excursion.

The Parents Association highlight of the year had to have been the RMDS Red Carpet Parents night. Over 100 parents gathered for an incredibly privileged social night. We were entertained by eleven parents in the school, who are all at the top of their game in their fields of TV and film. We were treated to presentations covering productions such as The Great Irish Bake off, Love/Hate, Kisses & Room. We enjoyed to award winning short films as well as insights into documentary making in Dublin. Thank you to Nick Kelly for bringing the idea to the PA and to the wonderful contributors from the parent body who gave us a glimpse of the glamour (and bad language!) in this industry – Richard Chaney, Maire Kearney, Kieron Walsh, Tom Conroy, Juangus Dinsmore, Maya Derrington, Stuart Carolan, Ed Guiney, Billy McGrath and Lance Daly.

The Sports Day is the final event of the year. Sandford Park School were very generous once again in allowing us to use their wonderful facilities. We always enjoy a super day there with racing, novelty events, outdoor games, ice cream, hot dogs and the tuck shop – well stocked with all of the lovely donated baked goods! This year it was particularly nice to see so many of the children in their new RMDS t-shirts and hats, which the PA arranged, despite the weather!

A final note to thank all of the hard working committee members who did so much on behalf of the PA all year. You were all fantastic! We look forward to welcoming many new members on board in September 2016. PA meetings are usually once a month, on the first Tuesday, from 8pm in the School – so please do think about coming on board!

Wishing you all a fantastic summer!

**Avril Whelan**

*Chairperson*



# From the Board of Management

It was (almost!) all change on the Board at the beginning of the year, as the previous Board ended its four-year term and handed over to a new Board. Three members of the previous Board (Joan Whelan, Paul Fairbrother and Will Connor) remained, and were joined by David Harney, Henrietta McKervey, Clodagh Keher (all of whom are RMDS parents) and two new community representatives, Gerry Murphy (a former parent) and Maurice Devitt. Together, we'd like to say a big thank you to the previous Board for the work they did on behalf of the school and the community of pupils, teachers and parents.

As with previous Boards, the management and administration of the school and overseeing the school's educational activities takes up most of the time. This work covers not just the operation of the school, but also the childcare service and the programme of extra curricular activities. In addition to this work, every new Board agrees some areas of focus for its term of office. We decided to look at the development of music at RMDS and to see how we can become more active in the life of the our local area and have more presence in the community.

The Board's work this year includes:

## Voluntary Contributions

The financial support we receive in contributions every year is vital to keeping the school running smoothly and maintaining a comfortable and stimulating environment for all our children. Many thanks to everyone who gave so generously to the school this year through the Voluntary Contribution scheme: we've exceeded our target of €40,000! Among other things, thanks to VCs we were able to fund the renovation of Linear Park and contribute to the continuing programme of maintenance and repairs to the school buildings itself.

## Ethos Review

Our ethos is an important part of the core of the school, and the foundation on which we operate. The Executive is undertaking an ethos review of the school's principles, and we are working with them on this. This will continue into the next school year and parents will be kept up to date with this as it progresses.

## Maintenance Programme

The older parts of the school buildings are almost twenty years old now, and – both in terms of interior and exterior – require regular maintenance. In collaboration with the Executive, we are putting in place a rolling system for all maintenance, replacements and repairs. Scheduling the work – and the cost – in this way is a smoother and more financially sound way to look after the physical environment of the school.

## Extra Curricular Activities

The ECA programme has been particularly busy this year. A survey last month of parents about ECA provision showed that the classes are considered to be very good value as well as popular. We are currently putting together an exciting programme for September.

Of course the biggest change to the life of the Board is Joan's imminent retirement. Her dedication to the school over the last two decades has been huge. Her care, hard work and kindness have made an immense contribution, not only to the day-to-day life of RMDS, but also to the ethos and culture. We wish her all the very best for her next adventure.

Joan's replacement is Rosemarie Stynes, and we look forward to working with her. The Board would like to wish her many years of happiness here.

And finally, please have an enjoyable and restful summer everyone, and we look forward to seeing you all in September!

