

Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter March 2025



The Big Build



A Bird's Eye View!

Thank you to
Rowandale parent
David Whittaker for
these fabulous
aerial pictures of
our new school.
What amazing
progress!

Rowandale Integrated Primary School

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Integrated Education Month



Each year, Integrated schools celebrate Integrated Education Month, which is an opportunity for the collective celebration of Integrated Education and reflection on what makes us unique.



Integrated Education Month

For 2025 the theme is "Celebrating Cultural Connections".

At Rowandale we strive for diversity in terms of religious background, cultural background, socio-economic background, ability and much more. During Integrated Education Month, we celebrate this diversity and create spaces in which our school community can learn from our rich diversity. "Celebrating Cultural Connections" is focused on making the most of the rich fabric existing within our school and in wider society.



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Integrated Education Month



Environmental Youth Speak Winners



Congratulations to Annie and Lena from Year 7 who won the Environmental Youth Speak competition today at the Island Arts Centre in Lisburn. The girls faced very stiff competition from nine other primary schools in the local area. After delivering an incredible speech on how to become a 'Waste Buster', the girls came away with the first-placed prize. A great achievement and a very important message from Annie and Lena on how we need to look after and protect our planet for future generations



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Playgroup Update

The Rowandale Integrated Community Playgroup held a very successful Open Morning in March, with lots of families coming along to see the wonderful facilities for children aged 2 years and 10 months upwards.

The Playgroup Leader, Emma, along with Caoimhe and Jayne, are 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.



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Pie Competition Winners



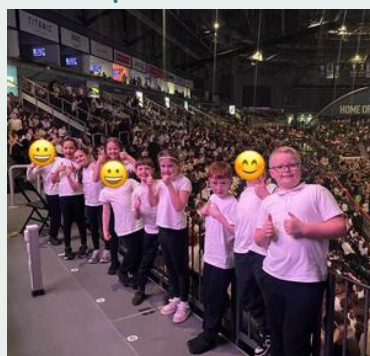
Dimitri and Jasper from 6M won The Pie Shop's 'Create A Pie' competition with their Curried Goat and Potato Pie. They had the privilege of going to the shop to help make their winning pie! They were presented with a trophy each and a shield for the school. Thank you to the team at The Pie Shop for putting so much effort into bringing the winning pies to life! They were delicious!



Peace Proms



In March, a group of children and staff from Rowandale Integrated Primary School travelled to the SSE Aren in Belfast to take part in the annual Peace Proms. A breathtaking extravaganza of colour, music, singing and movement, the Peace Proms are an uplifting and moving event and one that the children will remember always. Thank you to Mrs Hughes, Mrs McWilliams, Mrs Bennett, Mrs Evans, Miss Falloon, Miss Watson and Mr Reynolds for accompanying the children on the day. The school values the importance of providing the opportunities to participate in The Arts.



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Peace Proms



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Pancake Tuesday

The children celebrated Pancake Tuesday by making pancakes in their classrooms. There were thin French crepes and fluffy American style pancakes. The office staff even got to taste some of them and they definitely had a favourite - we wonder who the best pancake maker was...?



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Pancake Tuesday



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.**

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Friends' Day of Service



In March, Friends' School Lisburn held a Day of Service as part of their 250th Anniversary celebrations. Pupils from Friends' carried out voluntary work in various ways including school visits, litter picking, visits to care homes and much more. We were delighted to welcome a number of pupils to Rowandale to take part in Arts Activities to fit in with the whole school learning objectives. Art, drama and music lessons were provided by the students. We even had a couple of willing volunteers to help move some furniture as part of The Big Move to our new building! It was lovely to see past pupils Sarah, Sean, Caitriona and Tim back in Rowandale.



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In Focus - Playgroup Leader Emma Ovadia

How long have you been the Rowandale playgroup leader?

I have been Playgroup Leader in Rowandale Community Playgroup since 2016 and have worked in the Playgroup since 2013!

What is your favourite memory of playgroup?

My favourite memory of Playgroup is always our yearly Graduation. When I became leader I felt it was important to mark the end of the Playgroup year. It is a lovely event where all children, parents and grandparents come together for some songs and a certificate to signify the end of the academic year. We have lots of fun taking funny photos and sharing memories over some tea and coffee afterwards.



What do you enjoy most about playgroup?

I love seeing the progression of each individual child throughout the year. Many of them when they start at 2 years and 10 months have never attended a childcare setting before so it is lovely to see them form friendships and build attachments with everyone at playgroup. The progress in development in a child in the Early years in 1 year is amazing. I also love that we get to see many of the children continue to grow and thrive as they move onto Primary 1 and above in the school.

