

September 2026

Newsletter Rathmore



Diary Dates

August

25–28 Parent Sessions (see page 2)

September

11 PTA AGM 2pm (childcare arrangements)

24 European Languages (Dress Up Day)

25 Closed – TransformEd Day

29 P5 Intergenerational Day

A New Year at Rathmore

We are so pleased to welcome you to a new school year at Rathmore.

We are delighted that our Nursery expansion (from part-time to full-time places) is now complete; with new spaces and staff who are ready to welcome our 52 nursery children to their full-time places.

We are proud to be a Gold Award winning UNICEF Rights Respecting School recognising Rathmore PS & Nursery as a school community that places the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart, ethos, curriculum and policies, aimed at cultivating a safe, empowering and respectful environment. We have also been awarded our Eco-Green Flag 2026-2028 with Mrs Emma Henry named as Eco-Teacher of the Year. This is in recognition of her role in developing Rathmore's culture of outdoor learning with strong emphasis on healthy living and pupil wellbeing.

While we are now unable to honour the mandate parents gave us in their 'Yes' vote to become Integrated, we remain committed to this journey as we seek to celebrate diversity, nurture positive relationships and promote a strong sense of belonging in school and in our 'RathMORE Together' community.

We are grateful to everyone who engaged in our whole school review in April/May 2026. Our children have been central to renewing our Vision and Motto statements, updating them and making their language more child friendly to echo our Gold RRS in-school Class Charters.

We will introduce a 'Home School Partnership Charter' to better communicate our aim to nurture a respectful, kind and inclusive school with you as parents and active partners. Our new statements are:

Vision Statement

At Rathmore, we strive to create a safe and inclusive community where everyone is treated with respect and kindness and where each individual feels valued, accepted and encouraged to be themselves.

We celebrate diversity and promote teamwork, nurturing positive relationships and a strong sense of belonging.

Through meaningful learning experiences, we inspire curiosity, resilience and personal growth, empowering our pupils to grow with confidence, embrace challenges and contribute positively to the world around them.

Motto

'Be Kind, Belong, Become Your Best.'

Staffing Update



Our best wishes to Mrs Brenda Atkins as she leaves Rathmore to commence her new teaching post in Lagan College. We will miss Mrs Atkins following her 16 years as a teacher, leader and governor in our school and we wish her well in her new post.



'Raffy's Thought for the Month:
'Celebrate each other'
We are all special



'Be Kind, Belong, Become Your Best'

www.rathmoreps.co.uk



We will welcome back Mr Jordan Gibson as an experienced member of our team and Foundation Stage specialist. He will join Dr Mitchell-Barrett and Mrs McDougall in the P2 teaching team.



Congratulations to Emma Henry (and Johnny) on the birth of Arthur James on 29 July 2026. We hear that Olivia is enjoying being a great big sister. We look forward to welcoming Arthur when he comes to visit!

Parent Information Meetings

Our Parents' Information Meetings for P2 - P7 will take place 25 – 27 August 2026 in your child's classroom. At these meetings, your teacher will outline the necessary information for the year. We encourage you to attend. Please enter your child's classroom via the playground doors. Further details and reminders will be sent via Seesaw.

P2 – Wednesday 26 August 2026 at 1.15pm

P3 – Thursday 27 August 2026 at 1.15pm

P4 – Thursday 27 August 2026 at 1.45pm

P5 – Wednesday 26 August 2026 at 2.15pm

P6 – Wednesday 26 August 2026 at 1.45pm

P7 – Tuesday 25 August 2026 at 2.15pm

New School Year - Important Reminders

The children are welcomed at their classroom door at 8.45am each day. For reasons of safety, no child should arrive for school before this time as there is no supervision of the children prior to 8.45am. To develop independence, we encourage P3 – P7 parents to leave their children to the playground gate, when possible, to allow the children to journey to class by themselves. It will take a few days for children to become confident about their journey and class door. We are here to help, direct and welcome them with a smile. Lessons begin promptly at 9am so please do all you can to bring your child to school on time. Late arrivals should enter through the main office entrance. Nursery & P1 Children are brought directly to their class door each day.

Finishing Times Reminder - September 2026

	Monday - Thursday	Friday
P1	See P1 Induction Pack	
P2	1.55pm	1.55pm
P3	1.55pm	1.55pm
P4	Mon-Wed 3pm, Thurs 1.55pm	1.55pm
P5	3pm	1.55pm
P6	3pm	1.55pm
P7	3pm	1.55pm

Pedestrian Entrances & Road Crossing Patrol

Rathmore usually has two crossing patrols to assist with road safety. Mr Hodgen will be on the Rathmore Road from approx. 8:40-9:05am, 1:30-3:05pm. *We have a vacant post on Killeen Avenue so there is no adult helping children cross this road at the location.* Please set a good example for your child, and others, by using the designated crossings.

The main entrance (Rathmore Road), field entrance (Lyndhurst Avenue) and side entrance (Killeen Pathway) will remain two-way, with pedestrians staying to the left of their path and respecting others' journey.

Communicating with School

Often parents want to clarify or discuss issues with school staff. You can contact the school office by email/phone/letter or by note to the teacher via your child (school-bag post). Face to face meetings will be accommodated as the need arises, following a phone call. As staff are teaching throughout the day, please allow 48 hours for a response to your query.

Thank you for signing up to your new 2026-27 Seesaw. This will be used throughout the year for teachers to communicate with parents.

Our School Office can be contacted by:

E: info@rathmoreps.bangor.ni.sch.uk

T: 028 91 270399

Change of Pick-Up Time

If you have a scheduled appointment for your child, please inform the teacher or office with at least 24 hours' notice so arrangements can be made for their safe collection from the school front door, at the agreed time.

