



Scoil Thomáis

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NUACHTLITIR

Dated 24th September 2021



As we approach the end of September it is a good time to reflect on what we have achieved as a school community since our return to school on 31st August. WELL DONE to all the children who have settled back to their new classes very well.

Teachers and SNAs continue to implement Covid safety procedures in-class as whilst supporting the curricular and welfare needs of the children. Secretaries Geraldine and Collette are busy in the school office with school administration tasks and

Mick and Tony continue their caretaking duties in the school. The school continues to have enhanced Covid and regular cleaning services throughout the school day carried out by Pauline and Regina which is part of the School's Covid Response Plan updated Sept 2021.

Covid Cases continue to present in school and the school must adhere to current Public Health Advice in all cases. Thank you to parents/guardians for your co-operation in the management of close contacts identified from school. The school awaits clarification on the latest Public Health advice from HSE regarding asymptomatic close contacts (due to be effective from 27th Sept). The updated advice will be posted on the school website.

Again the advice to parents is not to send your child/ren to school if they show Covid-type symptoms ie sore throat, cough, fever (see hse.ie for their symptom list) or otherwise unwell. Please seek medical advice as necessary. Please encourage your child/ren to keep up their good work at school, to continue to co-operate with the Covid routines, follow their teachers/SNAs instructions and be mannerly and helpful to all their classmates and school staff. Don't forget to make sure that your child brings a small bottle of sanitiser to school and uses it regularly as directed.

School Timetable and Morning/Home Time Arrangements:

With effect from next Monday 27th September school times will return to 9am - 2.40pm for Classes from 1st - 6th.

Senior Infants school day will be from 9am - 1.40pm. *Junior Infants school day will be 9.05am - 1.45pm.

All school gates ie Vale, Rise, Community Centre, Shops will open from 8.55am for entry of pupils from Senior Infants, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th Classes (parents/minders must not come into school yard). Teachers will provide supervision in classrooms from 8.55-9am as pupils arrive. Pupils will continue to come into school using their assigned gates and walk to their class entry door - pupils are familiar with this morning entrance routine. School gates will close at 9.10am each morning.

At home time pupils and parents/minders should leave the school grounds promptly by the gate notified for each class level as at present. NOTE: Junior Infants day will begin at *9.05 and hometime is 1.45pm.

Parents/Pupils should not arrive at the school gates before 8.55am school entry (*9am entry for Junior Infants).

The revised arrangements have been notified to parents/guardians of each class level by email today.

We ask for the co-operation and patience of all parents/minders as we implement this system starting next Monday 27th September.

BIKE RACKS ARE NOW IN OPERATION FOR PUPILS IN 5TH & 6TH CLASSES ONLY.



Pupils in 5th classes park their bikes at the racks at Castleknock Rise Gate and 6th Classes must park at racks at Castleknock Vale Gate. Parents of pupils who cycle to school must have signed the Cycle to School Agreement Form which outlines the rules for use of bike racks. Pupils must observe cycle safety rules on the path and roadway to and from school and always wear a helmet. Bikes parked at the school must be locked securely. Pupils using bike racks must arrive and park their bikes at the racks 5mins before school gates open and then go to their class entrance gate.

Cycling of bikes on school grounds is strictly not allowed - pupils must walk with their bikes into and out of the school grounds.

School Uniforms: A reminder that the school uniform must be worn by all classes as follows:

Tracksuit uniform for Junior and Senior Infants each school day.

Full Uniform for 1st - 6th Class every day except on PE days when school tracksuit should be worn.

Please note that school shorts are NOT permitted to be worn from Monday 4th October as the weather will be getting colder. Parents/Guardians - please check that your child is wearing their proper uniform each day.

As advised pupils should change out of their school inform when home. Label all tracksuits tops/jumpers, coats etc so they can be returned if lost in school.



