

Rowandale Integrated Primary School



Rowandale
Integrated Primary School

Newsletter September 2025

The Big Move

We did it! After years of planning, consulting, meeting and preparing, our new school is finished! Weeks and months of packing, labelling and sorting finally came to an end when we moved across to the new building at the end of August.

A team of movers, along with help from volunteers Brian, Derval, Rory, Seamus, Tim, Julieanne, Gary, Ethan, Claire, Conor, Patrick and Lorraine worked tirelessly with members of staff to get the mammoth task done.

The entire Rowandale Team is delighted with the new school, with the space, light and facilities. We are hugely grateful to everyone, especially Mrs Hughes, for bringing this amazing project to fruition.



And so the next phase begins - the demolition of the old school and the creation of the car park and play facilities.

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Open House Event

Our Open House evenings for families and staff were a great success, with many current and past pupils and their families coming along to visit our new school.

It was lovely to see so many familiar faces. Everyone was very excited to have a look around the school, chat to old friends and reminisce about favourite memories.



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Open House Event



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Google DeepMind COO visits Rowandale

We were delighted to welcome Lila Ibrahim, COO of Google DeepMind, Anna Artemyeva, Head of Google Education for UK and Ireland, Damien Harvey, Interim Head of C2K, Frances Meehan, Director of EdIS Programme along with other members from Google and C2K. Lila came to Rowandale to visit one of our classrooms to see the amazing work we have been doing in the past number of years with Chromebooks and the Google for Education tools.



Lila also heard from Mrs McCarragher about being involved in the Gemini Proof of Concept group and how AI has been impacting making learning accessible for all through the adoption of Universal Design for Learning principles at Rowandale.



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Google DeepMind COO visits Rowandale



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Year Group Pictures 2025 - 2026



Year 1S



Year 1A



Year 2DB



Year 2D



Year 3E



Year 3M

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Year Group Pictures 2025-2026



Top: Year 4M

Bottom: Year 4R



Left: Year 5F



Right: Year 5M

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Year Group Pictures 2025 - 2026



From top:

Year 6M

Year 6W

Year 7R

Year 7M

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Rowandale Integrated Nursery

In these photos, the nursery children are fully engaged in sensory play, exploring sand, water, and mud through hands-on activities. They are tipping, filling, and pouring using a variety of containers, developing their fine motor skills and early scientific understanding. The children are investigating different textures and observing cause-and-effect such as how water moves rubber ducks through a tube. This play encourages curiosity, problem-solving, and collaboration. As they work together, the children share their ideas and have meaningful conversations about what they are creating, demonstrating early language and social development.



Rowandale Integrated Nursery



Rowandale
Integrated Nursery



At nursery, we love to finish the week with a special Friday Treat, and our first week's activity had the children making their own Top Hat Buns! This engaging task combined fun and learning as children poured melted chocolate, added marshmallows, and topped their creations with Smarties - an ideal way to strengthen fine motor skills. Alongside the hands-on fun, children took part in discussions about how chocolate melts and changes as it cools, introducing early scientific thinking. They also demonstrated fantastic turn-taking and cooperation, making the experience both enjoyable and educational.

Rowandale Integrated Nursery



Our nursery has been full of colour and creativity lately! In nursery, arts and crafts play a key role in helping children express themselves and develop important skills. Recently, the children have enjoyed a variety of creative activities-from painting and free drawing to crafting paper chains and illustrating their families.

These experiences allow children to explore different materials, colours, and textures while encouraging imagination and communication. Working together with friends, they've created meaningful artwork to proudly take home and share with their families, all while developing fine motor skills and social confidence.

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Rowandale Community Playgroup



Playgroup Children enjoy a range of activities such as painting, outdoor play and watching our new playgroup building being made ready for us to move into!

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Rowandale Community Playgroup

Rowandale Community Playgroup is always a hive of activity - the children follow a full and comprehensive programme of lessons, activities and outings.

Caoimhe and Alex are also looking forward to the busy months ahead, moving into their own premises on the school grounds, 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 us on 028 9261 3946 for information about pre-School places and pre-pre-school places.



