

ST. BRIGID'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

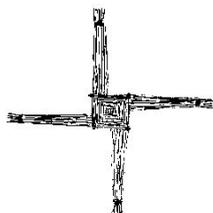
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17th June 2020

Good morning parents / guardians,

I am very emotional writing this newsletter today. The school closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic has really disturbed the final year of primary school for the class of 2020. It's very disappointing that we cannot celebrate their achievements, friendships and developments. As a school, we would really like them all to know how proud we are of them and how impressed we are of their ability to adapt as mature young people to these unprecedented circumstances during the previous few months.

There were 33 children in the primary seven class of 2020. Pupils worked extremely hard both in school (before March 2020) and remotely (since March 2020). They were all so very helpful to staff, their friends and also to younger children in school. Pupils were chatty, friendly and enjoyable to be around. These characteristics make a school into a place of great learning and enjoyment, where friendships are made for life.

I look back on our school year for primary seven and I am thankful for the small things - the leaver's jersey brings a smile to my face when I think of the children wearing it with pride to various sports competition and school quizzes.

Over the last few weeks, we have been working exceptionally hard behind the scenes making the necessary preparations and arrangements for returning to school. I have been reflecting on what St Brigid's may be like for the pupils returning to us in September 2020. In addition, our new primary one class may have a very different school experience than the Leavers of 2020.

I want to update you in this newsletter regarding the end of year arrangements which would ordinarily cause great excitement in school during the final few weeks of term.

Carlingford Adventure Centre

Carlingford Adventure Centre cancelled our annual residential trip due to government restrictions imposed on the Centre.

We have been liaising with Carlingford Adventure Centre regularly and for some time now to refund the money paid by the primary seven children and their parents / guardians. Unfortunately, Carlingford Adventure Centre continues to claim they will hold all monies paid by St Brigid's Primary School until the 2021 residential trip and not refund the money paid to them.

We have called, emailed and sent numerous letters to the centre in relation to our urgent request to refund money back to the school. To date, we have not received an acceptable response and I am exceptionally disappointed and frustrated that Carlingford Adventure Centre will not refund the money (or compromise with the school).

I know that our community has suffered financially during the lock down period and how important it is for you that you receive this refund. Therefore, I have spoken to the Chair of the Board of Governors about the matter. I will arrange payment of all money paid to the school for the Carlingford trip before **Friday 26th June 2020**. We will post a message through our school app regarding arrangements for collection of your money.

Transition Programme

During the third term, our primary seven class usually complete a Transition Programme. It is facilitated by REIM Boundaries.

The content of the programme helps the children to develop life skills when moving from primary to post primary school. In addition, it also helps children to understand what a school day may be like in post primary as well as reducing anxiety when moving to post primary education.

Mrs Donnelly completed a survey and twelve pupils registered interest in participating in this programme. REIM have contacted each school in our area to check numbers of pupils interested and they will then organise the programme remotely for all interested groups. I really hope you find this programme beneficial.

I Movie

Mrs Donnelly is currently collating videos that the primary seven pupils have shared on Flipgrid. She is also creating the annual imovie of memories.

Please make sure that you have sent in your videos and photographs as Mrs Donnelly will post the flipgrid and imovie on our website shortly. It will be a part of our memories of the primary seven leavers.

Planning for Primary Seven reunion

Advice from CCMS / Education Authority - the information we have received from the Education Authority is that children should not be on the school premises and meetings of no more than 6-10 people should occur outside.

We would like to celebrate the achievements of our primary seven class as they all move to post primary education. It is difficult however to make plans at this point for a “reunion”, even towards the end of August 2020, as there may be more adjustments to our lives as we become accustomed to a new norm.

Pending advice from the Department of Education and Public Health, we would like to invite our primary seven children back to school and celebrate their seven years with us in St Brigid’s Primary School. Further information will be provided pending this advice, in advance of any reunion.

I hope that you and your families have all been safe and well, and are looking forward to your summer with lots of nice weather!

Take care of yourselves and once again, if I can help you in any way, please let me know.

Kind regards

Mrs Keating