

# Rowandale Integrated Primary School



Rowandale  
Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Car Park Update

Work on the car park is now complete and we are thrilled with the new space. Our Kiss & Go system is working beautifully and traffic is flowing very well!



We have six disabled spaces for Blue Badge holders



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Dame Alison Peacock visits Rowandale

A Warm Rowandale Welcome for Dame Peacock. We were delighted to welcome Dame Alison Peacock, CEO Chartered College of Teachers, to our school recently. Dame Peacock was on a whistlestop tour of some schools in Northern Ireland and it was our pleasure to host her.

Dame Peacock visited all areas of the school, chatting with the children and staff.

Years 3 and 4 sang songs and took part in a Q & A, while the older children in Year 7 were able to demonstrate their knowledge in all areas of IT.

The children really enjoyed being able to chat with Dame Peacock about the work they're doing and life at Rowandale.

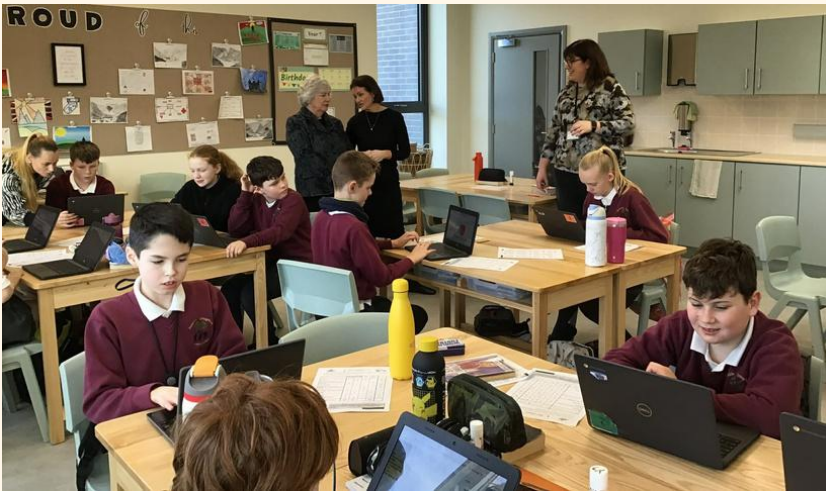
It was a great visit and we hope that there will be lots more visits in the future



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Dame Alison Peacock visits Rowandale



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

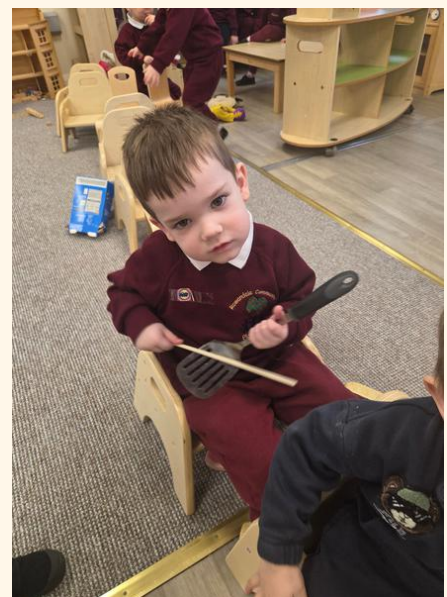
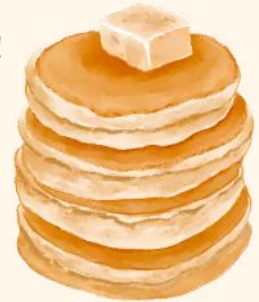
Newsletter February 2026

## Rowandale Community Playgroup



The children in playgroup enjoyed learning about cultures in February. We celebrated Chinese new year with a food tasting Chinese snack. Delicious! We also got creative and made Valentines cards for our families.

We celebrated Pancake Tuesday with lovely pancakes and lots of different toppings. These were a big hit.



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Rowandale Community Playgroup



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## 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.

Emma, Caoimhe and Jayne are also looking forward to the busy months ahead, meeting 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 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**



## Choir Success at Ballymena Festival

It's Festival Season and our Senior Choir were delighted to attend Ballymena Festival in February. They were placed 3rd in the Primary School Choir and Primary School Unison Choir classes. We received some lovely feedback from the adjudicator and look forward to attending Ballymena Festival again in the future.

