



Scoil na Mainistreach - Cinnlínte 163 - November 2019

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are now entering the last few weeks of a busy and successful term for Monastery NS. I have some news and important notices for you. Please visit our website for more information and of course lots of photographs. Don't forget to download our **Textaparent App** to access school texts and upcoming events on our **School Calendar**.

HOUSEKEEPING

1. **Health and Safety** – The Christmas season is almost upon us, the evenings are darker and the roads are busier. It gets harder to see children coming and going from school along our busy roads. In the interest of everyone's health and safety we remind parents of the following;
 - **Parents should not drive into Gaynor's' Lane at our back gates to drop off or collect children.** This is a **PEDESTRIAN ZONE** for parents and children during school opening / closing times.
 - **The cycle lane / tarmac area at the front of the school field gates must not be parked on. Please do not block it.** Children use it on their way to / from school each day.
 - **Please DO NOT WALK UNDER the staff car park traffic barrier through the staff car park.**

We ask for everyone's full co-operation with these important health and safety matters.
2. **Parent/Teacher meetings** take place from Monday January 20th 2020. Information will follow in the New Year.
3. **New Literacy & Numeracy Plans** – We recently had a visit from our local Department of Education Inspector who confirmed the high standards of teaching, literacy and numeracy in our school. We are of course extremely pleased with this evaluation of our work and with your support we will continue to provide the best education for our boys. Work is ongoing on our literacy improvement plan (LIP) and numeracy improvement plan (NIP) this year. For the second year our LIP will focus on **Spellings** and we ask parents to check up on their children's spellings each night. Our NIP will again focus on **Measures** (Length/Area/Weight/ Capacity/Money/Time). Maths must be relevant to pupils' ordinary lives and for this reason we ask that parents question their children in relation to measures in their lives when shopping, going to bed, problem solving etc.
4. **Timekeeping** – We have noticed this term a larger number of children than usual are coming late to school each morning. Please allow time for traffic and bad weather in the mornings to get your son to school on time.
5. **Absences**
 1. **If your son is returning from an absence from school please ensure you send in a note (infants) or complete an absence note in your son's diary (seniors).** *Reasons for absences* are recorded by teacher.
 2. Please ensure your son is fully recovered from illness before returning to school.
 3. At home remind your son about good hand / toilet and general personal hygiene to prevent the spread of flu / tummy bugs / winter vomiting bug etc in school.
6. **Team Teaching** – Did you know that classes in our school are supported most days during the teaching of numeracy and literacy by an extra support teacher? We make very good use of our five Special Education Teachers (SETs) who *team teach* in classrooms and withdraw groups and individual pupils for support.
7. **ICT Planning for the future** – We purchased 5 new classroom Activpanels this year and 16 iPads are being delivered in the near future. We plan to buy two additional classroom Activpanels in January 2020.
8. **Credit Union Art Competition** – Congratulations to 2nd class pupil *Adam McCartney* who won a first prize in the local Ardee Credit Union Art competition.

SPORT

9. **Gaelic Football** – Congratulations to our under 13 Gaelic team and managers Masters McAdam and McCoy who brought home the County Louth GAA Division 1 league title (Corn Mhic Ardail) for the fourth year in a row (see school website). Also congratulations to the boys in 3rd and 4th who took part in an after school GAA football league organised by Ms McCreanor and Ms McCabe. Medals for all were presented at Halloween Assembly.
10. **GAA 5 Star Centre** – This year we are applying to become a *GAA 5 Star Centre*. This initiative aims to support and recognise Primary Schools that provide pupils with 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous Gaelic Games activity per week in a manner that ensures the children will experience fun, friendship, fairness and ultimately improve their fitness. Our teachers have already completed training with local Louth GAA Performance Coach Ciaran Sloan. For more information see <https://learning.gaa.ie/5Star>.
11. **Badminton** – Ms Cusack and Ms Maguire have organised our first *Monastery NS Badminton Championship*. Thanks to our Sponsored Walk fundraising we purchased new badminton poles and a net. The first round has just been completed and the qualifiers will now battle it out to become our first *MNS Badminton Champion*.
12. **Soccer**
 - Mr McGee and Ms Cusack ran a successful lunchtime league for all the boys in 3rd and 4th (soccer) where the emphasis was on pupil participation. After exciting group stages *The Mad Scones* played *Nike FC* in a thrilling lunchtime final. *Nike FC* came out as eventual winners and medals were presented to both league winners and runners up at Halloween Assembly. A lunchtime league will be organised for all the boys in 5th and 6th in the New Year.
 - FAI Futsal - Futsal is a form of indoor 5 a side soccer. At the end of October Monastery NS brought a team of 12 players from 4th class to play in an FAI County Louth FUTSAL non-competitive competition hosted at DKIT Sports Centre. The boys won all their games and enjoyed the competition. New Futsal footballs were bought for all the classes to play matches at break times.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MONASTERY NS?

