

# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter April 2025



## The Big Build



### Brick by Brick

This beautiful picture of bricklayers working on the new school at sunrise building was captured by Mr McHenry.

As the weeks go by and the building grows, we can feel the excitement mounting.

One big step in the right direction was the removal of the crane. In place for fifteen months, we had got so used to the crane being a part of the landscape that it was quite a surprise when it disappeared!



## Smartphones and our Children

<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>



### Children and Smartphones

The five schools in the Moira and Magheralin area have grouped together to start a discussion on children's use of smartphones. We believe this is a very important topic, particularly given recent items in the news on the potential dangers children can face online despite the best efforts of parents to keep them safe.

We are keen to understand parents' views on the use of smartphones and will be circulating a short parent survey across the five schools in the coming weeks. This is to help determine what information and support we can provide, with a view to potentially holding an information session for parents.

In the meantime we wanted to share an initiative and some media on the topic that has been highlighted to the schools by some parents. Please note that some of the media linked below does contain some difficult and sensitive themes.



**Smartphone Free Childhood** is a grassroots movement of parents who believe childhood is too short to be spent on a smartphone. The aim is to bring parents together, empower parents to wait to give their children a smartphone and demonstrate that parents are demanding change. <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>



**Assignment - Ireland's first smartphone free town.** This podcast follows the story of the 8 primary schools in the Greystones area of County Wicklow, which made headlines in recent years due to a pact made by parents to delay the introduction of smartphones until the age of 12. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct5mss> (can also be found on usual podcast platforms)



**Swiped - the School that Banned Smartphones** - Two-part documentary series that see Emma and Matt Willis explore the use of smartphones by children and the dangers they can face. The program also focuses on a group of year 8 students who give up their smartphones for 21 days and the impact this had on their well-being and mental health. **Available on demand on the Channel 4 On demand player.**

# The School Improvement Plan

## Update

### The Arts

Developing a skills approach in the teaching of Art, Music and Drama

Staff availed of 2 sessions of training with Lorna Gardiner, Thinking Matters Consultant.

### Thinking Matters

Staff explored the use of Thinking Frames to encourage a transfer of thinking skills and provide a visual record of thinking.

# metacognition

### Play

Clare Devlin, Educational Play Consultant has been working with the school to support the development of the new Nursery and Foundation Stage Play provision.

### Adaptive Practice

Foundation Staff have been creating resources to increase the power of choice as to which resources the children select to support their learning in Literacy and Numeracy.

### Restorative Practice

Teachers have been implementing Restorative Circles to the weekly schedule to build stronger relationships, develop social-emotional skills and enhance conflict resolution.

Staff are also revising planning for Physical Education, improving pupil performance in the area of 'Fluency of Facts and Procedures' in Numeracy and developing strategies to improve word meaning in KS1 and KS2 in Literacy.





We asked our  
Anti-Bullying  
Ambassadors what  
their thoughts were  
on **Diversity** and  
**Inclusion**...

Diversity is  
important to make  
sure everyone is  
accepted.

Inclusion is  
important because  
it accepts everyone  
and helps you to be  
accepted.

Everyone should  
be treated  
equally!



Diversity is what  
built us all.



THE  
DIANA  
AWARD



*Here's what  
they said!*



We should always  
help people if they  
are feeling down or  
have nobody with  
them.



We should all be  
treated the same no  
matter our  
differences.

Celebrating  
diversity means  
not being racist  
or biased  
towards others.



Being unique is  
great!



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## Carl Henderson

The entire Rowandale community was rocked by the news at the end of April that a much loved member of our school family had passed away suddenly.

Carl Henderson, husband to Caroline and Dad to Aibhilin, Rian and Caoimhe, was climbing Mount Errigal with friends when he became ill. Despite the very best efforts of all involved, Carl could not be saved.

In the days that followed, tributes flooded in to the man who was described by all who knew him as a gentleman, a devoted husband and father, a much loved member of his extended family, a kind and thoughtful friend.



We will remember Carl as the Dad who did the school run, who remembered to pack the lunches, who came to school performances, who was always ready with a chat, a joke, a smile.

Carl and Caroline have been a part of Rowandale for some years now and we extend our deepest sympathies to Caroline and the children.



At Caroline's request, the Rowandale Choir sang at Carl's funeral and the family has said that Carl would have loved it. Caroline also wishes to express gratitude for the messages, acts of service and support received in these early days.