The choir has been practising very hard with their Choir Leader, Caitriona McAtarsney. Caitriona has worked tirelessly with the choir this academic year and we are very grateful to her for her unwavering hard work and dedication.

Thank you to all of the choir members for putting so much work into rehearsals and to the parents for your continued support.



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Rowandale Integrated Nursery



It was so wonderful to welcome our Whole School Buddies into Nursery. Even with their own very busy schedules in Year 6, these fantastic role models took some time out to join us for a morning of play, laughter, and exploration.

In Nursery, we love the new buddy system as it helps us to build confidence, see kindness in action and build community spirit across the school.

Whether it was building towers in the construction area, sharing stories, or creating pieces of art, the energy was just lovely. We're already counting down the days until our next sessions!

## Rowandale Integrated Nursery



The Nursery had a 'shell-ebration' when our wonderful assistant, Rea, brought a very special guest to school - her pet tortoise, Brian!

It isn't every day we have a real animal roaming the classroom, and the children were absolutely fascinated. We spent the morning observing Brian as he made his way across the floor (at his own steady pace!) toward his favourite snacks.

Meeting Brian was more than just fun; it was a fantastic learning opportunity! Together, we discussed caring for pets and animals, using gentle hands and sharing fun facts about tortoises.

As it turns out, the tortoise fever is spreading! We discovered that our other nursery assistant, Claire, also has a pet tortoise at home. It looks like we have a real team of tortoise enthusiasts here in Nursery!



## Year 1 Celebrate the Lunar New Year

Our classroom was filled with colour and excitement as we welcomed one of our very own parents, Lai-Ping, to lead a special session on Lunar New Year. Through storytelling and hands-on discovery, Lai-Ping brought the "Year of the Horse" (and all the vibrant traditions of the festival) to life for the children. From exploring the significance of red envelopes to learning about the Great Race of the Zodiac, it was an afternoon of joy and discovery.

We are so grateful for these moments!

Having parents share their heritage is a vital part of our curriculum.

A huge thank you to Lai-Ping for her time, her energy, and for making our community a little brighter.





# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

Year 2 - all types of learning going on!



Building on the foundation blocks from Year 1 when we learned our sounds, phonics and blending, we are now able to read story books that spark imagination while building vocabulary and improving comprehension. We are readers!



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Year 2 - all types of learning going on!



Our outdoor play area is full of opportunities to have fun and be creative. From building our own 'climbing fame' using the wooden blocks, to transporting our friends around in the truck, every game is a learning experience.



The sand pit is definitely the most popular part of our play area. We get our outdoor suits on and get stuck into digging, moulding, pouring and building. All of these activities are vital to developing gross and fine motor skills, learning to work as part of a team, communication and forming friendships.



## Year 3 Stained Glass Art

Year 3 have been learning all about dinosaurs during Term 2 so during an Art lesson, they made dinosaur footprints using the stained glass window effect. Absolutely lovely!



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

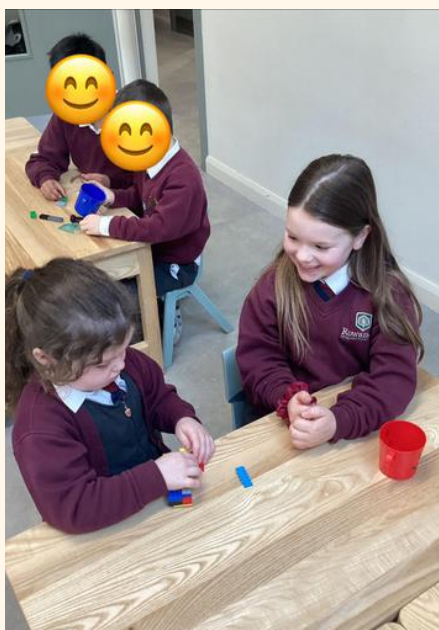
Newsletter February 2026

## Year 4 Buddies

As part of a new school wellbeing initiative, two classes at Rowandale will now buddy up once a month to spend some quality time together. In February, Year 4R and Year 1A kicked things off by chatting, getting to know one another, and working on a small project together.