**Will Connor** (*Chair, Parents Association & Patron liaison*)

**Maurice Devitt** (*Insurance, Hall Rental*)

**Paul Fairbrother** (*Health & Safety, maintenance*)

**David Harney** (*School Age Childcare, Voluntary Contributions*)

**Clodagh Keher** (*Treasurer*)

**Henrietta McKervey** (*Extra Curricular Activities, Recording Secretary*)

**Gerry Murphy** (*Enrolment, Educate Together liaison*)

**Joan Whelan** (*Principal and Secretary*)





# From the Patron

It has been a very busy and successful year for the Executive Committee with work on each of the three core objectives for the Patron during the 2015/16 school year:

## Provision and maintenance of School Facilities

Following excellent work by Conn McCluskey and Colin Newman (Executive) and Paul Fairbrother and Joan Whelan (Board of Management), we have agreed a 5 year €94,000 programme of planned maintenance of the school to ensure we have first-class facilities for teaching and learning. Over the period of 2016-2021 this will include:

- Repainting each classroom and common area
- Replacing linoleum in each classroom and common area
- Replacing the furniture in each classroom
- Replacing glazing where damaged
- Re-sanding and varnishing of multi-purpose hallway
- Upgrading insulation and ventilation in Seomra Spraoi

The work will be funded from Voluntary Contributions and fundraising events such as the Christmas Fair, and thanks to parents who give so generously to support this important work.

## Oversight of the Board of Management

Following on from the joint review of roles and responsibilities of the Board of Management, Executive and Parents Association, a sub-group of the Executive led by Emma Lane-Spollen with great support from Susan O'Connell and Kathryn Heslin, have worked closely with the Board of Management to deliver:

- a comprehensive document which describes the roles of the 3 school bodies
- a clear vision for the Executive
- best practice templates for use by the Executive

## Ethos

During 2016 the Executive Committee began to examine its role in relation to the ethos of the school. A review of the ethos is now planned to commence in September 2016 using the School Self Evaluation process. This will include surveys and workshops for all members of the school community. This will be a great opportunity to understand how the principles of Educate Together are implemented and experienced by all of our school community.

In addition to the progress made on the three core areas above, we also made significant progress with a number of governance improvements. A joint Fundraising and Finance committee has been established, comprising representatives from each of the BOM, the Executive and the PA to improve coordination of fund-raising efforts. The BOM, the Patron and the PA meet at the beginning of each term to plan activities for the year and to ensure that there is no overlapping of planned school activities or fundraising events. Changes have been made in finance practices with the BOM simplifying funding flows and an alignment of accountability with management responsibility. Finally, we are reviewing the Memorandum and Articles of Association of



the RMDSA – the patron body company – in order to ensure compliance with new Companies Act legislation.

In order to fund building repairs, the executive held a number of fundraising events. The Christmas Fair was a major success this year, raising €10,000 in aid of the Linear Park project. There was a tremendous atmosphere around the school and everyone seemed to be having a good time. We particularly want to thank all of the parents, pupils, teachers and local businesses who contributed to making it such a very successful event. The Halloween and Easter raffles were run as usual – thanks to the parents who donated prizes and the student council who helped sell tickets at the gate. These events are an important part of fundraising but also have a strong role that complements that of the Parents Association in community building and strengthening our ethos.

## Looking to the next year and the future

As we know, this year sees the end of an era, with the retirement of Joan Whelan from the School. On behalf of the Executive I would like to sincerely thank Joan for the fantastic job she has done over the years and for the dedication and commitment she has shown right to the end of her tenure. We wish her a wonderful and well-earned retirement.

As patron, we participated in the Board of Management recruitment process for the new principal, and I am confident we have found an excellent candidate in Rosemarie Stynes to take up the mantle next year. We wish every success in her new role.

