



Baby boom...

There must be something in the water in Saplings at the moment! Aine and Aoife welcomed babies Robyn and Tom in January, and Dana and Jenny welcomed babies Elsie and Devin in March! All mummies and babies are doing well and we look forward to meeting the little ones as soon as the Covid-19 restrictions allow it.

Update on Our School's Behaviour Analyst...

As you know, Wendi and the other 12 Behaviour Analysts have been fighting for their permanencies since the school transitioned to being a DES Special School in 2011. I usually update you on the status of their case at Parent's Association meetings but due to Covid this has not been possible for the past year. You may remember that the last update was in December 2019, when Wendi won her case at the Labour Court. The Labour Court ruled that the "case be conceded" and that the DES should meet with the Behaviour Analysts as a matter of urgency to resolve the issue. Almost a year and a half later, this meeting still has not taken place. The Behaviour Analysts believed in good faith that this ruling would be upheld, but that Covid restrictions had impeded

the Labour Court's mandated meeting. However, with less than nine weeks remaining on the Behaviour Analyst's current employment agreement with the DES the situation has now become untenable. Louise and Wendi have been in contact with the DES directly, with Ministers Foley (Minister for Education) and Madigan (Minister for Special Education) and with all of the TDs in North and South Kildare to push for the Labour Court's ruling to be implemented and the vital service of a full-time Behaviour Analyst to be maintained in our school, and in the twelve other affected schools. We have had some positive correspondence from local TDs who are highly concerned that such a valuable service for children with autism and complex needs is being threatened, especially after all the trials and tribulations that the students have experienced over the past year.

Megha's Fundraiser...

Megha and her family have kindly decided to donate Megha's gorgeous flowing black locks to the Rapunzel Foundation, which is a charity organization that works to improve the lives of those living with hair loss (alopecia). She also hopes to raise money for the school in the process. We hope to raise €1,500 to purchase a new iPad for each classroom. You can donate

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Saplings
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by searching 'Megha's Haircut' on iFundraise or at this link: www.ifundraise.ie/fundraiser/11402757_megha-s-hair-for-someone-who-lost-their-hair-.html There will also be updates and links on our school Facebook page (Saplings Special School Kill) and on the school website www.saplingskildare.ie

School Tour...

Unfortunately our traditional school tours (Tayto Park, Cinema, Farm etc) will not be possible this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, we still want to mark the end of the 2020/21 year during which our students coped fantastically with the huge number of changes that were introduced to keep us all safe! We are hoping to have another party day like we did at Christmas time, with bouncy castles, activities, ice cream, games and lots of fun! We will be in touch again shortly regarding costs for this event (costs in line with the average school tour price).

Dates for your diary:

Monday 3rd May (May Bank Holiday) – School Closed

Monday 7th to Friday 11th June (Inclusive) (June Bank Holiday) – School Closed

Summer Fun Day – Date TBC