

# **1<sup>st</sup> Year Newsletter**

## **2016/2017**



**September 2016**

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I would like to bring a number of important items to your attention as your son sets out on his journey through secondary school with us.

### **School Contacts**

1. It is very important that your son settles into the school quickly and that his early experiences here are positive. If you have any concerns regarding his progress, please contact the school. Each first year class has a Class Tutor. The first year group also has a Year Head. You should address your concerns initially to the Subject Teacher, Class Person or Year Head. However, if your concerns are of a more serious nature, please feel free to make an appointment to meet the Deputy Principal or Principal.

First Year Year Head: **Mrs. Barry**

*Class Tutors:*

Brennan: **Ms. B. Roche**

Connolly: **Ms C. Spellman**

McDonagh: **Mr. Whitty**

Pearse: **Mr. Walsh**

### **Homework Journal**

2. The homework journal is a very important communication vehicle between you as parents and your son's teachers. Please ensure that your son has his homework noted in his diary on a daily basis. This journal should be checked every evening for notes etc. from his teachers. **Each first year is expected to do at least one and a half hours at homework and study every evening, with some additional time over the weekend.** You are expected to sign the diary on a weekly basis. The journal also contains an Individual Merit/Reward Chart. This will be used by teachers to affirm and reward positive behaviour. I would encourage parents to monitor their son's progress in the chart and perhaps use it to build in home based rewards for their son on reaching agreed target.

### **Personal Property**

3. School jackets are an intrinsic part of the school uniform and have been distributed. Please ensure that your son has written his name on the jacket. Please also ensure that all property belonging to your son has his name on it. This will facilitate reuniting lost property with the rightful owner in the event of items being misplaced.

### **Uniform**

4. Please ensure that your son comes to school in full uniform every day, unless you are informed otherwise. You will be informed by text in the event of a 'no uniform day'. Non uniform jackets, hoodies etc. will be confiscated.

### **Facial Jewellery**

5. Please note that facial jewellery is prohibited and will be confiscated.

### **Personal Contact Details**

6. If you change your mobile number, please let us know as you will not be in a position to receive texts from the school. A text message will be sent home in the event of your son not presenting for morning and or afternoon classes. If he is absent without your permission, please contact the school. **If your son is absent with your permission, please write a note in his journal explaining the reason. His journal should be presented to all his teachers on his return to school.** Please also let us know if you change address.

### **Mobile Phones**

7. Students are not allowed use phones during class and should have them switched off. Those breaking this rule will have their phones confiscated. They will be returned to the student or parent at the principal's discretion.

### **Staying In**

8. As you are aware, first students are not allowed to leave the school premises during the school day unless signed out and collected by a parent/guardian or accompanied by a teacher. Each class group has been assigned a classroom for lunch.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

9. There is a wide range of extracurricular activities on offer in the school. Cycling, swimming, public speaking, Gaelic football, rugby, hurling, golf, soccer, table tennis and basketball are available so I would encourage your son to get involved in one or more of these activities.

### **Nut Allergy**

10. I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that a number of our students and staff have severe nut allergies. Students should not bring nuts, peanuts, peanut butter sandwiches, nut bars etc. to school. It would be helpful if you had a discussion with your son on the matter and to further impress on him the importance of vigilance on this issue.

### **Information Evenings**

11. **We will be holding information meetings for parents/guardians of first years on the following dates and times in the school:**

**Brennan/Connolly: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016 @7.30pm in Room 11**

**MacDonagh/Pearse: Wednesday 5th October 2016 @ 7.30pm in Room 11.**

**You are invited to attend to discuss how your son is settling in, raise issues of concern etc. The meetings will last one hour approximately.**

### **Voluntary Contribution**

12. Thank you to those who paid the **Voluntary Contribution**. Any parent who has not yet paid and wishes to do so may drop the money into the school office. This money helps to ensure that the school can pay the electricity, phone and water bills, bus hire etc.

### **School Lockers**

13. Lockers have been distributed by the Parents' Council. Any first year who wishes to rent a locker should contact the school caretaker if he hasn't already got a locker.

## **Literacy and Numeracy Campaigns**

14. As part of our literacy campaign, I would ask you to continue to encourage your son to read. Your support and example in this regard are vitally important. We have a number of initiatives in the school promoting literacy including 'Drop Everything and Read' and 'Book in the Bag'. For these initiatives to be successful programme it's very important that your son brings a novel to school every day. We also organise 'numeracy moments' throughout the school year, where all students engage with numeracy challenges.

## **Parents' Council**

15. The Parents' Council would like to encourage parents to become involved with the Council and new members are welcome. The Parents' Council AGM is scheduled for **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October @ 7.30pm** in the GP Room.

## **School Mass**

16. The school will celebrate the beginning of the new school year with Mass in Bride Street church on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September @12pm. Parents/Guardians are welcome to attend.

## **Child Protection**

17. Any concerns on child protection or child welfare issues relating to any of our students should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person (Mr. McMahon) or in his absence the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Mr. Hegarty).

## **Attendance**

18. Full attendance at school is vital if your son's learning is to progress and he is to reach his potential. Family holidays etc. should be scheduled outside of the school calendar if at all possible.

## **School Redevelopment**

19. It has been a busy summer decanting to the temporary accommodation. We have also taken possession of our new gym and computer room. Demolition work has commenced on the old school in preparation for substantive building works. We hope to be in a position to take possession of the new build in late in 2017. Parent(s)/guardian(s)

are asked to park off site if visiting the school and to exercise care when entering the campus as vehicular and pedestrian traffic share the same access route. Health & Safety is of the utmost importance and students have been given clear instructions not to enter the restricted areas under any circumstances.

### **Student Leaders**

20. We are endeavouring to provide further leadership opportunities for our students. Each First Year class will be electing a Class Captain and Class Vice-Captains. These students will represent their classes in meetings with Management, Year Head etc. and will be asked to liaise with Meitheal leaders etc.

Best wishes to you, your family and your son for the forthcoming academic year.

*Michael McMahon* (Principal)

