

## Scoil Inse Rátha

### Déan do Dhícheall

#### Newsletter November 2021

#### Dear Parents,

I wrote the following paragraph this time last year. Never did I think that the same message would apply still at this point. Unfortunately it does, but I am very proud that our community has continued to stick together and work hard to keep our school open and as safe as possible.

*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.*

#### **Covid-19 update:**

At the time of writing there have been some changes to our guidelines in schools. These impact our students, families and staff. From this week, if there is a positive case in a class I will inform the parents of children in the class, from J1 to 1<sup>st</sup> Class and the children in the pod, from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. These parents will be given a number to ring to order antigen tests for their child. This will be optional but provides an extra layer of protection for our community. **It is important to remember that an antigen test can only be used when you have no symptoms.** If you have symptoms, you need to get a PCR test. The government are currently deciding on the use of masks in primary school. I will pass this information on once we get it.

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

We held our Parent/Teacher meetings this month by phone. It was great to be able to speak to parents and to discuss our shared objective of helping each child to achieve their potential. Even though the formal meetings are over, we are still available to discuss any issues that may arise during the year. If you

have concerns, it is always better to discuss it with us at an early opportunity rather than waiting for it to build up.

### **PLC Day:**

We had an in-service day this month to examine and discuss the Primary Language Curriculum. This was a worthwhile opportunity for our staff to work together in a way that isn't possible day to day. We will have more in-service on this later in the year.

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

Our Board of Management met this month. We discussed the ongoing Covid situation, staffing and the day to day running of the school. We also reviewed the following policies:

- Covid-19 Response Plan
- Admissions Notice for 2022
- Child Protection Annual Review
- Computer and Internet Policy Review
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Attendance Strategy

We will meet again on Monday December 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Italian Classes:**

Ms. Ginevra, our Senior Infant teacher, is also a qualified Italian teacher. She has started doing Italian classes with 6<sup>th</sup> Class twice a week after the infants go home. We are delighted to have this opportunity for our students as it exposes them to another language and culture. It has been proven that exposure to any foreign language helps with the learning of any other language. We are very grateful that Ms. Ginevra is giving up her time for the good of our students.

### **SIP for this year:**

Our School Improvement Plan is discussed and agreed every year. As a staff and Board of Management we agree what the priorities are for our school. We still do all the other parts of the organisation, management and curriculum but we have a particular focus on these areas. This year we are concentrating on the following:

- Covid-19 Response Plan

- Safety and Wellbeing of pupils and staff
- Primary Language Curriculum
- Comprehension
- Spellings

There is a lot in this but we will discuss these areas at each of our monthly staff meetings and make progress during the year.

### **Christmas Presents for staff:**

At our most recent staff meeting we discussed the pressure that parents can feel to get presents for staff. In some cases, there can be several adults involved with a child and this can make it very expensive for families at an already expensive time of year. We understand the importance of teaching children to say thank you so we came up with an alternative this year. Firstly, there is no need to say thank you as we love working with the fantastic children in our school. If you do want to say thank you, a card or a note is always welcome and appreciated. If you wish to give a present, we ask that you give a donation to Cork Penny Dinners, from the list below. We will gather up the donations and drop them in to help this worthy charity. We do appreciate the generosity of parents over the years but we really don't want there to be pressure on parents.

- Gravy granules
- Peas and beans
- Soup
- Microwavable food
- Tinned rice
- Olive oil
- Custard
- Tinned fruit
- Jelly
- Tea&coffee
- Sugar
- Salt and pepper
- Biscuits and cakes
- Cereal
- Juice
- Dried pasta/spaghetti

- Diluted squash
- Toilet rolls/ paper towels
- Refuse sacks
- Tin foil
- Tea towels
- Hand wash
- Wash up liquid
- Bleach
- Pot scourers
- Disinfectant spray

### **School Calendar:**

Our annual calendar is with the printers and will be available shortly for sale. Please support this school fundraiser as it raises much needed funds. Thank you to our Parents Association for organising this, especially Lisa Byrne, who has put in a huge amount of time and effort again this year.

### **Credit Union Art Competition Winners:**

Our students won nearly all the prizes this year in the annual art competition. We won six out of the nine prizes! Congratulations to everyone who took part as the judges were amazed by the high standard. The winners were:

#### **UNDER 7**

- 1st Alexandra Klimka
- 2nd Alvin Dijo
- 3rd Alice O'Loughlin

#### **Age 8- 10**

- 1st Caleb Butler Cremin
- 2nd Marta Rochon

#### **Age 11- 13**

- 3rd Emily Linehan

### **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. We hope that 2022 will see a return to traditional festivities!

That's all for now.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

### **Up Coming Events:**

**29<sup>th</sup> Nov:** for the next 2 weeks The Everyman's "To Catch a Star" is available online to JI-2<sup>nd</sup> to make up for not being able to go to the panto.

**8<sup>th</sup> Dec:** Lifetime Lab virtual lessons for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

**13<sup>th</sup> Dec:** 7pm: Board of Management meeting

**17<sup>th</sup> Dec:** The Radisson has invited us to sing carols in reception. Unless things improve we won't be able to attend but we remain hopeful but realistic.

**22<sup>nd</sup> Dec:** school closes at 12.15pm for Christmas Holidays.