



# Summer Newsletter (2025)

## St. Francis Xavier Junior National School

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we come to the end of the academic year, 2024/2025, we would like to let you know about some of the exciting activities that have been underway, here, in St. Francis Xavier Junior National School during the last term of school.

**Drumming:** Our senior infant classes and a first class took part in a drumming session in recent weeks. From conga to djembe to banboula drums, the children tried many different drums and created some delightfully rhythmic beats!

**Communions:** On a beautiful sunny Saturday in May, our second class children made their First Holy Communion and did themselves, their families and our school immensely proud.

**Graduations/Quiz:** As our second classes come to the end of the junior school, they enjoyed a series of fun activities throughout the last week. They enjoyed a cosy pyjama party, a very well contested quiz, a delicious chipper party and a very yellow graduation ceremony! As they move forward into the next exciting stage of their learning journey, we wish them all the very best and know that they will quickly adjust to the flow of student life in our wonderful senior school.

**Swimming:** Well done to all our second class swimmers who completed their six swimming lessons in Coolmine with flying colours!

**Mobile Library:** The mobile library was a great hit with all our avid young readers and we would encourage you all to continue to read throughout the Summer months and pay regular visits to our local library in Blanchardstown. We would also like to mention, Summer Stars, a free national reading programme, for children, that takes place in all public libraries and online each summer. More information can be found at <https://www.librariesireland.ie/services/right-to-read/summer-stars>

**LCC Dogs :** Luttrellstown Community College (LCC) kindly let us have their beautiful therapy dogs, Darwin and Murph for a short visit. They brought great happiness and excitement to all the children and staff they met during their visit. A huge thank you to LCC and their staff for facilitating the visit with us.

**Schoolbook delivery:** Ms. Reilly is coordinating the schoolbooks for the children this year and be assured that your children's books and copies will be ready for them on their return at the end of August. Thank you Ms Reilly!

**Hot School Meals** : All going well, it is hoped that we will be able to avail of the Hot School Meals Programme in Term 1 of the coming school year.

**We struck Gold:** Curious Minds Science, Gold Award. Here is what the judges had to say about our submission:

*Wow, what an incredible application! It's clear that the learners at St Francis Xavier JNS are all very invested in their STEM learning - and having fun while they do it too! It was fantastic to see all the video evidence showcasing such a thorough and inventive exploration of science in the school such as the Robodog experiments! There were also lots of great cross-curricular links, including when the learners designed a heart shaped box and learnt about F1. It was also great to see lots of great peer-to-peer learning such as the second class teaching the senior infants, and the involvement of parents in talks and experiments. Bravo and keep up the good work!*

We also struck gold with our very own Ms. O Connor and thank you to her for all her hard work.

**Active School Week:** **Walk, run and have some fun. Be more active everyone!**

We had a super Active School Week this year in St Francis Xavier Junior NS.

At St Francis Xavier JNS, we are always on the move, but especially so during Active School Week. Pupils wore their tracksuits, and homework was to be active at home. Classes completed lots of active movement breaks throughout the week. We used our Active Walkway to complete lessons as we walked and ran around our school. Skipping breaks were really popular this year and lots of the boys and girls now have amazing skipping skills. Classes practiced yoga and completed polyspot activities.

We had visitors into our school during the week, teaching us various ways to keep active. Nikki from Playball taught us some skills in a fun way. Emer and students from Trinity College, taught us some fundamental movement skills and facts about our body. Marcus from Savage Martial Arts, came in to demonstrate and teach some jiu jitsu. Second class continued to attend their swimming classes in Coolmine Leisure Centre. Our wonderful SNA, Dorothy, brought in her marathon medals and she chatted about her achievements and the training and preparation involved.

Our active dance this year was, 'Life of the Party'. We gathered in the yard on Friday to dance to it as a whole school with bubbles! Well done to Mauviyal, Tadhg, Louis and Robyn who won our Active School Week art competition. What a fun week!

**GAA trip to Russell Park:** The 1st class boys were invited to a GAA blitz in Russell Park in early June. They sang all the way down and back on the bus. After a quick shower of rain, the sun came out and the boys had a super couple of hours learning new GAA skills and playing matches. The 1st class girls had a similar blitz last October. Thanks to Megan and the TY students in St Brigid's for hosting this great fun event!

**Restorative Practice:** This term, we continued our journey in Restorative Practice focusing on developing the children's skills of empathy and problem solving. More to follow next year.

**School Tours:** The children had great fun on their school tours and they are always one of the highlights of the school calendar. The junior infants enjoyed Clonfert Farm, the senior infants enjoyed Explorium, the first classes went to Newgrange Farm and the second classes went to Rockfield House.

**School maintenance:** Our new heating system is well underway and is due for completion before we return at the end of August. Our new solar panels were installed recently so here's hoping for plenty sunlight!

**School Improvement:** Each year we identify areas for improvement within our school and this year we were working hard to implement the new maths curriculum. We continue to focus on Wellbeing with the implementation of Zippy's Friends, Wellbeing and Active School Week. In addition, we have created a new Bí Cineálta policy, which outlines procedures specific to our school, to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. We began our journey in Restorative Practise, which will continue in September. We continue to develop our digital strategy and this year investigated new forms of digital assessment. We are currently looking forward and planning for next year.

**Retirement:** Congratulations to Carmel Dowd, who is retiring from her cleaning position in our school after 25 years. We thank her most sincerely for her diligence and continuous hard work and wish her all the very best in the future.

**Congratulations:** Congratulations to Ms Dervan, Ms Healy and Ms Connolly who were recently appointed as Assistant Principals.

**Go raibh maith agaibh:** To all the children and families of St. Francis Xavier JNS, I would like to thank you sincerely for your support and kindness in my first year as Principal. Wishing you all a safe, happy and restful Summer break.

Le meas,  
Olivia Barrett

Principal