



Scoil Thomáis

Laurel Lodge, Castleknock, Dublin 15

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NUACHTLITIR

Dated 18th December 2020



On behalf of all Scoil Thomáis staff, we wish all our pupils, parents and their families a happy and safe Christmas this year and we all look forward to a brighter 2021. We again express our appreciation to you all for your co-operation with all the Covid safety routines and procedures implemented since the return to school in September. It has indeed been a challenging term but thanks to the enthusiasm of our pupils, the dedication of our staff and the support of parents/guardians we have had a productive school term despite living through a pandemic. We look forward to the return to school for term 2 on Wednesday 6th January 2021. Meanwhile we ask that everyone continues to be mindful of the most up to date Public Health advice including wearing masks, keeping social distance, sanitising frequently and limiting social contacts in accordance with government guidelines. We understand that many pupils are looking forward to meeting extended family members including grandparents over the Christmas days but please take every care not to spread the virus. We are all aware that Covid cases are increasing in line with increased social activity - and a high level of cases may necessitate further restrictions being imposed before New Year.

Parents/Guardians should be aware of and take note of current advice in relation to travel. It is important that all non-essential domestic and international travel is avoided. Anyone who travels internationally must restrict their movements for 14 days on arrival into Ireland. Alternatively, travellers may take a PCR test on DAY 5 after arrival and should continue to restrict their movement until they receive a 'not detected' result.

Parents should be aware that families who choose to travel abroad over the Christmas break must follow the Department of Foreign Affairs advice on their return to Ireland. It is essential that pupils who travel abroad DO NOT return to school in January until they have complied with quarantine rules advised by the government. We do not want to put the health and safety of our staff and pupils at any unnecessary risk when school reopens after the Christmas break. For further advice on travel and safety advice for returning, please check out the Department of Foreign Affairs website

<https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/coronavirus/general-covid-19-travel-advisory/>

Christmas Holidays: School finishes at ***11am/11.10am* next Tuesday 22nd December**

for pupils and re-opens on Wednesday 6th January 2021 for the new school term.

*Classes who come to school at 9am finish at 11am and those who come at 9.10am go home at 11.10am that morning. Please note that on Tuesday 22nd December there will be no morning break for pupils to facilitate the earlier finish time. Pupils will have a 'festive fun' morning in school on 22nd December and it will be a non-uniform morning in school. Please ensure that your child is collected on time this day and pupils will exit by their usual home time gates.



Special Message from Santa ! Santa has emailed school office with special message for pupils in Scoil Thomáis. He reminds all children to be in bed early on Christmas Eve. Santa will be visiting homes in Laurel Lodge and the Dublin 15 area with special presents for all the boys and girls. Do leave out some carrots for Rudolph and some nice food for Santa and don't forget to leave a bottle of hand sanitiser handy for Santa this year !!

Merry Christmas 2020 to all Scoil Thomáis pupils from Santa

PARKING AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AT THE SCHOOL GATES:

PLEASE BE EXTRA CAREFUL AT ALL SCHOOL GATE AREA AND ROADWAYS.

Where possible please cross at the designated pedestrian crossings at the RISE Gate and at the LAUREL LODGE ROAD/COMMUNITY CENTRE

Please drive carefully when approaching or leaving the roads surrounding the school and be mindful of pedestrians and pupils entering and exiting the school grounds



Coronavirus
COVID-19



Covid Safety Rules: Make sure that your child is wearing suitable warm coats and hats for outdoor times. All pupils are reminded to keep social distance when waiting at the school gates before school time in the morning and at home time when walking home.

Parents/Minders and those dropping off and collecting pupils must keep social distance - the school has noted that many adults at the school are chatting in close groups and not keeping to social distancing rules. It is important that all adults show good example to the children and keep reinforcing the Covid safety rules. Adults, please do not delay at the school in the morning time or at hometime collection of pupils.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR PARENTS: Again a reminder NOT to send your child to school if they are unwell or display any Covid related symptoms. Keep your child at home and contact your doctor for advice and please email teacher to keep them informed of the matter. Thank you for your co-operation with this requirement to date which is helping to keep the incidents of the virus at a minimum in the school. Please check www.scoilthomais.ie for useful Covid safety information and links to HSE/Public health for parents.



First Communion for R.13 and R.14 pupils. Congratulations to the pupils in Ms Galligan's and Ms Boland's Classes who received their First Communion on Friday evening 11th December.



The boys and girls looked wonderful dressed up in their Communion dresses and suits and they did themselves, their parents and teachers proud with their prayerful participation in the Mass. Photographer Philip Murray took a class photo at the end of each Mass, the link to purchase the photos was emailed to parents this week.

A special thank you to Fr Brendan PP and Fr Dan Joe for celebrating the Masses and to Teuta, for preparing the Church for the ceremony.

Also to Sinead O'Donnell and teacher Ms Rodgers for the beautiful music and singing at each Mass and finally, to both teachers for preparing the pupils for First Penance and First Communion.

Fundraising Raffle 2020: The Raffle took place this week on Wednesday 16th December with great excitement in all classes as staff and pupils watched the raffle live via Zoom from Ms Ryan's Office. There were many lucky winners for the prizes on offer including a laptop, cash, vouchers, hampers, gift sets, wine, and many pupils won lovely sellers prizes. All prize winners have been contacted and have collected their prizes. This year's raffle raised just over €7,000 and the support of so many school families is much appreciated. It is expected that planning and designing for the resurfacing of the junior courtyard with child friendly soft surface will start early in the New Year thanks to the generosity of parents for fundraising events since September. The school is grateful to the many local business interests and companies who deal with the school for donating great the raffle prizes - a full list of sponsors and prize winners is available from the school office.

fundraising



Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal 2020. Scoil Thomáis Parents' Association wishes to thank all the parents who so generously supported this year's appeal for vouchers and toys for the local V de P branch which were gratefully accepted in the Community Centre over three mornings last week. A letter of appreciation was received by the PA and the vouchers and toys are being distributed to needy families to bring joy and comfort to them this Christmas.