13. There was great excitement at our **Halloween assembly**. We awarded the September and October nominations for **Student of the Year**. See our website for a list of the "*Student of the Year*" nominations. We also awarded *Friendship Week* competition prizes. Ms McCreanor and Ms McCabe ran a very successful *GAA Autumn League* for 3rd and 4th classes and awarded medals to all of the boys involved. Our Green Schools committee provided us with the latest Green Schools News. And finally we had our sponsored walk monster draw for two bicycles and over 30 spot prizes. Special congratulations to bicycle winners Preston Fischel in 4th class and Corey Finnegan in 1st class. See photographs on our school website by clicking on the *Activities / Assemblies / Halloween links*.
14. **Parents Association News** - A successful Church gate collection took place on Sunday November 10th. Thanks to all who stood in the cold and collected outside local churches for our school. Our Parents' Association will also organise a raffle during our Christmas Concert.
15. **Swimming** will commence for 3rd and 4th on our first week back at school after Christmas on Thursday January 9th 2020. Please forward your payment to teacher as soon as possible.
16. **Green Schools News** – Ms McKeown and Ms McCabe have been meeting regularly with our **Green School's Committee**. This is the final year of our Green School's theme *Global Citizenship – Marine Environment* which focuses on raising awareness of marine eco-systems and the work being done to save them. Fourth to sixth classes are taking part in Louth County Council's *Greener Christmas Poetry Competition*. 4th and 5th classes will also partake in workshops in school organised by the *Rediscovery Centre* in December. And we are planning a *Showcase Day* of project work on Friday January 31st 2020. More information will follow in January.
17. **The Altar Boys' Christmas Schedule** will be issued shortly. Thanks to parents who currently support our Parish and during the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Please try to make sure your son serves mass when scheduled.

18. Christmas Activities

- **Our annual Christmas Concert takes place on Monday (Matinee & Evening Show) December 16th and on Tuesday (Evening Show) December 17th.** Our Concert has the same format as last year. Our choir and infants open our show and perform until the interval. 1st to 6th classes will then present one show entitled **“The Amazing Advent Calendar”**. **An information letter will issue on December 6th.**
- **Christmas Decorations from Recycled Materials Competition** – Don’t throw out that cardboard box! This competition takes place over the weekend of November 29th. 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for every class. Master McGee’s prize for best entry in the school. **A letter will issue on November 28th. All entries must be returned by Monday December 2nd** and will be displayed before the Christmas Concert.
- **Colouring Competition** for infants to 2nd classes and **Handwriting Competition** for 3rd to 6th classes.
- **Christmas Jumper Day** – **We are hosting a Christmas Jumper Day in aid of Crumlin Children’s Hospital medical research fund (CMRF) on Wednesday, December 18th.** Pupils can decorate an old jumper with decorations or buy a Christmas jumper and wear it to support our fundraiser for charity. **The cost is €2 per pupil or greater donations accepted.**
- **Christmas Assembly** takes place at 11.10am on Wednesday, December 18th.
- **Santa visits our Infants on Friday, December 13th at 1.15pm.** Parents are welcome to attend.
- **Our Choir** visit our senior citizens at Moorehall and at Ardee Day Care Centre on December 4th.
- The **School Crib** will be erected on the morning of **Thursday December 6th.** **However we need five to six fit, strong and healthy parents to help us to erect it. Please contact the office if you would be available to help us for one hour on this morning.**
- **Confessions** for 3rd to 6th takes place after 10am mass on Monday December 2nd.

