

St. Attracta's Senior School

MEADOWBROOK - DUBLIN 16



Scoil Shinsireach Naomh Athracht

CLUAIN GHLAISE - ÁTH CLIATH 16

NEWSLETTER #1 September 2020



DEAR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS,

Fáilte ar ais! A big welcome back to school to all the children and especially those who are new to the school. It has been really fantastic to open our doors again. The children have been very compliant and co-operative in adjusting to the different rules and schedules in the school and despite the challenges we face, we hope all our children will be very happy here in St. Attracta's Senior School over the coming year.

This newsletter is our way of keeping you up to date with all our news about what's happening in the Senior School. It's also an introduction to the school for new parents and a few reminders for others about new school routines, which we hope will help the school run smoothly in the year ahead.

If at any time you have any questions, concerns or worries or if you're not sure about something, please don't hesitate to contact the principal - Shane Maguire. Or if it's about a class issue, please email your child's class teacher or arrange an appointment with him/her so that the teacher can give you time to address your concerns.

Suzanne Barrett, our secretary will also help you with any admin-related queries, so don't hesitate to ask. Both Suzanne and our caretaker, Tony McCann have made a huge contribution towards the safe reopening of our school and both have worked tirelessly over the summer months to help us get set up for the year ahead. Go raibh míle maith agaibh!

Céad míle fáilte to our new class teachers - Ms. Grealis and Ms. Reinhardt and also to Ms. McCarney who joins our SET team - we hope they will all be very happy here in St. Attracta's Senior School. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you - the parents - for your continued support and co-operation during these challenging times and we look forward to a memorable year ahead!

Go raibh míle maith agaibh agus gach rath ar an obair!
Shane Maguire, Príomhoide

PARENTS OF NEW PUPILS

We hope your children are settling in well, whether they have come from the Junior School or from far afield.



WORK TOWARDS REOPENING THE SENIOR SCHOOL

It was a very busy summer and we owe huge thanks to Tony, our caretaker and to our Aide, David Priestley for their wonderful work over the summer keeping the school in order, creating zones for each class, maintaining the gardens, marking the fields and so much more - so thanks a million to Tony and David!

As part of our re-opening plan, the school underwent a deep clean in July. To assist with the cleaning schedule, the school has invested in a school washing machine and a disinfectant fogger machine. Sanitiser dispensers, PPE, wipes, paper towels, disinfectant spray etc. have been purchased for each classroom in the school.

OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS

St. Attracta's Senior School opens to receive 3rd and 5th class pupils at 8.40am and 4th and 6th class students start at 8.50am. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. Classes will end each day at 2.20pm and 2.30pm for the two groups. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them collected and the person should be at the school no later than 2.30pm as we cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time. Pupils are not allowed to re-enter school for forgotten items.

ST. ATTRACTA'S STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

This year's Student Council Elections will take place on Wednesday, 14th October

The elections are carried out in the same way as local or national elections and in this way, the children are taught about the democratic process.

Thanks to all the students for adding their voice to our school! It's a very worthwhile venture in which our pupils really do make a difference! So please give consideration to the best candidate in your class who will represent you, your class and your school in the best possible way and who will also try to make our school a better place.

Good luck everybody. Go n-éirí libh go léir!



ONLINE ASSEMBLY

Earlier this week, students from Mr. Kenny's 6th Class delivered a wonderful presentation on the Wellbeing Theme of FRIENDSHIP for our first online Assembly of the year. This is a continuation from our new initiative last year where presentations were delivered on LOVE and NEW BEGINNINGS.

Mr. Heffernan recorded the presentations and they were then shared with all the students to view on their Interactive Whiteboards.

Thanks to Mr. Kenny, Ms. McCarthy and Mr. Heffernan for all their work in preparing the students.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE FOR PUPILS

The Parents' Association facilitates the Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for Pupils. All payments have been processed this year via Aladdin Connect and we'd like to thank Michele O' Riordan and the Parents Association as well as Suzanne for looking after the administration of the scheme - it's a great deal for parents!

ONLINE BEGINNING OF YEAR SCHOOL MASS

An Online Mass will take place at 11am on Thursday October 8th to mark the Beginning of the School Year. Fr. Liam Belton will celebrate the Mass from the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Ballinteer and it will be available to parents via the webcam. All classes in the school will be able to view the Mass using the Interactive Whiteboards in their classroom.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Unfortunately, we are unable to facilitate any extra-curricular activities for this current school term.

HOMEWORK

The children have been working diligently in class since our return to school and the homework hiatus for the first few weeks of the school year has worked really well. Teachers will be gradually reintroducing homework to the children over the coming weeks and all parents should have received communication from teachers in relation to homework plans for each standard.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION FUNDRAISER

The Parents Association are organising a fundraising event whereby each child gets the opportunity to design their own Christmas card. Dates are as follows:

- Suzanne will submit children's names and class teacher to the printers by the end of September.
- The School will then receive individual templates for the children so they can commence artwork.
- Children commence artwork by week ending 9th October (the more colour the better!)
- Children complete artwork by 22nd October (pre mid-term break) and return to printing company.
- After mid-term the school will receive artwork from the printers, with details on how to order cards online.
- All payments to be made online (no cash) and children to receive their individualised cards by end of November.