Junior Infants have settled into their class routines, are completing full infant days since 15th September and are showing great independence when coming into school via the Community Gate (C) each morning. Parent/Guardians continue to walk with their child to the Junior Infant class line and await teachers and SNAs who will escort the children to their classroom



Mass for Beginning of the New School Year: A special school Mass to mark the beginning of the 2021/22 school year will be celebrated by Fr Brendan on **Tuesday 28th September at 1.45pm.**

Classes from 3rd - 6th will tune into the Mass from their classroom via the church webcam. A small number of pupils who have been invited to do Readings and Prayers of Faithful will attend at the Church for the Mass accompanied by a teacher. Mr Kelly will also be in the Church and will sing at the Mass. Thank you to Ms O'Leary for organising this Mass this year on behalf of the school. Parents/guardian are welcome to tune to this Mass via www.laurellodgeparish.ie Church webcam. *Pupils who for religious reasons do not wish to participate in the Mass in their classrooms may go home at 1.30pm - parents please send a note to inform teacher for permission to leave school early.*



Safety At School Gate Areas: Please be extra careful at the school gates when dropping off or collecting pupils. Cars should not be parked at the KEEP CLEAR AREAS and parents/guardians should not allow children to hop out of cars onto the road at the main school gates. Please park safely and either wait for your child in your car or walk to the school gate to meet your child. Drivers of cars should drive slowly on the roads at the school entrances and everyone should co-operate with school wardens on duty each day. Please take extra care especially on wet days.

Secondary School Applications: Applications forms for local secondary schools including Castleknock Community College, Luttrellstown Community College, Edmund Rice College and St Declan's College D7 are now available from each school website - please make your application by the due date for First Year places for Sept 2022. If you have queries, please contact the relevant Secondary School. *Please note that application forms for Castleknock Community College www.castleknockcc.ie and Luttrellstown Community College www.luttrellstowncc.ie are being accepted from 1st October until the closing date of 22nd October at 3pm*



For the Attention Of Junior Infant Parents: The HSE School Immunisation Team is organising MMR & 4in1 vaccinations for children in Junior Infant classes and this service is due to be delivered in the HSE clinic over the coming months. Consent forms have been given to all Junior Infant classes to bring home and parents are asked to return these to teacher by 30th September. The HSE team will contact parents/guardians with dates and times for the vaccinations. For further information, contact HSE on 8975101

Parental Communication With The School/Teacher/SNA: Parents who wish to send a message to teacher/SNA can

(i) write a note in their child's school journal (ii) send in a letter to teacher/SNA with your child (iii) email the school office secretary - and the email will be forwarded to Teacher/SNA/PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY PRINCIPAL (Teachers/SNAs cannot respond to emails during class time) (iv) arrange for a phone call via the school office. Your child's teacher may also provide a school email for parent communication, please note that teachers cannot respond to emails during teaching time so please note that response time can vary. Please only use teacher email for sharing short points of information with teacher (ie absence reason/ early home request etc)

NOTE: for matters requiring discussion an arranged phone call is the preferred manner of communication.

Parent or Teacher/SNA requests for meetings must be kept to a minimum and must be by appointment only.



School Lunches: Please give your child healthy lunches and a drink each day for snack time and lunchtime.

Please note that NUT BASED FOODS are NOT allowed as there are many children in the school who have allergies related to nuts. This year we are asking that all pupils bring home any food waste in their lunchboxes and place in the brown bin at home. It will also help parents to monitor how much your child has eaten during the school day. Please encourage your child to eat all of their lunch/fruit in school as a healthy diet helps children to concentrate and learn in school.

Gardening in the School: The Parents' Association has purchased spring bulbs for planting on the school grounds. This will be done by Junior Infant classes in October. Well done to 3rd classes who have weeded and planted autumn bedding plants and spring bulbs in the Pebble Courtyard (Ms Lenihan's Class) and in the Zen Den Planters (Ms Boland's & Ms Scally's Classes). The lovely floral displays brighten up the school outdoor areas. The school welcomes donations of spring bulbs and bedding plants for classes to plant.

School Calendar 2021/22 is posted on the school website www.scoilthomais.ie ABOUT US.

Please note the dates of the upcoming Hallowe'en midterm break: School closed from Monday 25th - Friday 29th October. School reopens after midterm break at 9am on Monday 1st November.

