

Scoil Inse Rátha

Déan do Dhícheall

Newsletter February 2022

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and your children had a lovely midterm break. They say that times flies when you are having fun and this school year is going by very quickly. We have a lot done and a lot more to do. Thank you for your support so far this year. We are entering a new chapter as we see most of the Covid-19 restrictions lifted. We are all hoping that this next phase will go smoothly. I am confident that, together, we can manage whatever comes up.

Covid-19 Measures:

The government have changed some of the restrictions around Covid-19 in schools. For some of you, this will be cause for celebration while for others you will be nervous that children are still at risk and that we are moving too fast. We will continue to do what we can to keep your child happy and safe.

Here are the main points but more details can be found on what I posted to our app on Friday 25th February.

1. Children from 3rd to 6th Class will no longer be required to wear masks in school. Your child is free to wear a mask should they wish but we will not be insisting on it.
2. Pods and class bubbles will no longer exist and we can have activities that involve mixing classes such as assembly and sports training.
3. Staggered entry and exit from the school in the morning and evening will cease. Children will be supervised on the yard from 8.40am each morning and will go into class at 8.50am when teaching will start. On wet mornings children will be allowed into their classrooms at 8.40am. Our school can take no responsibility for children before 8.40am. Sherpa Kids offer childcare before school each morning. Junior and Senior Infants will finish at 1.30pm and will exit the building as has been the case so far this year. 1st to 6th Classes will finish at 2.30pm and will exit by the gate they have been using so far this year.
4. Children who have positive antigen tests and/or symptoms of Covid-19 should continue to stay out of school and follow health advice. <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/guidance/educationguidance/Isolation%20quick%20guide%20under%2013s.pdf>
5. Extra hand washing, cleaning and sanitising will continue until the summer holidays. It will be reviewed after this.
6. Children have been managing really well coming into school independently and we would like to see this continue. Please drop continue to drop your child at the gate and allow them to walk in. If you need to speak to your child's teacher, please make an appointment either in the journal or by ringing Jacinta.

Board of Management:

Our Board of Management met this month. We discussed Enrolment, Staffing, infrastructure improvements and finance. We also conducted our annual review of our Anti-Bullying Policy. Our

offers of places for Junior Infants for September 2022 have gone out. We have been approved funding to upgrade the windows at the front of the school and we have also been selected by Cork County Council to have a new 30 space bike shelter installed at the front of our school.

Up Coming Events:

Our children have missed out on a number of traditions, events and experiences over the last two years. We have plans in place to get some of these back in place over the next few months.

- Assembly is a weekly opportunity for our school community to come together and celebrate birthdays, achievements and other events. We look forward to starting this again next week.
- Junior Achievement: experts from local businesses and industries follow the JA Programme in each class. Companies get to give something back to our school and our children get to experience some of what the real life of work is like.
- Engineering in a Box: 6th Class will be working on this programme, led by an engineer. They will have to work to solve real life engineering problems.
- Sciath na Scol: 4th to 6th Classes have already started training for this as individual classes. From next week we will step up our preparations for the hurling championship. There will be a football blitz in June as well.
- Basketball: Every class and teacher has missed Mark Scannell's weekly visits to our school. Mark will return next week. Every class will get a few weeks with Mark before the summer holidays.
- Cork Sports Partnership Athletics programme in 3rd class running for five weeks.
- School Tours: our teachers are in the process of booking school tours for their class. Some of our students have never had a school tour and everyone else has waited a very long time so there will be huge excitement.

There is very serious and important academic work to be completed as well but our job is to educate the whole child so these events are essential...and equally important is the fact that it brings fun to their school experience!

Primary Language Curriculum:

The new Primary Language Curriculum continues to be rolled out in Primary Schools across the country. We had a training day earlier this year and the next stage is now available. We are to undertake this training before Easter so we will close early on March 16th at 12.15pm so staff can avail of this training.

New Bank Holiday:

In line with the rest of the country the school year has been reduced by one day for the new bank holiday. School will be closed on Tuesday June 7th as a result of this as we were already scheduled to be closed on March 18th.

World Book Day:

Thursday March 3rd is World Book Day. Children can dress up as a character from a book on that day. It would be lovely if they could bring the book linked to their character with them as well. We recognise that it isn't possible for everyone to dress up and we certainly don't want people to spend money on costumes. The goal is to encourage children to read and enjoy books. If they can't dress up they can treat it as a no-uniform day provided they can tell us who their favourite character is and why!

That's all for now. I sincerely hope that we are at the end of the Covid tunnel. We still need to be careful. I think we have all learned that we don't know what is really going on in anyone's life and that we need to be kind to each other. I can't wait to see your children on Monday.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

Up Coming Events:

28th February: Back to school after midterm. Normal school hours resume. Supervision from 8.40am. Class from 8.50am to 1.30pm for JI & SI and from 8.50am to 2.30pm for all other classes.

2nd March: Basketball with Mark starts for 1st and 2nd Classes for four weeks.

3rd March: World Book Day – children may dress up.

8th March: Cork Sports Partnership Athletics programme starting today for 5 weeks in 3rd Class.

16th March: school closes at 12.15pm for all classes for staff training on Primary Language Curriculum.

17th & 18th March: School closed for St. Patrick's weekend.

1st April: Confirmation at 11am in Little Island Church.

8th April: school closes at 12.15pm for Easter Holidays.