ROLL CALL, TIMEKEEPING & PUNCTUALITY

The Department of Education has directed that pupils not present at the time of roll call must be marked absent and the entry cannot be changed. Therefore, any pupil not physically present in the classroom at roll call time will be marked absent. So, please make sure your child is on time for school.

It seems unfair - particularly on the younger children - to be giving out to them if the reasons for being late are beyond their control. We ask parents to ensure that your child is on time for school with everything they need. Let's all work together to start school on time, to learn more and to make life less stressful for our pupils!

CHILDREN LEAVING SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS

As an increased safety measure, if your child has to go home early for any reason (illness, dental visits, etc.), a note must be written in your child's homework journal or alternatively send an email to the class teacher. Your child must be signed out from the office on collection.

REMINDER - all absences must be recorded on Aladdin.



FLYING THE FLAGS

We are very proud of the flags we have received over the past number of years. These flags recognise excellence in different areas. Long ago, we started work on our first Green Flag and we now have 6 of them (litter and waste, energy, water, travel, biodiversity and global citizenship-litter and waste.)

In the past, we also worked for and were awarded Digital School Status and Active School Status. Fuaireamar an Gaelbhratach freisin agus táimid an-sásta go deo leis sin, labhair Gaeilge linn inniu agus gach lá.

We couldn't have been awarded these flags without our fantastic children who embraced all the hard work and commitment associated with this recognition. But it's not all about flags - it's about putting our initiatives and achievements into action.

We now have a challenge ahead of us to continue to promote green initiatives, technology, Gaeilge and healthy, active living. Watch out for more news in our future newsletters. Ar aghaidh le chéile!

WALK OR CYCLE TO SCHOOL

As a Green School we encourage all families to walk to school or to park and stride as often as possible. It is wonderful to see so many children cycling to school and we remind children to always wear a helmet. Bicycles should be locked in school at all times and we have recently installed more bike stands on the Gallops side of the school. We can accept no responsibility for the security of bicycles on school grounds. Children (or adults) should **never** cycle through the yard as this has led to accidents in the past. All cyclists should dismount and walk the bike through the school grounds.

Important Note

Each child must bring a personal hand towel in a zip-lock bag for use whilst visiting the bathroom and a small container of hand sanitizer (non-spray) to school each day. They should also have a pencil case that is to be stored in school.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

So what's around the corner?

Student Council Elections: Wednesday 14th October

Goal Jersey Day: Friday 9th October

Online Beginning of Year School Mass..... Thursday 8th October

Book Week: Monday 19th - Friday 23rd October

SAFETY IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

In the interests of the safety of all our children, we appeal to all adults to drive slowly and to park carefully in the permitted spaces in the public carparks; please do not obstruct gates, park on double yellow lines, on the zig-zag lines at the pedestrian crossings, in wheelchair spaces, in the Staff Car Park, or in the Bus Parking area directly outside the swimming pool.

Please give good example to the children by not gathering in groups congesting the entrance and exits to the school and by using the pedestrian crossings to access the school.

At this stage, children should be able to walk the short distance from the entrance gates to their specific class zone outside their classrooms and we ask that parents continue to wait outside the school grounds when collecting their children preferably at a pre-arranged location a short distance away from the school gates.

Finally, remind all pupils to cross with the lollipop lady! If a child is hurt by careless driving it will already be too late. Thank you!



Healthy Habits

- We ask all children to follow our Healthy Eating Policy which encourages a healthy active lifestyle both now and in the future.
- This simply means that we continue the same policy as the Junior School - no treats.
- Keep lunchboxes healthy and drink plenty of water, but not during class teaching time.
- All wrappers and leftover apple cores, etc. should be brought home and disposed of at home.
- Eating is only half of the equation. We also encourage the children to keep fit and active at all times. A healthy body and a healthy mind...



School Expenses Welcome Anytime!

Thank you to those who have paid the School Expenses of €85 which covers art & craft, photocopying, sports, computer and curriculum resources.

There has been a great response from parents availing of the Aladdin Connect Payment facility. This money goes directly towards buying materials for children in the classroom and is a huge help in resourcing the many areas of the curriculum which the Department of Education and Skills does not fund. Without it we would not be able to provide for the children in the way that we do.

As this is an expensive time of the year, these school expenses can be paid anytime but if possible before Friday 9th October.

Parents are invited to contact the principal, Mr. Maguire or Ms. Neville in confidence, if you have any difficulty in this area. Never hesitate to talk to us - we may be able to help!

OUR FANTASTIC CHILDREN

Finally, we continue to do everything in our power to keep all our students and staff safe in these extraordinary times. The children deserve huge credit for their resilience and their amazing ability to adapt. We are very proud of them all. Ar aghaidh le chéile!



You only live once, but if you live right, once is enough!