

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. 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 school routines, which we hope will help 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 – Iníon Uí Mháirtín. Or if it's about a class issue, please make an appointment with the teacher, so that class teaching time won't be interrupted.

Céad míle fáilte to our new teachers – Ms. Murphy and Ms. Power – we hope they will 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 we look forward to a fabulous year ahead!

Go raibh míle maith agaibh agus gach rath ar an obair! - Muireann Máirtín, Príomh Oide

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

You may recall we had applied to the Department of Education in February for a small extension, but by early July, it was still under consideration and we had no choice but to put forward an alternative proposal to ensure we had classrooms for everybody on our return to school. This proposal to reconfigure our spaces was accepted and the Department agreed to fund a smaller project, resulting in the creation of a new library, restoration of a classroom and partitioning of rooms for support teaching. Thanks to our builder – Peter Pardy - great progress has been made and we are nearly there! We hope that everything will be finished very soon!



Other improvements also took place. 3rd and 5th classes have newly painted classrooms, while 4th and 6th class pupils got lovely new tables and chairs. Two new interactive whiteboards have just been installed in Ms. Rafter's and Ms. McDonnell's rooms, as part of a phased plan to keep St. Attracta's up to date with latest teaching methodologies.

We also have new hall doors, vision panels in all rooms and noticeboards arriving this week – necessary work which couldn't have been done without the generous voluntary contribution received from you – the parents. You are what makes our school what it is, so we sincerely thank you for that.

Between builders, painters, carpenters and cleaners, it was a very busy summer and we owe huge thanks to Tony, our caretaker for his wonderful work over the summer keeping the school in order, so thanks a million Tony!

But we're not finished yet! Thanks to the Parents' Association fabulous fundraising, landscaping and signage are also in the pipeline and this will hopefully give the entrance to the school a whole new look, but please be patient with us!

And to cap it all – if you haven't heard – we have the most amazing curriculum room – or is it a space station? With huge thanks to one of our parents – Leo Maher – he offered to give the room a makeover and invited Ms. Nelly's 5th class last year to come up with a theme and they chose space school! We had no idea what to expect, but it has surpassed all our expectations and the children now have a room where they will absolutely love to learn. Go raibh míle maith agat Leo!

OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS

St. Attracta's Senior School opens to receive pupils at 8.50a.m. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. Classes will end each day at 2.30p.m. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them collected and the person to escort them should be at the school no later than 2.30p.m. as we cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time. Pupils are not allowed to re-enter school for forgotten items.



SAFETY IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

In the interests of the safety of all our children, we appeal to all adults to only park in the permitted spaces in the public car parks; please do not obstruct gates, park on double yellow lines, on the zig-zag lines at the pedestrian crossings, in the Staff Car Park, or in the Bus Parking area directly outside the swimming pool. Please give good example to the children by using the pedestrian crossings to access the school. 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!



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CALLING ALL PARENTS OF NEW PUPILS.....

We hope your children are settling in well, whether they have come from the Junior School or from far afield. We'll hold our coffee morning for parents of new pupils on Friday 28th September at 9.00a.m. (just after dropping children to school). This will give us a chance to meet you and for you to meet other parents as well. Our coffee morning will take place in the Curriculum Room and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible! Join us for a cup of tea or coffee, a chat, a mingle with other parents and a chance to say a quick hello to the 3rd class teachers – Mr. Coughlan, Ms. Rafter, Mr. Bradley and Ms. Murphy. We look forward to seeing 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 water. All wrappers and leftover apple butts, etc. should be brought home and recycled as we only have paper bins in the Senior School. Eating is only half of the equation. We also encourage the children to keep fit and active at all times.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Extra-curricular activities for this term have now started and information on this went home in a separate note. Enrolment took place in early September and in order to be fair to everybody, places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. We remind you that while the school facilitates these activities - payment, consent forms and all communications for each activity are dealt with directly by the individuals running the activities.

Details of sporting activities are dealt with separately by teachers as these are done on a voluntary basis without payment. A huge thank you to all the teachers who give their time – both after school and at lunchtime – to promoting sport in our school. The sporting activities include GAA – football, hurling and camogie - as well as basketball, soccer, Olympic handball and athletics. These were not listed on the extra-curricular activities sheet as some of these are lunchtime activities and others take place after school. Some are run in the first term, while others take place later in the year. Teachers will liaise with children in the relevant classes. Go raibh mile maith agaibh, a mhúinteoirí.

SCHOOL EXPENSES WELCOME ANYTIME!

Thank you to those who have paid the School Expenses of €90 which covers art & craft, photocopying, sports, computer and curriculum resources. 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 support financially. Without it we would not be able to provide for the children in the way that we do. As this an expensive time of the year, these school expenses can be paid anytime but if possible before Friday 28th September. Parents are invited to contact the principal, Iníon Uí Mháirtín or Ms. Neville in confidence, if you have any difficulty in this area.



BOOK RENTAL:

The Book Rental Scheme is going very well and by now pupils should have received their books – we're awaiting a small delivery of books but if you paid for Book Rental and didn't receive books, please ring us immediately on 01-2951627. We remind parents to encourage pupils to keep the books in good condition throughout the year, as damaged books must be replaced. First inspection of books will take place in November, so be ready!