We hope this program will help strengthen our school community and support our younger children in feeling more relaxed and confident as they build connections with older pupils.

Judging by this first get-together, it was a rousing success!



## Year 4 Houses and Homes

### Architects in the Making: Our Dream Home Showcase

The classroom was transformed into a neighbourhood of pure imagination this week! Our students recently put on their designer hats for our "Dream Home" project, and the results were nothing short of spectacular.

After spending time at home constructing their ideal dwellings—using everything from recycled cardboard and glitter to LEGO and wood—students brought their masterpieces to school for a special "Show and Tell" gallery. Sharing these projects allowed students to practice their public speaking in a supportive environment, explaining special features and answering questions from their "potential buyers" (their classmates). We are so proud of the effort, engineering, and heart that went into every single model. A huge thank you to the parents and guardians who helped clear some space on the kitchen table to let these dream homes come to life!



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Year 4 Houses and Homes



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Year 5M Origami for World Book Day

For World Book Day, year 5F had a go at creating some origami bookmarks. We then decorated them - some were monstrous, some took animal form and we even had one ice cream cone! Just another idea to encourage our love for reading!



## Year 6M Safer Internet Day

For Safer Internet Day, Year 6 explored both the positive uses and potential misuses of AI. The children demonstrated great maturity and a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.



## Year 6 Love for Life & GarageBand Workshop

Year 6 recently took part in a Love for Life workshop focused on Choices and Changes. The session was informative and age-appropriate, encouraging pupils to reflect thoughtfully on the decisions they make and the impact these can have on themselves and others.

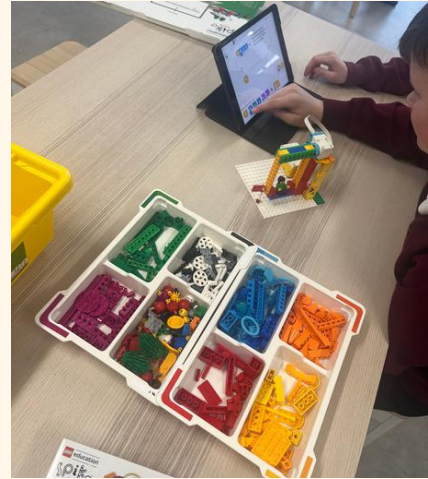


Year 6 also took part in an engaging GarageBand workshop. The session, led by Jon McKinley, was highly interactive, giving pupils valuable opportunities to explore their creativity, compose their own pieces and share their creations with their peers



## Year 7 Lego Spike

Year 7R have loved using our new Lego Spike Education kits to create and problem solve various challenges. We have then been able to use the Lego Spike app to code and make our creations move, light up and play sounds



# LEGO





Rowandale  
Integrated Nursery

# Rowandale Integrated Primary School



Rowandale  
Integrated Primary School

## A Guide to the Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme

Rowandale is now registered with the  
Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme (NICSS)

If you are eligible, you are now able to register to receive the 15% off wraparound costs capped at £184 per month.

When registering please ensure you register with Rowandale Integrated Primary School & Nursery (NOT Rowandale Community Playgroup)

**Once you have registered,  
you must notify Laura at lrichards962@c2kni.net**  
(School does not receive notifications of new applicants sitting on the Portal)

We will then logon and approve/request revisions to your application.

Setting the scheme up has been a complicated process, so please ensure you read the following step by step guide. This will be a bit of a learning curve for us all.

- Reserve your wraparound care **WITHOUT** paying by clicking **reserve** rather than the + button.
- Ensure you checkout with £0 to reserve spaces.
- School will invoice you once a month (via email) which will include the 15% discount. You will be invoiced in arrears eg: March payments will be invoiced in April.
- You must then request the amount invoiced from TFC to be sent to us.
- Email Laura when this is done so that it can be applied to your SchoolMoney account.
- Once we receive the additional 15% from NICSS it will be applied to your account. You may be in arrears for a short while, but please do not worry.

**Important:** Do **not** forward payment to school until you have received your invoice each month. If you forward payment prior to receiving an invoice from school, your additional 15% discount cannot be applied and refunds will not be possible.