We will continue to support Caroline, Aibhilin, Rian and Caoimhe and hold them close to us in the weeks, months and years ahead.

Rest In Peace, Carl.



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Newsletter April 2025

## Portadown Festival



The Rowandale Choir was delighted to come joint third at the Portadown Festival this week. Standards from all choirs participating this year were very high, which makes it all the more special. The adjudicator Jonathan Rea remarked that the choir had, "Secure harmonies and a nicely blended sound....super enthusiasm and great commitment - a super performance!"

A huge thank you to Mr Reynolds and Mrs McCarragher for their hard work in preparing the choir.





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Newsletter April 2025

## The Daily Mile

In April, we were delighted to welcome Jackie Adair from the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust to Rowandale to do a feature on the Daily Mile.

We, as a school, have been taking part in the Daily Mile since 2016 - and we love it! The benefits are numerous - fresh air, exercise, socialising with friends, a break from classwork to clear the head. The Daily Mile is so easy to implement - there are no set-up costs and no equipment is required. At Rowandale, we love The Daily Mile!



## Year 3W



Year 3 have received certificates for completing their Young Enterprise programme.



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Newsletter April 2025

## First Holy Communion



Some of our Year 4 children, along with children from Magheralin PS, Meadowbridge Ps and Waringstown PS, celebrated their First Holy Communion at St Patrick's and St Ronan's Church in Magheralin.

A lovely day of happiness for the children and their families.

Very special thanks go to Mrs Duffy for preparing the children so well for the sacrament, to Fr Maciej for his support and for celebrating the Mass, to Mr Reynolds for preparing the choir, who sang so beautifully, to Caitriona and Denise from the parish for their help, to the amazing helpers - Lesley Anne, Beau, Laura, Caroline, Ellen and Patricia - for setting up, serving teas and coffees and clearing up afterwards, to the Rowandale parents for donating the treats and goodies, to Mrs Hughes, Mr Evans, Mrs Elliott and Mrs Silcock for their unwavering support. None of these occasions would happen without the support of the whole community. Thank you.





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Newsletter April 2025

## First Holy Communion





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## Yr 5 Trip to W5



Year 5 enjoyed a wonderful trip to W5 as part of their Inventors topic. They had a workshop on 'Marvellous Machines' and explored the exhibits! While there, the children explored Climb It! Some children were a bit apprehensive at first but look how well they faced their fears! It was great fun exploring different routes and helping our friends!

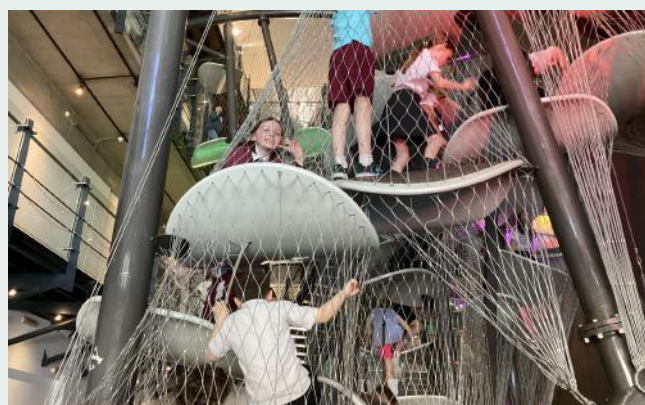
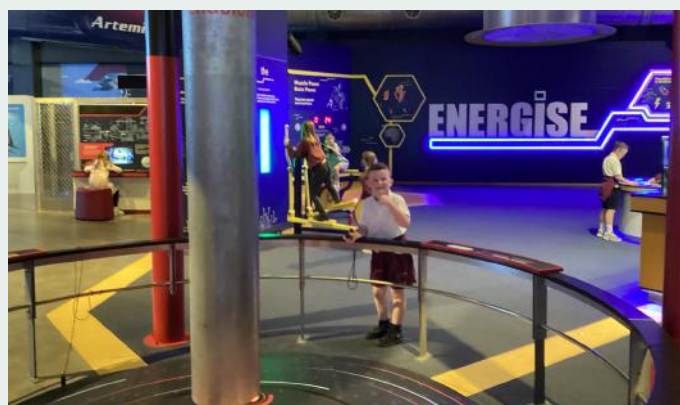
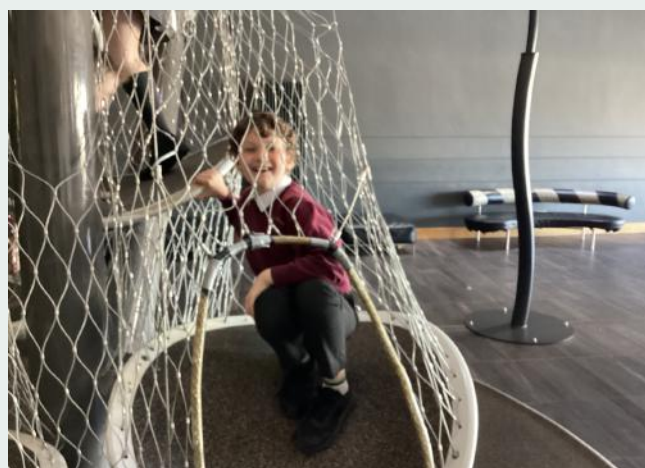
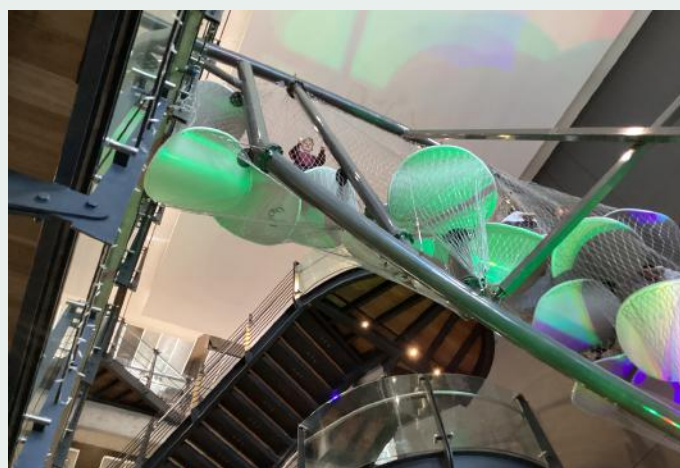