ST. ATTRACTA'S STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

This year's Student Council Elections will take place this coming Friday, 28th September. 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!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

So what's around the corner?

COFFEE MORNING FOR NEW PARENTS:	Friday 28 th September at 9.00a.m.
STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS:	Friday 28 th September at 9.00a.m.
MASS FOR THE START OF SCHOOL YEAR:	Early October - to be confirmed
SPORT FOR ALL DAY:	Friday 5 th October
OCTOBER CAKE SALE:	Friday 12 th October
GOAL JERSEY DAY:	Friday 19 th October
BOOK WEEK:	Monday 22 nd – Thursday 24 th October

The Presidential Election will take place on Friday, 26th October. It is likely that St. Attracta's will be requested as a polling booth, in which case both schools will be closed on that day. We will confirm this as soon as we can.

FLYING THE FLAG

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 5 of them (litter and waste, energy, water, travel and biodiversity.) We are currently working on global citizenship. We then worked for and were awarded Digital School Status and Active School Status. Fuaireamar an Gaelbhreach freisin agus táimid an-sásta go deo leis sin. 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 next newsletter. Ar aghaidh le chéile!



WE'RE A TELLING SCHOOL!

Do you think your child is getting a hard time in school? Or just feeling a little lost and uncomfortable? Please tell us! We're a 'telling school' - not a 'telling tales school', but a 'telling the truth' school. We can't do anything if we don't know about it, but if we do know about it, we can work with your children to help solve problems and to keep them happy in school.



A CHECKLIST!

All pupils should by now have the necessary

- St. Attracta's homework journal
- copies, books and stationery
- full uniform (labelled of course!)
- art folder & display folder
- prayer book
- a plastic box in which to store books
- a personal hand towel for use after visiting the bathroom

SIOPA SCOILE

The following items are available from the school Siopa:

Homework Journal	Prayer Book
Display Folder	Art Folder
Maths Set	Calculator
Hardback Copy	Recorder
Plastic Box	Pritt Stick
Personal towel	

PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE FOR PUPILS.

The Parents' Association facilitates the Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for Pupils. This note went out 2 weeks ago and the closing date has now passed. We'd like to thank all those who organise it – it's a great deal!



ATTENTION PARENTS of RANG 6:

In preparation for secondary school, your children will start a 10 week Science programme with science lecturer Ms. Niamh Dorman **this coming Friday 28th September**. We do not charge for this but Ms. Dorman has asked that each child would have a 40 pocket display folder. It is important that all pupils are well prepared for their science classes and do the necessary homework each week.

WET DAY GAMES

After what was a very memorable and warm summer, we were shocked when September brought a few wet and stormy days and we had to stay indoors! We then realised that some classes had very few wet day games. Which is why we now appeal to you to send in any wet day games which you may have lying around unused. (Board games such as Boggle, Scrabble, Connect 4, Headbands, Draughts, Chess, etc.) But please make sure they are full sets and are in good working order. Go raibh maith agaibh!



SOME ROUTINE REMINDERS for the NEW SCHOOL YEAR

NO DOGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS PLEASE

Time and time again we have appealed to parents not to bring dogs on to the school grounds. They may be your pet but there is no guarantee that they will be on their best behaviour if approached by young children. No matter how nice your dog is, when aggravated they may snap! Some children are also very frightened of animals so in everybody's interests, we ask you not to bring dogs on or near the school grounds. Please tell your minders likewise as some problems have arisen in the past.



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. Last year, regular latecomers lost up to 20 hours of school by being late coming in. Once the classroom door is locked in the morning latecomers will have to sign in at the office, so 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 given to the class teacher and your child must be signed out at the office. We can't let children go home on their own or cross the car parks to meet you as the traffic around the swimming pool is too dangerous. Please collect your child from the office if you are taking them out during the school day.



REMINDER – all absences must be recorded in the pull-out section of the school journal.

UNIFORM

Full school uniform should be worn every day except P.E. and match days when school tracksuit must be worn. We ask parents to check that uniform is worn tidily and that shirts are fully buttoned when children come to school. Please ensure children wear black shoes with their uniform. Runners only on PE day! We also remind you that nail varnish and jewelry (bracelets, dangly earrings, necklaces, rings) are banned and the same rules apply to all.



SWIMMING ... SNÁMH

Swimming classes have started and our pupils really enjoy the lessons. We're delighted to have the swimming pool on our doorstep and each class will have six lessons between now and year end. Parents will receive a note in advance, with the guidelines for swimming and the rules to be observed in the swimming pool.

WALK OR CYCLE TO SCHOOL

As a Green School we encourage all families to walk to school or to park and stride on Wednesdays. We remind children who cycle to school that we can accept no responsibility for the care or security of bicycles on school grounds. Bicycles should be locked in school at all times. Children (or adults) should **never** cycle through the yard as this has led to accidents in the past. Cyclists should dismount and walk the bike through school.



PARTY INVITATIONS

It is our policy that invitations to parties **should not** be given out to children in school or on the school premises. As time goes on, it can create a lot of problems and can cause unnecessary hurt to certain children. We ask for your co-operation on this matter.



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