If you have any queries, please contact Laura at lrichards962@c2kni.net

For more information on registering and eligibility visit  
<https://www.early-years.org/nicss/parents>

# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## 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.**

## More Football Success for Rowandale

Two teams from Rowandale took part in the regional heat of the NI Integrated Schools' Futsal Tournament in February. A fantastic day of football was had by all the children in attendance.

One of the two teams was unbeaten over the entire day, winning the regional heat within Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.

This team progressed to the NI Finals Day where they competed against the other top integrated schools from across the province.

Sadly, it wasn't to be but the entire team should hold their heads high after an amazing performance.



## Service of Light

Some of our Year 7 children took part in the Service of Light in February. The service is an important part of the process in preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Congratulations to all the children who took part.



## Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Henry (Yr 1S) achieved 4th in his set poem at Armagh Speech festival. His musical theatre group at Pamela Cassels School of performance came 1st with Finding Nemo the Musical section at Portadown Festival. Great work, Henry.



## Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Grace (Yr 4R) gave an amazing performance and danced her way to 1st place in her Lyrical solo at the Relevé Dance Competition in Armagh! Congratulations, Grace!



Hannah won Gymnast of the Month at LX Dunmurry, she only joined two months ago and she is absolutely loving it! Keep up the great work, Hannah.



Joshua completed a course with Centre of Excellence 'Exploring Outer Space for Kids' and received a diploma with Distinction. Fantastic, Joshua.

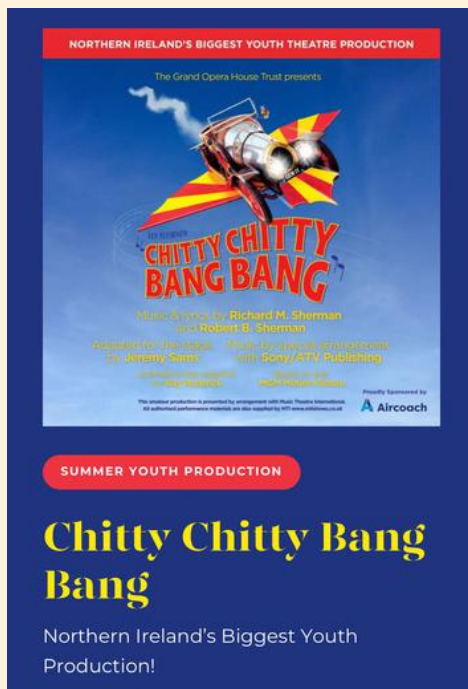
## Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Matthew (Yr 2D) has achieved his Blue Star in Taekwondo. He also has his red and yellow star. Amazing work, Matthew.



Elliott (Yr 4McC) won player of the match. He plays for Lurgan Town Vapours U8. Well done, Elliott.



Sophia got a featured dancing role in the Grand Opera House for the production of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang starting this July. Congratulations, Sophia.

## Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



Fiadh (Y1S) and Róisín (Y2H) participated in the one of Feis in February. It was the very first Feis for Fiadh but thanks to Róisín's encouragement, she got 2nd place in her beginners dance group. Róisín got 6th place and both of them enjoyed their dance.



Luke, Lewis and Deacon (Yr6W) received blue bandanas for completing the first level of Parkour. They are as proud as punch. And rightly so!



Alex Duffin axe throwing in the Scouts forest and a pic of Sophie Duffin accepting her fitness badge in Squirrels.

## Extra Curricular Activities & Achievements



We are in awe of Susanne Fitzpatrick, Mum to Willow, Hannah, Phoebe and Robyn, who climbed the highest free standing mountain in the world, Kilimanjaro. The hike took five days to the summit and two days down, followed by a well deserved two day safari! Susanne said: 'It was such an amazing experience, super tough but loved everything about it'.



# Rowandale Integrated Primary School

Newsletter February 2026

## Parents Council - Meet the Team



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!

## 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 [lrichards962@c2ken.net](mailto:lrichards962@c2ken.net)



## Can You Volunteer?



# Rowandale

Integrated Primary School

## Kiss & Go - can you help?



**Are you able to volunteer to keep our morning drop-offs running smoothly? Just half an hour of your time is all we need. A fun and invigorating way to start your day!**

**Please message Fiona on 07725 355 899 to join our team of volunteers.**