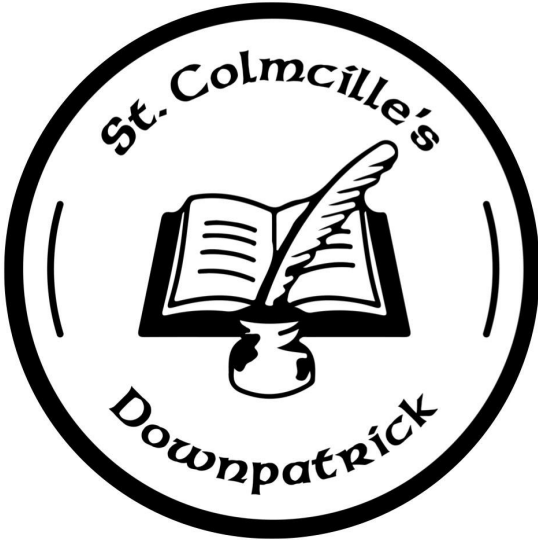


# School Newsletter February 2026

The latest news and events from St. Colmcille's Primary School



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- **Our Summer Programmes are Back!**

## Upcoming Dates



 Thursday 12th March

 **P7 Science Shop**

 Friday 13th March


 **LSC3 St Patrick's Day Show**

 Tues 17th & Wed 18th March

 **School Closed**


 23rd Mar - 3rd April

 **Cycle to School Week**


 Thursday 26th March

 **Easter Fun Day** (  *Weather Dependent* )

 **PTFA Evening Bingo**

 Tuesday 31st March

 **School closes for Easter break at 11.30am**

 Monday 13th April

 **School Reopens**



Please see attached key dates relating to sacraments for children in P3, P4 and P7.

📖 ✍️ Ed Wicke Author Visit 📖 ✍️



We were delighted to welcome children's author and experienced storyteller Ed Wicke to St. Colmcille's last month as part of National Storytelling Week. Throughout the day, Ed shared a selection of his stories with our pupils from P1 to P7, giving them the chance to listen, imagine and enjoy tales told by the author himself. A firm favourite among the children was Alicroc - his wickedly funny and mischievous short story about an alien who becomes a nursery school teacher, which had pupils engaged and laughing throughout. The visit was a lovely reminder of the magic of storytelling and the power stories have to spark imagination, build curiosity and inspire young minds. With The National Year of Reading now underway, we remain committed to promoting reading for pleasure across our school community and encouraging pupils to explore the many worlds that books can open. A warm thank you to Ed for spending the day with us and sharing his stories with our pupils.

🤝 👤 Recent School Council Meeting 🤝 👤



Pupils shared fantastic ideas—from adding Gaelic Goals for more fun at playtime 🏈 ⚽ to enjoying new equipment, that we have already received. They suggested exciting Easter treats too: discos 🕺 🕴, bingo 🎲, an egg hunt/animal farm 🐣 🔍, and even a charity bake sale for Cash for Kids 🍷 ❤️. We also loved their creative podcast ideas 🎙 and their thoughtful improvement suggestions, including trimming bushes near the outdoor classroom 🌿 ✂, starting a new Playground Buddy system 🤝, and developing a new vegetable patch 🥕 🌱



During National Storytelling Week, our pupils explored stories through digital creativity! Each class took on the challenge of creating their own digital story or reimagining elements of a well-known tale, using a range of digital tools and apps. This whole-school activity supported our focus on enhancing creative writing opportunities. It gave the children the chance to express their imagination, develop their pupil voice and strengthened their confidence in using digital technology. It has been wonderful to see pupils from P1 to P7 embrace digital storytelling and use technology to bring their ideas to life. Their enthusiasm, teamwork and creativity have filled our classrooms with pride and excitement. A huge well done to all our young storytellers, your creativity truly shines!

## 💡 Valentine's Celebrations at School! 💡



We had a fantastic run in to the Mid-Term Break at St. Colmcille's PS, with two days of Valentine-themed events: ✨ PTFA Valentine's Charity Bingo & Children's Movie & Game Night – Thursday 5th February. A huge thank you to our wonderful PTFA for organising another brilliant Bingo night! The hall was buzzing, the prizes were fantastic, and fun was had by all. During our Movie & Game Night, pupils took part in an art competition, and we're delighted to announce our three winners—each receiving a voucher for Mabel's Ice Cream, kindly provided by the PTFA. Well done to all who entered! ❤️ Valentine's Fun Day – Friday 6th February. Our celebrations continued with a joyful Valentine's Disco for P1–P3 & LSC1–3, followed by a special and exciting Valentine's Kid's Bingo for P4–P7 & LSC4—beautifully planned and run by our PTFA. Thank you again for your continued support! A big shout-out to our P7 pupils, who operated a very successful Tuck Shop throughout the day. This was not only a treat for everyone but also a valuable learning experience linked to their work on financial well-being and the Junior Entrepreneur Programme. They did a fantastic job! ❤️ Thank you to every pupil, parent, and staff member who helped make our Valentine's events such memorable occasions. Community spirit at its best!