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Newsletter April 2025

## Yr 5 Trip to W5





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Newsletter April 2025

## Baby News



Congratulations to Mrs Beck and her husband, Thomas, on the birth of a beautiful baby boy. Parker James arrived safely on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. We cannot wait for cuddles!



## Wedding Bells!



Congratulation to Mr Reynolds and David who went on a Spring break to Rome and came back engaged! We are very excited for you both and wish you all the happiness in the world.





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Newsletter April 2025

## Happy Birthday Mrs McCarter

Mrs McCarter celebrated a special birthday in April. As is now tradition, there was the guard of honour, a whole-school rendition of Happy Birthday, cards and gifts and a delicious afternoon tea.

Happy birthday, Mrs McCarter - we hope you enjoyed your day.





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Newsletter April 2025

## Abseiling for Rowandale



On Sunday 6th April, twenty-four incredibly brave members of our Rowandale community met at the Europa Hotel... to abseil from the roof! Family and friends gathered on the street below, craning their necks to identify loved ones and witness their courage in the face of this enormous challenge. A huge congratulations to all who stepped out of their comfort zone and completed the gruelling descent. To date we have raised well over a whopping £8,000 and Rowandale Parents' Council have earmarked this money to go towards outdoor play equipment for the new school. Keep an eye out on social media for some more photos and videos from the day.

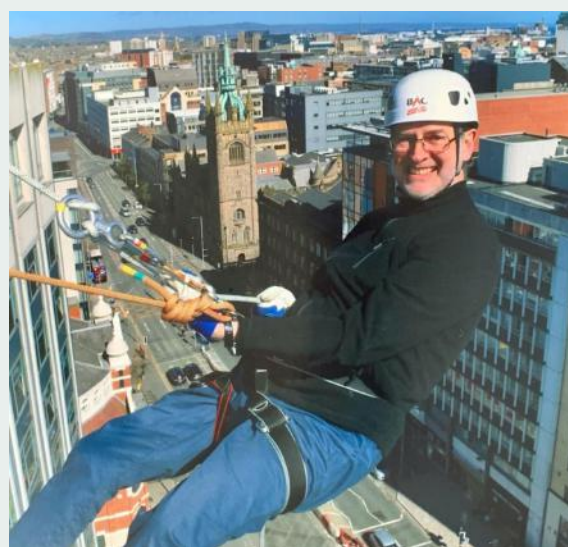




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Newsletter April 2025

## Abseiling for Rowandale





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Newsletter April 2025

## Playgroup Update

Rowandale Community Playgroup is a hive of activity - with the children are getting ready to move to nursery school and primary schools.