What do you enjoy doing outside school?

I love going out for nice dinners and going on holidays. Much to my husbands dismay!! I also love hosting family bbqs in the summer time.

What is your favourite food?

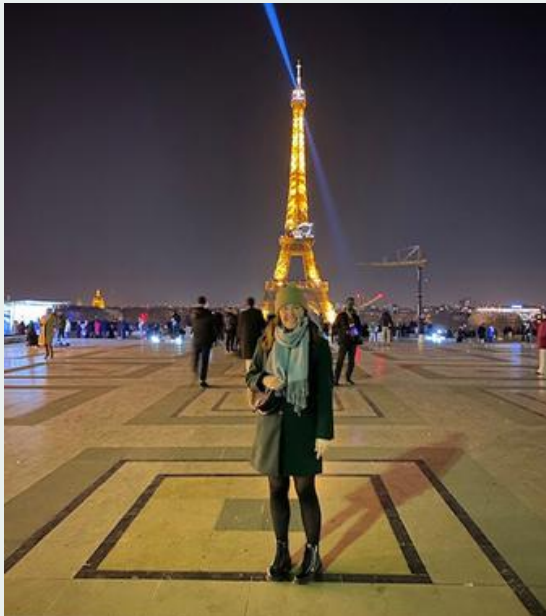
Anything Italian based, love pizza and pasta but particularly love a good lasagne!



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In Focus - Playgroup Leader Emma Ovadia



What is your favourite country?

Bali. Myself and my husband went here on our honeymoon and it was just such a beautiful country with some of the kindest people I have ever encountered..Would love to go back one day! Paris is a very close second favourite place and somewhere I have been lucky enough to visit quite a few times.

If you could do anything....what would that be?

Travel more of the world with my husband and little boy Ezra.

Saturday Clubs - free fun for pre-schoolers

Spread the word about these FREE fun sessions, aimed at pre-school age children and their families. Complimentary tea and coffee!
Sign up to the school monthly newsletter for upcoming dates and characters (Bluey, Paw Patrol, Peppa etc)

The Very Hungry Caterpillar **Saturday 10 May**
11am-12 noon: story and crafts. **12-1pm: free play outside**



FREE NO NEED TO BOOK
ALL PRE-SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WELCOME

ROWANDALE INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL
CLAREHILL ROAD, MOIRA

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

Belfast Children's Festival

The Parents' Council secured some funding this year through the Rural Engagement Arts Programme supported by The Arts Council NI and The National Lottery. A portion of this funding was used to provide drama support workshops to the pupils and staff in Year 3 and Year 7 in advance of their own theatre productions.

Thanks must go to Miss Watson and Mr Evans for their hard work in making sure the children of Rowandale have the opportunity to be part of the KS1 musical - the importance of performance skills, working together, critical thinking and problem solving. The school places great importance on the development of The Arts.

To complement the funded drama support workshops that both groups have been enjoying, Parents' Council set aside some money for a trip to the Belfast Children's Festival. We are grateful for all of the parent contributions that made this trip possible.

A few weeks after their amazing performance of "Ellie the Penguin", Year 3 attended "Sandscape" at The Brian Friel Theatre in Belfast. The theatre piece was made by four Nigerian performers. It was a rhythmic and musical show with sand, completely without words, that ended on some interactive play with the audience.

After the show was finished the children enjoyed a Q&A session with the performers.



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Belfast Children's Festival



Belfast Children's Festival

My favourite part was when they had to try and find the stone in the sand. They all kept hiding it and they kept moving it around. It was funny.

I loved the songs because they were interesting. I'd never heard songs like that before.

Playing with the sand was so funny and cool.

My favourite and funniest part was when the boys were throwing the sand at the lady's back.

I loved playing with the sand and learning how they passed it through each other's hands.

What the children had to say:

thought it was funny when they stared at us in the beginning.

My favourite part was when the actors showed us how we could write in the sand.

After the show a wee group of them hunkered underneath the umbrella and they were pouring using the sieve. They'd seen the show first then they were starting to re enact it for themselves too.

The questions they asked were relevant. You knew they wanted to find out more

They were taking in everything that was happening.

What the teachers had to say:

They realised that this was a different culture. That it wasn't something local.

None of them were hesitant about going on to the stage. Nobody sat back. They were straight in there wanting to explore and touch the sand.

You could see that there was great satisfaction with what the actors were doing with the sand and how they were manipulating it.

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The children attended "Der Lauf" at The MAC as research for their upcoming performance of "High School Musical". The show was made by a Belgian company of circus performers who wore buckets on their heads for the entire performance! They relied on the audience to help them spin plates and to guide them whilst they stacked bricks and glasses with boxing gloves on their hands!!