In terms of the Executive Committee, we have a number of people who are stepping down this year, including myself. I would like to thank Margaret Bluett, Kathryn Heslin, Susan O'Connell, Emma Lane-Spollen and Niall O'Donnchu for their years of valued service. Particular thanks go to Margaret who as Secretary did trojan work to make my job as Chairperson easy and Niall for a remarkable 6 years hard graft as our treasurer. At the AGM on 14th June a new committee was elected and I would like to wish them all every success well as they take up their duties over the coming year.

**Kevin Hewson**  
*Chairperson*

## Other info...

### Second level schools

*This year, Rang 6 move to the following second level schools:*

SECONDARY SCHOOL	BOYS	GIRLS
Gonzaga College, Ranelagh	2	
St Mary's, Rathmines	3	
St Louis, Rathmines		1
Our Lady's Grove, Clonskeagh		1
Sandford Park, Ranelagh	5	4
Stratford College, Rathgar		1
Muckross Park, Donnybrook		4
Stepaside ETSS		1
The High School, Rathgar	4	1
Loreto, St Stephens Green		1
Belvedere College, Dublin 1	1	

It is advisable to contact the second level schools of your choice as soon as children start in primary school, in order to be more informed about their enrolment policies.

### Dates for 2016 -17

(provisional)



**School reopens:** Thursday 1st September 2016 at 8.30am

**October half term break:** Monday 31st October to Friday 4th November inclusive

**Christmas holidays:** School closes on Wednesday 22nd December 2016 at 12 midday and reopens on Monday 9th January 2017 at 8.30am

**February half term break:** Monday 20th February to Friday 24th February inclusive

**Easter holidays:** School closes on Friday 7th April 2017 at 12 midday and reopens on Monday 24th April\*

**Public holidays:** School will close for the following public holidays:

Monday 1st May

Monday 5th June

**Summer vacation:** School will close for the summer vacation on Friday 30th June at 12 midday.



\* Unless changes are required as part of contingency arrangements to make up for time lost due to unforeseen school closures, in which case the school may reduce the length of the Easter break.

### Remember – Junior Infants

Junior Infants go home at 12.10pm for the first five days. From Tuesday 8th September, normal closing time of 1.10pm will apply.

### Staffing 2016–2017

#### Class teachers:

*Junior Infants:* Therese Coogan

*Senior Infants:* Rita Brennan

*Rang 1:* – Colette Desmond

*Rang 2:* – Aoileann Farley

*Rang 3:* – Amal Pererra / Mary Clare Pigott

*Rang 4:* – Assumpta Neylon

*Rang 5:* – Louise Ormiston

*Rang 6:* – Paul Fairbrother

#### Resource teachers:

Maria Halpin

Therese Curran

Margurette Ryan

Jilly Swain / Caroline O Dowd

#### Deputy Principal:

Padraic Mulholland

#### Principal:

Joan Whelan / Rosemarie Stynes

#### Special Needs Assistants:

Christina Dowling

Anne McCullough

Ann Maguire

#### Classroom assistants:

Mishily Sibanda

Leanne Cunningham

#### Secretaries:

Eleanor Murphy-White

Mary Holder

### Notices

Pupils are accepted on a first come, first served basis. This applies to all pupils, including siblings. There is a significant demand for places, so please put siblings names down on the pre-enrolment list within weeks of their birth.

School requisites and school tours payments for 2016-17 can now be made online. Go to the school website at [www.rmids.ie](http://www.rmids.ie) and click on the contact button. Scroll down to the Easy Payments plus button for school activities and items and follow the instructions. Voluntary contributions can also be made online or contact Mary in the school office with any queries. Please ensure we have updated contact details for you and your children for September – the onus is on you to let us know of any changes – in particular contact details for minders and crèches.

#### Newsletter Photography:

Special thanks to Michelle O'Sullivan, Joe O'Keeffe, Kate Horgan, and Alice Clancy.



**From 1st September, RMDS will implement a strict **NO NUTS** policy in the lunchboxes. We have a junior Infant child joining the school who has a severe nut allergy. No peanut butter, nutella or actual nuts should be used in the lunch boxes. A strict no sharing of lunches policy will also be promoted. If in doubt, please leave it out. We appreciate very much everyone's co-operation.**