Emma, Caoimhe and Jayne, are also looking forward to the busy months ahead, moving to the new school building, meeting lots of new children and continuing to provide an excellent pre-school experience for the children of Moira and the surrounding areas.

Each year, Playgroup receives exemplary reports in their inspection.

Contact Playgroup on 028 9261 9325 for information about pre-School places and pre-pre-school places.



## Rowandale Community Playgroup

Places available  
for September  
2025.  
Apply now!



Call us  
on 028  
9261  
9325

18 Clarehill Road, Moira BT67 0PB  
[www.rowandaleips.co.uk](http://www.rowandaleips.co.uk)



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Newsletter April 2025

## In Focus - Heather McCarter (SEN CA)

How long have you worked at Rowandale?

I have worked at Rowandale since day 1, way back in 2007!

What is your favourite memory of Rowandale?

My favourite memory would have to be the start of our adventure here. Mrs Hughes, me and eighteen children. No one knew what the future held but we were excited for it!

What do you enjoy most about Rowandale?

No two days are the same - the children keep me on my toes and keep me young.

What do you enjoy doing outside school?

I love to read and I enjoy gardening. I also sing in a church choir. And there's nothing better than a night at the theatre!

What is your favourite country?

I have found a lovely wee spot called Ayamonte in Spain - it's a firm favourite at the minute.

If you could do anything, what would that be?

I would love to travel more. There are so many places still to see and explore.





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Newsletter April 2025

## Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Congratulations to Nazar, who has completed Level 4 in gymnastics at Salto. Well done, Nazar - we may have an Olympian in the making!

Sophie Mckee from year 4E took part in her Girls Brigade display on Friday 11th April and did brilliantly. She got awards and her 5th year badges. In September she'll be going into juniors Well done, Sophie - exciting times ahead.





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Flynn (Yr 4R) competed in his first Taekwondo championships. He won gold for pattern and silver for sparring in the Northern Ireland Taekwondo Championships. Wow, Flynn, what a great achievement!



The Carnfuff Family had a great time in Salou over the Easter holidays. They even got to meet Bert & Ernie!





## Saturday Clubs

### Saturday fun at Rowandale

We have enjoyed lots of fun this year with story, craft and outdoor play at our free Saturday sessions. These are aimed at pre-school age children and their families.

We finish this year on 31 May and will return after the summer. Why not help us spread the word to local families with pre-school age children. Anyone can sign up to our monthly newsletter which includes dates and characters (Bluey, Paw Patrol, Peppa etc).

Click [HERE](#) to sign up to our Saturday Clubs newsletter



**Saturday preschool  
fun  
closing party**

our last craft & play  
until the new  
school year

**31 May**

**JOIN US AT 11AM**  
**1 HR INDOORS THEN 1 HR OUTSIDE**  
**FREE AND NO NEED TO BOOK**

**PICNIC  
AT THE ZOO**

**CRAFT  
& PLAY**

**Saturday  
17 May  
FREE**

**11am-12 indoors  
12-1 outdoor play**



## A BIG THANK YOU...

...to our amazing Kiss & Go team who brave  
all weathers  
to help keep the traffic flowing.

Aisling, Alison, Brenda, Bronagh, Caroline, Christina, Christine, Dana, Deborah, Emma, Jodie, Julia, Kseniia, Laura C, Laura D, Laura G, Laura K, Lesley Anne, Lorna, Maria, Michaela, Nicky, Nicole, Ruth, Sian, Susanne, Ursula, Niall, Frances and Fiona.

We are all so grateful for your time.

If you would like to  
volunteer for Kiss & Go,  
Reading Partnership or  
any aspect of school  
life, please send a  
WhatsApp to  
Fiona on  
07725 355 899





## Rowandale Integrated Primary School

### Key Dates

Please keep an eye out for SIMS messages about Sports Days and end of year events

Bank Holiday: 26th May

School closes 30th June

### Contact Information

Rowandale Integrated Primary School  
18 Clarehill Road, MOIRA, Craigavon, BT67 0PB  
School Website: [www.rowandaleips.co.uk](http://www.rowandaleips.co.uk) School  
Phone: 028 9261 3946  
School Email: [info@rowandaleips.moirani.sch.uk](mailto:info@rowandaleips.moirani.sch.uk)  
Parents Council Email: [rowandalepc@gmail.com](mailto:rowandalepc@gmail.com)