## 🐾🎉 Donkey Assisted Learning Begins! 🐾🎉



We were absolutely delighted to welcome Gail and Rosie, our two new resident therapy donkeys, who joined us for the launch of our Asinine Assisted Learning programme! Over the next few weeks, pupils from across the school — including our Specialist Provision class and LSCs — will have the chance to spend time working with Gail and Rosie through a series of calm, nurturing, and confidence-building sessions. ✨ How can donkeys assist our pupils? Donkeys are naturally gentle, steady, and reassuring animals, making them wonderful partners for therapeutic and educational activities. Working with therapy donkeys can help pupils to: ✨

- Build confidence and self-esteem 🧠
- Strengthen focus, communication, and emotional regulation 💬
- Develop social skills in a relaxed, low-pressure environment 🌿
- Reduce stress and promote a sense of calm 🍋
- Encourage empathy, responsibility, and positive relationships. 🍋

We're so excited to see the impact Gail and Rosie will have as pupils get to know them — and we can't wait to share more updates as the programme continues. Stay tuned for plenty of wholesome donkey moments!

# ✧ Free Workshops for Parents & Caregivers! ✧



**THE CHANGING LIVES INITIATIVE**  
FLOURISH & THRIVE



**Free Workshop For Parents and Caregivers**

## Attention HQ

**Helping Kids Tune In and Stay On Track**

Does your child struggle to concentrate, forget instructions, or drift off easily? This free workshop explores why attention and memory can be such a challenge for some children and shares simple strategies you can use at home and school to help them stay on track.

**Whether your child has a diagnosis, is on a waiting list, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use straight away.**

**In this workshop you can expect:**

- ✓ Parent-friendly information on how attention and memory work in children's brains
- ✓ Everyday strategies to help kids focus, stay organised, and follow through

### Event Details:

- 📅 25th March 2026
- 🕒 10:00AM - 11:00AM
- 📍 The Warehouse  
45-47 South Street  
Newtownards  
BT23 4JT



SCAN HERE



A project supported by the DEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).  
Delivered as part of The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive

**THE CHANGING LIVES INITIATIVE**  
FLOURISH & THRIVE

## Sensory SOS!

### Practical Strategies for Kids Who Feel Everything

Free Workshop For Parents and Caregivers

Does your child struggle with loud noises, itchy clothes or strong smells? For some children, everyday experiences can feel overwhelming to the senses. This free workshop will help you understand why sensory sensitivities happen, what they can look like, and how they affect daily life.

Whether your child has a diagnosis, is waiting, or you're beginning to explore the possibility, this session offers knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies you can use right away.

**In this workshop you can expect:**

- ✓ Parent-friendly information on what sensory sensitives are and how they can affect children
- ✓ Practical strategies to support your child

**Event Details:**

- 📅 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026
- 🕒 10:00AM - 11:00AM
- 📍 The Warehouse  
45-47 South Street  
Newtownards  
BT23 4JT

SCAN HERE

PEACEPLUS  
Colin Neighbourhood Partnership  
A project supported by the PEACEPLUS Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Delivered by Archways as part of The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive

The Changing Lives Initiative: Flourish & Thrive is hosting two practical and supportive sessions this March at The Warehouse, Newtownards — designed to help you better understand and support children’s sensory needs, attention, and memory. 🧸 **Sensory SOS! – Practical Strategies for Kids Who Feel Everything.** Does your child struggle with loud noises, itchy clothes, or strong smells? This friendly and informative workshop will help you understand why sensory sensitivities happen and how they can affect daily life — plus practical ways you can support your child. 📅 18th March 2026 🕒 10:00AM – 11:00AM 📍 The Warehouse, South Street, Newtownards 🧠 **Attention HQ – Helping Kids Tune In and Stay On Track.** If your child finds it hard to concentrate, follow instructions, or stay organised, this workshop explores how attention and memory work — and shares simple strategies you can use at home and school to help them thrive. 📅 25th March 2026 🕒 10:00AM – 11:00AM 📍 The Warehouse, South Street, Newtownards

🌍💚 Eco Committee Community Clean Up 🌍💚



Our Eco Committee had a wonderful time working alongside the Downpatrick Scout Group to carry out a litter pick in our local area. The children worked together to collect litter around the school and nearby streets, helping to keep our community clean and tidy. They showed great teamwork, enthusiasm, and care for the environment. Thank you to the Downpatrick Scout Group for joining us and supporting this important activity. Well done to all the children for doing their part to look after our planet.

## ☆ Children's Mental Health Week ☆



Last month we celebrated Children's Mental Health Week with the theme "This Is My Place." Throughout the week, children took part in mindfulness sessions, music meditation, sensory activities, the Daily Mile and outdoor reflection time. Classes also explored where they feel they belong through belonging maps, murals and reflective writing. Mental health is about how we think, feel and cope with everyday life. Looking after our mental health is just as important as looking after our bodies, and it is something we take very seriously as a school community. UNICEF Article 24 – Every child has the right to the best possible health. We are so proud of the thoughtful discussions and fantastic work produced across the school 🧡

🧠✎ Credit Union Schools Quiz ✎🧠



Congratulations to our Primary 7 pupils Kaiden Hardiment, Jessica Douglas, Amber Murray and Grace Manley who represented St. Colmcille's in the recent Credit Union Schools Quiz. Our team were able to answer some tricky questions based on a wide range of subjects and were excellent representatives for our school. Well done folks!



We love to connect with our school community!

Get in touch with us at:

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