Pupil Personal Accident Insurance (PPAI) for school year 2021/22: The Parents' Association has organised this insurance cover again this year with JF Dunnes Insurance. This scheme is open to all parents to register their child/ren for additional 24/7 insurance cover in the event of an accident or injury to their child at school or outside of school. An online information and application form and Aladdin payment link has been forwarded to parents earlier this week - the closing date for applications is Monday 27th September.

Scoil Thomáis Parents' Association News: The current PA Chairperson Pascal Brogan and Secretary Sharon Reilly met with the school Principal and Deputy Principal recently to discuss school matters for this term and to plan for forthcoming PA events. A date will be confirmed for PA Annual General Meeting in October and will be notified to parents. The PA has submitted its Annual Accounts for 2020/21 to the BOM for their ratification. Thank you to outgoing Treasurer Lorna O'Shea for all her work in maintaining and finalising the PA accounts to date. A new PA committee and class link parents will be arranged as soon as possible. The PA will issue a letter next week to parents of Junior Infants Classes to welcome them and to invite them to join the PA this year.

Recent Visitor to the School: Last Friday 17th September, teacher Ms McMahon returned to the school to meet her former pupils in 3rd & 6th classes who made special cards and shared good wishes on her retirement. Due to Covid restrictions school staff and pupils were unable to mark her January 2021 retirement formally so it was lovely to see her visit the school this September. We wish Ms McMahon a happy retirement after many years teaching in Scoil Thomáis.

Google Classroom Logins: Pupils in 4th Classes have been set up with Google Classroom logins by their teachers. Pupils in 5th & 6th Classes keep their logins from last school year. Google Classroom can be accessed by pupils from both home and school and allows pupils to complete learning task online. Over the coming term teachers will teach the pupil the skills for using google classroom and some homework assignments may be requested online using this platform. Classes from Junior Infants to 3rd will be set up on Seesaw shortly - all previous logins will continue to be valid for this school year.

First Penance/First Communion Preparation and Dates for 2021: Parish Priest Fr Damien issued a letter (sent via school email) to parents of 3rd class pupils registered for First Holy Communion outlining the plans for the preparation and celebration of the Sacraments of First Penance and First Communion for the pupils who were to have received these sacraments in the last school year. Teachers will teach the Sacramental lessons in October and November. Pupils will have First Penance Service in the Church on dates notified in November and First Communion Masses for each class will be held on Saturday 4th December at the times notified. The parish Do This in Memory Masses for Communion Pupils and their parents are expected to resume after 22nd October. First Communion plans for 2022 for those pupils currently in 2nd Classes have not been finalised yet - parents will be notified when arrangements are in place. Parents of pupils for First Communion 2022 will need to complete a parish registration form when available.

Reminder: Pupils are not allowed to bring Mobile Phones to school. Please ensure that your child leaves his/her mobile phone at home during the school day. This rule will be strictly enforced. Please note this school policy which is available on the school website www.scoilthomais.ie/ About Us/ Policies. Parents are asked to make sure they have read the school policy on this matter.

Message from Ms McGarry, Principal: As I am retiring with effect from 3rd October, my final school day as Principal will be next Friday 1st October. I wish to thank all the school community - Board of Management, staff, parents and pupils for their support since I took up this role in March 2012. I particularly want to commend everyone in the school for their co-operation over the past eighteen months as we all had to rise to the challenge of teaching and learning during this Covid pandemic. The school staff has been inspirational throughout, the smiling faces and delight of pupils coming into school have kept us all going and the goodwill and cooperation of parents/guardians makes Scoil Thomáis the special school that it is - a place of work, care and learning. I wish the incoming Principal Ms Lorna Diffley every success as she takes up the role of Scoil Thomáis Principal on Monday 4th October.

BOM Meeting: The next Board of Management meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th September at 7pm in the school.

Reminding everyone to continue to be mindful of Covid health and safety procedures at home and at school.

Kind Regards from Mary McGarry, Principal & Mary Ryan, Deputy Principal

Date: 24th September 2021.