



Scoil Naomh Feichín

School News – Nov. 2023

It has been an absolute whirlwind start to the new school year over the last six weeks – the busiest September & October that I have experienced in my time as a teacher.

We have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming all of our pupils back after the summer break and we've extended an especially warm welcome to our new pupils in Junior Infants, our new pupils in other classes and some new Ukrainian pupils who have enrolled in our school.

We currently have 297 pupils in our school and this number is likely to increase over the coming months and years. Due to the increased number of pupils attending our school, we will gradually be able to increase the number of teachers we have in the school. Unfortunately, even though our current enrolment qualifies us for an additional class teacher, we have to wait until the start of 2024/25 to employ this extra teacher. Consequently, there are some classes which are currently quite large but hopefully, we will address this problem when more teachers are sanctioned for our school.

In this first newsletter of the new school year, I have highlighted a number of activities and initiatives of which we would like you to be aware. I would also like to communicate some important information to you which I hope that you will find useful.

Looking forward to your support and cooperation in 2023/24,

Bryan Collins
School Principal

Important Dates – Winter Term 2023/24

- Tues. Nov. 14th @ 7pm – Enrolment Ceremony for Confirmation
- Fri. Nov. 17th - “Sinbad the Sailor” – two performances in the school hall
- Nov 27th – Dec 1st - Parent Teacher Meetings for Pupils in 5th & 6th Classes
- Tues. Dec 19th – School Carol Services ---- (junior classes / afternoon & senior classes / evening)
- Wed. Dec 20th – Talisman Theatre performance for Junior Infant Pupils in The Barbican, Drogheda
- Thurs. Dec 21st – Santa’s Visit to Scoil Naomh Feichín
- Fri. Dec 22nd – Christmas Holidays begin at 12.30pm

New Board of Management **2023-2027**

The current Board of Management will come to the end of its term at the end of November. We greatly appreciate the support and contribution of the Parents’ Nominees, Deirdre Murphy & Neil Martin over the last four years and we look forward to working with all members of the new board from December 1st 2023.

AED Defibrillator Training

Just before the midterm break, all members of our school staff engaged in a refresher training workshop on the use of defibrillators and emergency response measures. Both of the AED units in the school are maintained and serviced annually and the external unit on the front wall of the school is available for use at all times, even when the school is closed.

Parent Teacher Meetings

The teachers of 5th & 6th classes will be arranging to meet parents of pupils in their classes from Nov. 27th – Dec 1st 2023. Meetings will be arranged for parents of pupils in all other classes early in 2024. Over the last few weeks the learning support teachers have been speaking to parents of pupils who are receiving additional support at school. All teachers are happy to arrange to meet or speak to parents who have any concerns about their child’s progress at school.

New Student Council

Congratulations to the newly elected pupils on our school's new Student Council. Elections took place a few weeks ago to select children to act as class representatives and Mrs McCuskey who is acting as coordinator for the council arranges monthly meetings for the group. At each meeting the pupils make constructive suggestions about how we can improve our school for everyone. The members of the council are – Conor Thornton, Mary Jane Rafferty, James Millar, Tadhg O'Neill, Jemimah Akinbode, A.J Cooney, Mia Jane Dunne, Nia Monaghan, Grace Ronan, Jack Lennon, Saoirse Farrell, Molly McGuirk, Oran Teehan & Senan Rice.



ATTENDANCE - ATTENDANCE – ATTENDANCE

We've been making every effort to promote good attendance at school again this year. This comes as a result of a significant rise in the number of unexplained absences from school over the past two years, in particular. Needless to say, we **never** expect any child to come to school if they are feeling unwell or if they have a medical appointment or any other urgent family reason for missing school. On all other days, children should be at school.

A few weeks ago the Department of Education launched a new **School Attendance Campaign** due to the fact that official records show that the number of unexplained absences from school has quadrupled over the last three years. Our school will support this initiative as school attendance is vital in supporting children achievement, wellbeing, and wider development and regular school attendance is a strong predictor of successful educational outcomes. In September we awarded individual certificates to all pupils who had full attendance for the 4 weeks in that month and in October we entered all pupils with excellent attendances into a "Spin the Wheel" raffle for a 12 class prizes.



September Attendance Winners in Mrs Cassidy's First Class.



Ruth McGlew – October Attendance Award Winner – 6th Class



September Attendance Winners in Ms Clayton's Junior Infants Class.

Healthy Lunches

Most of our pupils have healthy, nutritious lunches with them every day and that's really great to see. Good food and water improve concentration in class and energy levels when the children go out to play.



Treats are for special days and parties so please remember that we have a healthy eating policy in our school that all pupils must follow.

For ideas on healthy school lunches, click the link below:

<https://www.safefood.net/family-health/healthy-lunch>

Road Safety & Parking

There have been a number of complaints in recent weeks about some drivers parking on footpaths on the roadway outside the school at 3pm. Some children have said that they can't get by cars and have to walk out on the roadway. Sometimes cars are parked very close to the pedestrian crossing and this is obviously very dangerous for children using this crossing. Therefore, we appeal to all drivers to do all that they can to ensure that our pupils can walk safely home from school every afternoon.

New Leadership & Management Team

There have been a number of new appointments to the In-School Management Team in our school. This team is now made up of:

- Principal – Mr Collins
- Deputy Principal – Mrs Hurley
- Assistant Principal I – Mrs McCluskey
- Assistant Principal II – Mrs Cassidy
- Assistant Principal II – Mrs Ryan
- Assistant Principal II – Mrs Fahy
- Assistant Principal II – Mrs McManus



*Congratulations to all of the pupils who are preparing for the **Sacraments of First Penance & First Holy Communion**. The Enrolment Ceremony took place recently in our local church. Many thanks to the class teachers and Fr Paul for making the evening so special for the boys & girls.*

Success for Cross Country Runners in Tullyallen Races



Nessa Foley with her brother Dylan ----- 3rd Class Boys Team ----- Conor Balfe

Spooks Parade & Pumpkin Patch Visit



Special Activities for Pupils in Nov & Dec 2023

- Basketball Coaching
- Chess Club
- Irish Dancing Classes
- Soccer Tournament (Senior Pupils)
- Learn to Play the Guitar Classes

- Spanish Language Classes
- Learn the Tin Whistle Classes
- Coding Workshops
- Lego Club
- Little Music Makers (Jun & Sen Infants)