Pupils in 5th Classes will participate in an online Internet Safety Workshop in class

Expert speaker Ger Brick will speak with the classes via webcam about online safety and how to manage social media apps and deal with incidents of cyberbullying. This topic is an important lesson on the 5th class SPHE curriculum. Pupils in Ms Farragher's, Mr McGowan's and Mr Ryan's Class had their workshop today, Friday 18th Dec: whilst Ms Goulding's class will have their workshop on the morning of Monday 21st December. Parents are encouraged to ask their children to share what they learnt on this important lesson



Enrolment for Junior Infants Class Sept 2021:

Scoil Thomáis Admission Policy can be read from the school website www.scoilthomais.ie (ABOUT US/POLICIES). The Annual Admission Notice and Admission Application Form are now available to download from the school website www.scoilthomais.ie

Please note that applications for places in Junior Infants Class 2021/22 will be accepted (by post or to the school office) from 11th - 29th January 2021. All applications must be accompanied by original supporting documentation as listed in the Admission Notice ie birth certificate, utility bills, and proof of residence.



Congratulations to winners of prizes and certificates in the 2020 Christmas Art Competition. The standard of entries from all class levels was very high this year and there are many very artistic pupils in the school. All the winning entries are now displayed on the walls on the red corridor and will remain there until the New Year. Special thanks to teacher Ms Boland who organised the competition this year and who sourced all the prizes. The announcement of the winners was made via Zoom link to classes and prizes and certificates were presented to pupils by class teachers. A video of the art work will be posted on the school website for everyone to enjoy.

Again well done to all the classes who put such effort into their entries.



Scoil Thomáis Christmas Online Prayer Service was streamed via webcam to all classes from 3rd - 6th yesterday afternoon Thursday 17th December. Fr Brendan welcomed the school and pupils from each of the classes involved led the readings and prayers to share the Christmas story of the birth of Jesus. Mr Kelly and a small group of 6th class singers sang traditional Christmas Carols. The service is available to view on the parish website www.laurellodgeparish.ie as a recording for those parents or family who may

have missed seeing it. The pupils involved in the service were prepared so well by their teachers and Ms Boland co-ordinated the service, assisted by Mr Kelly & Ms Steen. Please see the parish website for the schedule of Christmas Masses for next week.



The school sends its sympathies to the Chairperson of Scoil Thomáis Board of Management, Mr Brian Kealy on death of his mother this week. Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a hanam.



Today Friday 18th December all classes enjoyed going on the Elves Christmas Walk.

Pupils and staff dressed in festive gear and walked singing along to Christmas songs. The walk route along the perimeter of the school was beautifully decorated by school staff and many parents helped too after dropping off their children to school. Added to the excitement was the chance to wheel Pauline & Regina's Festive Trolleys and Mick & Tony's Sleigh Trolley along the route - their trolleys have been beautifully decked out and decorated for Christmas ! Special thanks to Elf Walk organiser, Ms Flynn for her work in planning the schedule for the day and to all members of school staff who helped out to make the walk a special event for the children this year. Luckily, the weather was pleasant for all classes when walking despite the early morning heavy rain. Funds raised for the walk go into Fundraising 2020/21 school account.



PANTO DAY IN SCHOOL

On Monday 21st December all classes are looking forward to having an online Panto experience as this year's Helix Panto 'the Sword in the Stone' will be streamed into each classroom. Pupils can bring in a 'treat' (REMEMBER no NUT based foods) for the panto as well as their usual lunch and drink and everyone is encouraged to wear their Christmas clothes to school on this day. The school ticket for the Panto 2020 was purchased by the Parents' Association so again many thanks for this special treat.

All classes enjoyed a visit this week to the **Elves Christmas Courtyard Experience** This was created by staff members in the pebble courtyard. There were 12 small elves hidden in the courtyard and pupils had great fun finding them. The Courtyard is decorated with lovely lights, Christmas trees and other festive decorations including Santa with festive painting on the windows - all this work was undertaken by staff members over recent weeks who gave of their time and talents to create this special experience for the children.



As part of the school's SPHE curriculum Relationship & Sexuality Education is taught to pupils from Infants to 6th Class at age appropriate level in accordance with Scoil Thomais RSE policy (on the school website www.scoilthomais.ie ABOUT US/POLICIES) . The policy outlines why RSE is taught in school as well as clarifying the specific content and appropriate language to be taught at each class level. On return to school over the week 11th - 15th January 2021 pupils from Senior Infants to 6th Class will be taught a specific Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) lesson as part of the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. This lesson was on the curriculum for 2019/20 to be taught in May 2020 but due to the Covid-19 school closure, this lesson could not be taught to the pupils by teacher. The planned RSE lesson will now be taught in January 2021 to all relevant pupils by their class teacher. Please take time to read the Parents Information sent by email from your child's teacher this week

***Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir agus Áthbhliain faoi mhaise ó gach duine í Scoil Thomáis
Christmas Wishes to everyone for a safe and peaceful Christmas and New Year
from
Ms.McGarry & Ms Ryan.***



Caretakers

**Mick
&
Tony
and**

**Cleaners
Pauline
&
Regina**

**with their
festive
trollies.**