Absences

Our Educational Welfare officer has asked school to remind families that all children should attend school when they are well enough to do so. Note: School should also be notified (by email or phone to the office) of any reason for absence on the first day of absence with a prediction of how long the absence may be.

School Illness & First Aid

It is vital that we have up to date contact details for your child, so please link with our office urgently if you need to update any details. If your child is unwell during the school day, a staff member will phone, in order of emergency contacts, to arrange your attendance. If your child receives a bump to the head, you will be informed by email, receive the EA Concussion Leaflet and we will monitor their presentation. If they receive First Aid (other than head) your teacher will notify you via Seesaw.

Please refer to PHA guidance on infection control in school settings (see attached).

Medication

Children with EpiPens (two required), inhalers or other essential medication should bring these to school on their first day along with a copy of the current care plan, where appropriate. Please check that medication is in date. All medication should be clearly labelled with the child's name and will be stored safely in school.

To administer any medication in school during the year, parents must first complete and return the "Request for school to administer medicine" form as attached.

Home Learning

Written homeworks will be established by each year group with start dates and details communicated with you at your Information Meeting and by Seesaw. This is an important part of the learning process for our pupils and we encourage all families to establish a good routine for their completion each week. Homework will continue to be sent home on Friday afternoons, (homework grid will be sent in paper form) so each family can organise their time in a way which is most suitable to the demands of their family life.

Until homework begins, we recommend that our P2 - P7 children spend time reading and revising

number bonds (FS & KS1) and/or table facts (KS2).

Primary School Wrap-Around Care

Breakfast Club

We are delighted that Breakfast Club will start on Tuesday 1 September 2026 Breakfast Club opens at 8am each morning at a cost of £3.50 per day. Breakfast Club is paid in advance using our School Money System. Orders close on Sunday night for the week ahead. Our Breakfast Club Registration Form is attached for those children who wish to attend Breakfast Club for the first time. Please complete and return this to the School Office by Friday 28 August 2026.

Our School Money System has gone live for your booking convenience today. The named first contact for P1 – P7 will receive an automated text with the link details attached.

(P1 can attend Breakfast Club from Monday 14 September 2026).

YMCA After-School Club

YMCA have worked throughout the summer with many of our Rathmore children and will continue our After-School provision at the end of each school day. YMCA will continue to provide their play sessions alongside our calendar regarding all half days and holidays and will operate usual pick-ups from the playgrounds. Please contact them directly regarding places for your children: -

T: 07591840361

E: afterschool@northdownymca.org

F: @ymcaafterschoolclub

School Dinners

School Dinners commence on Tuesday 1 September 2026 for P2 – P7 children. This year school dinner cost remains the same at £3.10 per dinner. Dinners are paid in advance using our School Money System. Orders close on Sunday night for the week ahead. If dinners are not booked, a home packed lunch will be necessary. Please find our School Dinner Menu attached.

*** Children with dietary requirements must complete an EA Special Diet Form (attached) and meet with the Head of Kitchen to discuss our menu before any dinners are booked. Please contact the school office to arrange. ***

(Nursery & P1 Dinner information will be communicated separately)

Free School Meals/Uniform Grant

We encourage all those who were eligible for Free School Meals or think they are now eligible, to complete the EA online application process on eani.org.uk (Home-Financial Help-Free School Meals). This will ensure you can access Free School Meals as soon as possible.

Severe Food Allergies

We have a number of children in school who suffer from life threatening allergies. Please do not send any products containing nuts into school as Rathmore is a Nut Aware School.

Break

We encourage our children to eat a healthy break and ask for your assistance in this. Please pack one item e.g. fruit, scone, pancake, crackers, cheese, vegetable sticks for your child each day. We do not permit children to swap items due to the prevalence of serious food allergies.

Drinks – Water only

Please send a filled water bottle to school each day as we encourage water breaks. Please note glass bottles and fizzy drinks are not permitted in school.

After School Activities

Our After School Activities run by teachers and/or outside agencies will commence end of September/October 2026. Information will be communicated in due course.

Outdoor Play Equipment

The outdoor play equipment is to be used solely by children during school time, when they are supervised by staff. Please ensure that when you are leaving or collecting children from school that no child under your supervision uses this equipment. Please note that this includes the P1, P2, P3 and P4 outdoor areas and also the P5-P7 outdoor area.

Staff Car Park

Due to limited spaces, this carpark is for staff parking only. Should you have a blue disability badge and require access to the car park, press the barrier buzzer and show your blue pass. The turning circle must be left clear for emergency vehicle access.

Parking Around Rathmore PS

Your support would be appreciated when parking near to Rathmore PS. Our school receives a number of complaints from residents or concerned people when parents park over the zig-zag lines and residents' driveways. Please show consideration to each other and our local residents.

Vape & Smoke Free School Gates

Rathmore is part of the Vape & Smoke Free School Scheme. We remind parents not to vape or smoke in our grounds or around our school gates.

Dog-Free Grounds

We remind parents not to bring dogs on to our school grounds either on leads or carried. It is crucial that school grounds and field remain clean without dog mess.

PTA Fundraising Success

Thank you for your School Fund and event support during 2025-2026. We are so grateful as your donations raised funds for our class Enhancement Fund used for playground equipment, classroom Calm Corners, curricular enhancement and resourcing our classroom areas.

Our significant spends were the P3 outdoor areas, a further set of iPads and P4 outdoor zone, coming soon.

Our amazing Committee kept us motivated and are looking forward to welcoming new members this year at our first meeting on Friday 11 September 2026 @ 2pm. Our PTA AGM details have already been sent home.

Our voluntary School Fund remains at £30 per child (£10 per term) which will go live next week. If you are in a position to contribute any additional funds, we appreciate every penny donated as this money is completely ring-fenced for your children's learning resources.

