

## **Scoil Inse Rátha**

### **Déan do Dhícheall**

#### **Newsletter November 2020**

#### **Dear Parents,**

As we reach the end of our third month back at school, I can't express how grateful I am to be part of this wonderful community. It is a privilege to be able to come to work here every day. With everything that is going on nationally and internationally it is great to be able to come to work with our excellent staff and pupils. You, as parents, continue to make responsible decisions that keep everyone in our school community safe. We can't drop our guard now and must continue to be careful so we can stay open. Together we have done very well and our children are benefitting from being able to come to school. Thank you.

#### **Calendar:**

We took photos for our annual calendar last week. These have now been sent to the printer. We will let you know when they are available for sale. To minimise people mixing to sell tickets and get prizes we won't be having a Christmas Raffle this year. We have a reduced number of calendars for sale this year and it will be first come first served. This is an essential fundraiser for our school so we appreciate your support.

#### **Christmas Decorations Competition:**

Pádraig O'Sullivan, TD, arranged a competition for students in our school to make decorations for the Christmas Tree that has been erected near The Crompán Roundabout. Children and their families worked hard together to create some amazing decorations. We had nearly seventy entries! If you check out our app you can see a picture of the prize winners in a socially distanced photograph with Pádraig. Well done to all involved. We hope to be able to run this competition again next year.

#### **Credit Union Competition:**

Our local Credit Union ran their annual art competition recently. We were delighted to have six winners. The quality of entries was excellent. Well done to all involved.

#### **Parent/Teacher Meetings:**

We had our Parent Teacher meeting by phone this year. It was an unusual experience for everyone. Thank you to everyone who took part. If you didn't get to speak to your child's teacher yet feel free to ring Jacinta to arrange an appointment. Should you have any issues in the coming months we remain available to discuss these with you.

#### **Board of Management:**

Our Board of Management met this month remotely. We reviewed our SEN Policy and Admissions Policy and discussed the future direction of the school. We also reviewed our Covid-19 protocols to ensure we are as safe as possible.

**Junior Achievement:**

Junior Achievement run programmes in most classes in our school every year. This is done in conjunction with local businesses and companies. This year, as we can't have visitors in our classes, they needed to come up with an alternative. Over the last month they have been trialling a remote learning version of the programme in 6<sup>th</sup> Class. We have the latest IT equipment and high speed broadband so we are able to accommodate this. Sponsorship from the LIIDC has helped to put us in this position. Hopefully Junior Achievement Ireland will be able to roll out this remote model to the rest of the classes later this year so our students can benefit from it.

**Chromebooks/Laptops:**

We purchased Chromebooks during the summer to complement our IT provision. We have been introducing them to the classes over the last couple of months. Chromebooks are like laptops in that they have a keyboard and are fast to start like a tablet. They operate best via broadband and cloud storage so we have had quite a bit of learning for staff and pupils. Each child has their own login details to access Google Classroom. PepsiCo have sponsored five laptops for use with the Chromebooks. These provide another way to access Google Classroom in class. With iPads, Chromebooks and laptops we can show our students different way to access the wonderful possibilities available online, in a safe environment.

**Christmas Shows:**

We can't have our normal Christmas performances this year. Each class will mark the festive period in their own way. Some classes will perform a song or a poem for other classes via Google Meet/Zoom. We will have our usual decorations up around the school as well to make it all as normal as possible for our students.

That's all for now.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

**Up Coming Events:**

**Tuesday 22/12/2020:** School closes at 12.15pm for Christmas Holidays.