To Do List

- ☐ Call Rowandale Playgroup
- ☐ Arrange a visit
- ☐ Relax

**Call us on
028 9261 3946**

18 Clarehill Road, Moira, BT67 0PB



Rowandale Integrated Primary School

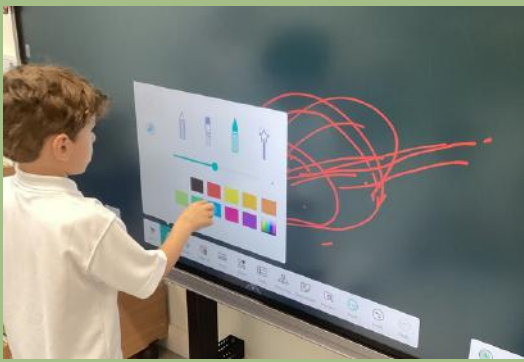
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Year 1 Settle Into School Life



The transition to Year 1 is always a big step, and we are absolutely delighted with how wonderfully our children have settled into their new class!

They have embraced the new routines with enthusiasm and have quickly become familiar with their classroom and their teachers. It's been fantastic to see them engaging with their new learning, building confidence, and already forming great friendships. We look forward to a fantastic year of growth and exciting discoveries with this brilliant group!



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Year 1 Settle Into School Life

The new block zone in Year 1 has incredible benefits for children's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. The staff have completed Clare Devlin workshops on hands on block play and gained expert insights into the educational benefits of block play.



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Year 2 Adventures

Our Year 2 adventurers have been absolutely loving exploring their incredible new outdoor and indoor zones! With mountains of blocks to build towering models, soft sand for endless digging and sculpting, and a fantastic array of loose parts to ignite their imaginations, every day is a new adventure in creativity and discovery. It's wonderful to see their ideas come to life!



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Year 2 Adventures



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Year 3 Creative Dance



Over the past few weeks Year 3 have been taking part in creative dance sessions with Clare Novaes School of Ballet. The children have loved taking part and cannot wait to perform in December.

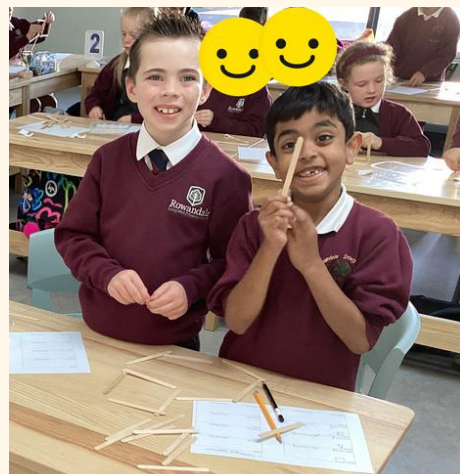


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Year 4 have been busy!

Year 4 have been busy learning about 2D shapes and have been exploring various ways in which we use 2D shapes on a daily basis.



Year 5M Chromebooks & Roots of Empathy



Year 5M using the Chromebooks to research about the life of Roald Dahl.



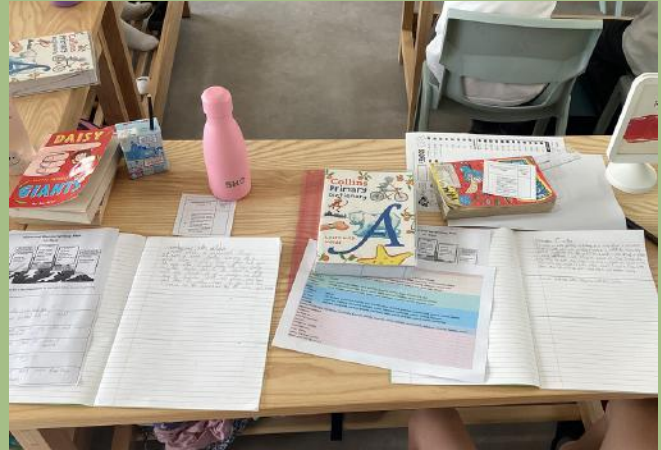
Miss Whiteway held the first Roots of Empathy lesson with Year 5M. The children are very excited about the programme.

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Year 5 Learning Resources

As part of our Universal Design for Learning journey, staff have been focusing on providing resources for children to use during writing activities. Year 5 made great use of dictionaries and word banks to write their historical stories!



Rowandale Football Team



A super performance from the Rowandale Football Team at Bluebell Stadium in September. Well done to everyone who took part.

Year 6 and the Human Body



Year 6W have been enjoying their 'Human Body' topic. So far, they have assembled skeletons to show their understanding of the bones and key organs within the body.



Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Rosie Wilson Year 3M has been having fun at Lurgan play park.