19. **Our Choir take part in the Peace Proms in Belfast on Sunday March 1st at the SSE Arena. Tickets are now on sale at www.ticketmaster.ie** Our Choir will also attend a Peace Proms rehearsal workshop next Wednesday November 27th in Belfast. The bus departs at 11am and will return at 3.30pm.

20. **Ardee Library** – As part of *Science Week* activities Mrs Marks / Mr McCoy’s 5th class visited our local Library and explored the world of computer coding. They learned to code using the child friendly programming language *Scratch* which helped them to create their own animation or game. Try it at home for free by visiting <https://scratch.mit.edu/> and registering. Meanwhile 6th class took part in a *Fly Your Kite* workshop and each boy took home his newly decorated kite. Ms McCreanor’s 2nd class will attend a workshop on November 26th given by actress and storyteller Roisín Murphy.

21. Enrolment of Pupils

- **If you wish to secure an enrolment place for your son in the next few years it is vitally important that you submit an enrolment application as soon as possible.** Contact us for an *Enrolment Application Form* or download it from our website.
- **If you think that your infant son may have special needs and require support in September 2020, it is vitally important that you make early contact with our school.** A considerable amount of work is required to apply for and put in place the necessary supports for your son.

22. Staff Announcements

- We would like to congratulate our **newly appointed Deputy Principal Mr Philip McAdam** and wish him well in his new role.
- It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our dear friend and colleague **Mr Bartle Woods** in his 83rd year on November 14th. He was a sincere, kind, humorous and likeable teacher who touched the hearts of so many pupils, parents and teachers over the years. **Go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a anam uasal.**

23. **We close for Christmas Holidays on Friday, December 20th at 12.30 and reopen on Tuesday, January 7th.**

THE INTERNET AND YOUR CHILD - SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR PARENTS

As we all know Santa is coming in the next few weeks and will bring lots of internet enabled devices. It can be quite daunting for parents to fully understand the positive potential and possible negative consequences of your child's internet use. The parents section of www.webwise.ie is an invaluable resource for information, videos and advice.

10 TIPS FOR PARENTS

98% of young people in Ireland use the Internet. 44% are online everyday. 28% access the Internet through personal devices like mobile phones and games machines. Young people are primarily going online to make friends, play games, download music, and do their homework. As parents, the most important thing you can do to reduce the online risks is to engage with their digital lifestyle.

- 1. Discover the Internet together.** Be the one to introduce your child to the Internet. This could make it easier to share both positive and negative experiences in the future.
- 2. Agree with your child on rules for Internet use.** Try to reach an agreement with your child on how long they should spend online and what types of sites and activities are ok.
- 3. Encourage your child to be careful when disclosing personal information.** They should be selective about what personal information and photos they post to online spaces. Once material is online it is subject to all kinds of unauthorised use.
- 4. Talk about the risks associated with meeting online friends.** Young people are making friends online but they should only physically meet these strangers in the company of an adult or others they trust.
- 5. Teach your child about 'source criticism' on the Internet.** Not all information found online is correct. Educate your children on how to verify information they find.
- 6. Don't be too critical towards your child's exploration of the Internet.** Remember, it is not always their fault if they come across inappropriate content on the Web.
- 7. Report online material you may consider illegal to the appropriate authorities.** It is important that we all take responsibility for the Web and report matters which we believe could be illegal to www.hotline.ie
- 8. Encourage respect for others.** As in everyday life there are informal ethical rules for how to behave when relating to other people on the Internet.
- 9. Know your child's Internet use.** To be able to guide your child's Internet use, whether it's on their mobile phone or PC, it is important to understand how children use the Internet and know what they like to do online.
- 10. Remember that the positive aspects of the Internet outweigh the negative aspects.** The Internet is an excellent educational and recreational resource for children. Encourage your child to be **Webwise** and explore the Internet to its full potential.

NEW & REVIEWED SCHOOL POLICIES

Check out new and reviewed school policies on our website at www.monasterynsardee.ie/policies.html

Is mise le meas,

Jim Mc Gee, Príomh Oide.