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Belfast Children's Festival



Thank you,
Parents Council

Rowandale Integrated Primary School

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Happy Birthday Mrs McCarragher

Mrs McCarragher celebrated her 40th birthday in March . She was presented with a gift and some flowers and had a lovely day, celebrating with her class.



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Outreach Cup Success

A huge well done to everyone who participated in the Outreach Cup over the past two months at Bluebell Stadium in Lisburn. The children have been an absolute pleasure to bring along each week, demonstrating skill, teamwork and playing football with a smile on their face.

A special mention to Carter who embodied all of these qualities and won the 'Ballon d'Or' award for his play over the past two months.



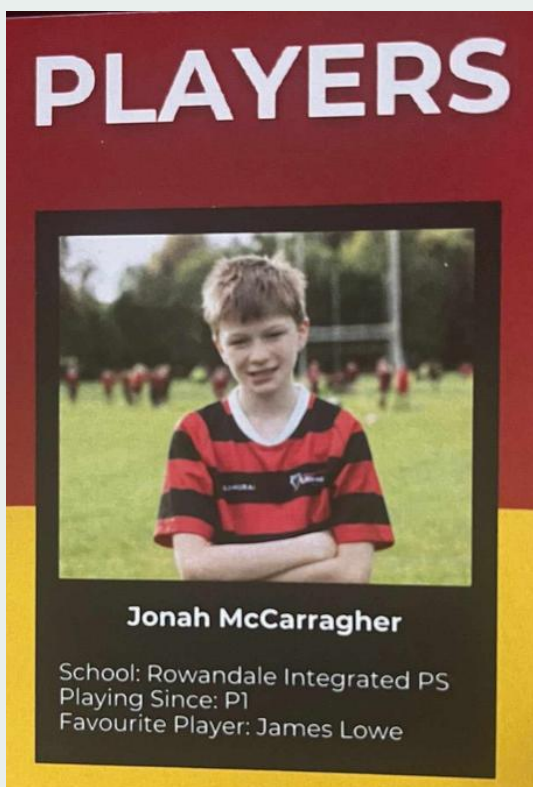
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Rugby Star In The Making



Jonah from Year 7 will be travelling to Barcelona with the City of Armagh Rugby Club minis tour in April. He was presented with his tour kit by Ulster players James McNabney & Scott Wilson. Jonah is a very keen rugby player and we have a feeling we might be hearing his name a lot in the future!



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Rowandale at the Swim Ulster Primary Cup



A massive well done to all our Rowandale Swim Stars who did our school proud at the Swim Ulster Primary Schools Cup and Championships. The children were all so brave - most of them had never swum in a competitive race before and they should be so proud of themselves. To get up there in front of hundreds of people, deal with nerves and noise and still swim their hearts out was just AMAZING! They are all absolute superstars. Thanks to all the parents for bringing the children along. Callan was delighted to qualify for the Swim Ireland Finals in Dublin in his last 1000M race and can't wait to represent Rowandale (for the last time!) at the National Aquatic Centre.



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Rowandale at the Swim Ulster Primary Cup



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Newsletter February 2025

Rowandale Runners prepare for Belfast Marathon



7 TEAMS. £7,000 TARGET. WHO'S TAKING THE CROWN?

The race is ON and our teams are battling it out to smash their fundraising goals! Who will raise the most? Who'll hit the target first? YOU decide!



Support your favourite team and help us reach that £7,000. Every penny counts and every sponsor makes a difference! Click the link, choose your team, and get sponsoring NOW! Sponsor a Team



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Newsletter February 2025

Rowandale Runners prepare for Belfast Marathon



Fundraising group - Run for Rowandale

Fundraising group - 🏃🏃 35 Parents & Teachers. 7 Teams. 1 Big Goal. 🏆 This May Day, Rowandale Primary School ...

peoplesfundraising.com



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Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Lexie Davis in Miss Watson's Year 3 class her cheerleading squad "Ares" finished off their competition season by winning their under 8s division and being Grand Champions of the day with the highest scored routine!

Lexie cheerleads at Kaleidoscope Gymnastics Dance & Cheer in Carryduff.

Well done, Lexie!



A huge well done to Dean (left) who has achieved his 600m badge and his brother Drew (right) who got his very first swimming certificate for his 5m badge the day before his fifth birthday!!

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



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Key Dates

Easter Holidays: April 14th - 25th inc

Bank Holiday: 5th May

Bank Holiday: 26th May

School closes 30th June

Contact Information

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