Rosie began her 4th year at GB and her sister Emily, who has just started at our Community Playgroup, has joined GB for the first time. How exciting!



Ella Gibson in Year 3M started ballet classes in September. We're looking forward to watching your progress, Ella



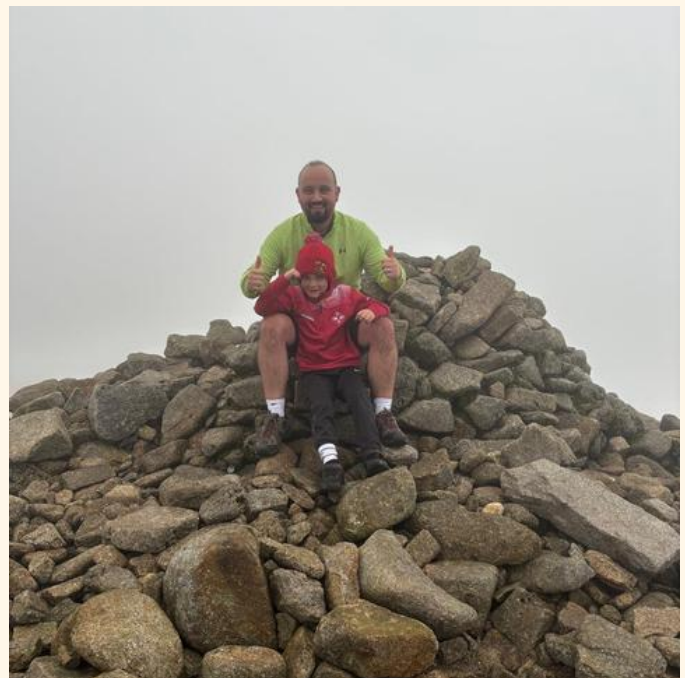
Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements

Eli Power from Year 4 in Mrs McConkey's class has had a very exciting few weeks. He's the goalkeeper for Lurgan Town 2017 Predators, and his team has been invited to the Wolverhampton Wanderers Academy in October for a special training weekend and a tournament against other Premier League academy teams.

To help raise money for the trip, Eli and four of his teammates decided to take on a big challenge, climbing Slieve Donard, the highest mountain in Northern Ireland. They didn't just walk it either – they ran most of the way up and down and made it all the way to the very top!

It was a tough climb, but the boys showed amazing determination and team spirit. Now they're even more excited to head to England and show what they can do on the pitch.

Well done, Eli!



Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Aibhilin, Rían & Caoimhe completed level 9 and Level 2 of Sea and Water Safety camp in Keadue, Donegal.

Well done to you all!

Baby news

Mrs Hanna and Sam welcomed Amber to the world in September. A beautiful healthy baby girl. Big sister Fiadh is relishing her new role!

Congratulations!

We can't wait for a visit and lots of cuddles!



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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.**

Smartphones and our Children



Rowandale Integrated Primary School supports the Smartphone Free Childhood movement.

Moira and Magheralin Schools' Smartphone Survey

In early 2025, 449 parents across the 5 schools in the Moira and Magheralin area responded to a survey on smartphones.

- **9 in 10 parents** said they would delay the introduction of smartphones if other parents in the area were doing the same.
- Nearly **8 in 10 parents** said they felt pressured into giving their child a smartphone at a younger age than they were comfortable with.

For more information (or to sign the pact), please visit <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/>

Currently ranked 6th out of 289 schools in NI for number of parent pacts signed.

School	Pacts
St Bride's Primary School ↗	128
Grange Park Primary School ↗	125
St Michael's Primary School ↗	93
St Ita's Primary School ↗	92
Forge Integrated Primary School ↗	83
Rowandale Integrated Primary School ↗	62
Academy Primary School ↗	61
Gilnahirk Primary School ↗	57
Glencraig Integrated Primary School ↗	57
Ballyholme Primary School ↗	57
Moira Primary School ↗	55

Smartphones and our Children



Save the Date

Children & Smartphones Information Evening

Tuesday 4th November 2025 7pm

**Rowandale Integrated Primary School,
18 Clarehill Road, Moira BT670PB**

Further details to follow

www.smartphonefreechildhood.org

Creative Dance



We are very excited about our innovative and creative dance sessions which take place weekly and which the children are really enjoying. The amazing Claire Novaes of Claire Novaes School of Dance came to Rowandale at the beginning of term to put the staff through their paces.

Rooted in the choreography of "Between the Earth and Sky" a sell-out dance performance at the Theatre at the Mill, Newtownabbey earlier this year, the programme aims to help the children explore movement, freedom of expression and dance in a relaxed and non-judgemental way.

It's safe to say that the programme is a great success!



Parents Council News



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Parents Council



Hi my name is **Aidan** Malone I am the **Chair** this year on the parents council. I have two daughters at the school Nora (p6) & Erin (p5) I'm a director in Malone Accounting and I'm looking forward to helping the committee & the school as best I can this year



Hi, I'm **Kerri**. I'm mummy to two boys – one in P2 and one who's counting down the days until he can join his big brother at Rowandale. I'm really looking forward to participating as **secretary** on the parent's council. I'm a science teacher, so it's great to get more involved in the other side of school life!



Hi, my name is **Tracy** Price. I have two girls, Isabella who is in P4 and Rosa, who has just started P1. For work, I'm a Quantity Surveyor and I am taking on the role of **treasurer** for the Parents Council. I'm looking forward to lots of fun and fundraising as much as possible for school.



MEET THE TEAM!



Hi! I'm **Cat** Barter! My daughter Orla is in P5. I'm stepping into the role of **Vice Chair** on the Parents' Council this year. This year I will continue to focus on delivering arts experiences and theatre adventures to the pupils, staff and families of our Rowandale community, whilst supporting the committee to host social and fundraising events.



Hi I am **Aimee**. I have two sons at the school Alexander (Yr3) and Sebastian (Yr2). I do stock control and social media for M&S and this year I will be helping with **PR** for the Parents Council. Looking forward to some lovely events throughout the year.



Hi, I'm **Ruth** and my sons Abel (Y3) and Hugh (Y2) are at Rowandale. You'll usually find me throwing horrendous moves at Kiss & Go! As **Volunteer Coordinator** I'll be encouraging lots of parents to volunteer at events to support the work of Parents Council!

Climb for Carl

On Saturday 26th of April Carl Henderson, parent of Aibhilin in Year 6 and Rian & Caoimhe in Year 3, was hiking on Errigal when he suffered a medical event and despite the best efforts of the emergency services sadly lost his life.

It took over 50 minutes for a land ambulance to reach him on the mountain path and the closest defibrillator was located approximately the same amount of time away.

In memory of his life, the family and friends of Carl Henderson are planning a sponsored walk up Errigal on Sunday 26th of October, starting at 11.30 at Errigal Car Park to raise funds to place a defibrillator around the mid point of the mountain.

By doing this, we hope that another family won't have to go through the pain of losing a loved one.

To donate please follow the link [here](#)

ClimbForCarl Tickets, Sun, Oct 26, 2025 at 11:30 AM available [here](#)

All money raised from this walk will go towards installing and maintaining an AED, with any additional funds donated to the Donegal Mountain Rescue for their efforts to help Carl on the day.

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Kiss and Go - Meet the Team

Our Kiss and Go Volunteers are a vital part of the daily routine at Rowandale. In all weathers, you will see a group of smiling faces ready to greet your child/ren and bring them safely from your car to the school gate.

This helps to keep traffic flowing, reduces congestion on the road and allows you to continue your journey to work without delays.

It also fosters independence in children, allowing them to start their day with confidence. The music is an added bonus and puts us all in a good mood, ready to face anything!



Mrs Hughes



Fiona



Suzi



Ursula



Lesley



Fiona



Kerri



Christina



Ruth



Lorna



Ellen



Fiona

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Kiss and Go - Meet the Team



Beverly



Sarah



Laura



Maria



Christine



Laura



Emma



Cassandra



Kseniia



Leanne



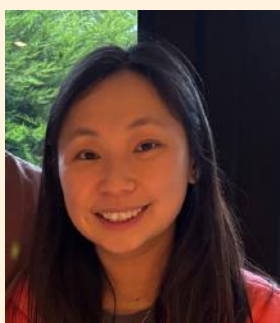
Akie



Catherine



Maria



Lai-Ping

A BIG
THANK
YOU...



Bronagh

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Can You Volunteer?

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



Facilities for Hire

Our state-of-the-art facilities are available to hire. If you are a group looking for a place to hold your meeting, sports practice, event or other gathering, call us on 028 9261 3946 or email Irishards962@c2ken.net

