



Re: January Information 2020

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

On behalf of the school community, I wish you a happy and healthy 2020. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. We look forward to working with you again this calendar year to achieve the very best for your child.

Silver Circle:

I would like to thank everyone in the school and local community who supported our recent 'Silver Circle' fundraising initiative. The money raised will be used to upgrade our libraries in the senior end of the school and to purchase new class novels to be used in these rooms. Our fifth class will begin a small group station teaching approach to teaching various novels in January this year. Mr. Reidy and Ms. Costelloe will be working with the children on this initiative. The teachers are currently working on implementing a guided reading programme in the middle classes to further progress the work that is done during our literacy 'Power Hour' from Junior Infants to 2nd class. Guided reading is an initiative where pupils read texts or books at an appropriate level to their reading development in a small group. Third class are looking forward to getting started with this initiative this term.

Safety:

Please take care when dropping off/collecting your child in the morning, at 2.00pm and at 3.00pm. Younger children should be escorted to and from the school gate. Local Gardaí have asked us to remind you **not** to park across the road from the school in the evening time as you are causing an obstruction to oncoming traffic and to cars leaving the school car park.

Parent Association Christmas Hamper Raffle:

Well done to all our winners in the Christmas Hamper Draw which took place just before the holidays. We would like to thank our Parent Association for organising the draw in the weeks leading up to Christmas and for their continued support of the school. We would also like to thank everyone who bought tickets or who supported the raffle through sponsorship of prizes.

S.S.E. (School Self Evaluation)

The school is currently focussing on three areas with regards to school improvement. Pupils in all classes are learning about the different writing genres and the correct formats to use when writing in each genre. A lot of work was completed in the first term teaching the recount genre and pupils learned all about the skills of editing, drafting and publishing final pieces. We are also continuing to work on our PE school improvement plan. Teachers have noted an improvement in pupils' Fundamental Movement Skills as a result of this focus on PE. The school also has a Digital Learning Plan and pupils in the middle and senior classes have been using Google Classroom to create presentations and to publish pieces of writing. In the junior classes pupils have created presentations on themes such as the 'School Garden.'

We will continue to review these plans as the year progresses as we work towards targets outlined in our School Improvement Plans.

Food Dudes:

The school has been selected to participate in the newly updated Food Dudes programme during the second term of this school year. Food Dudes is an award winning curriculum-linked evidence-based healthy eating programme, developed to encourage children to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables. It is based on repeated tastings of fresh fruit and vegetables, rewards and positive role models.

A new and improved programme is now being rolled out in schools and includes new varieties of fruits and vegetables and additional tasting days. Once the programme begins in the school the pupils will be given different fruits and vegetables to sample in the school. We ask parents to encourage their children to sample all the different fruits and vegetables during the programme.

GAA 5 Star Centre

The school has been selected to participate in the GAA 5 Star Centre initiative which has been established by the GAA to encourage children to become more active in their daily lives. Children in all classes will participate in games and activities such as Have a Ball, Fun and Run, Catch and Kick, Strike it, Skill Challenges and Go Games. While the GAA are spearheading this initiative, all the games are totally inclusive and develop basic movement skills such as catching, kicking, and striking which are fundamental to all games. At the end of the year the school hopes to become a GAA 5 Star Centre.

Stay Safe:

Pupils in all classes will be taught the Stay Safe lessons in the coming weeks. The Stay Safe programme is a primary school based approach to the prevention of child abuse. The aim of the programme is to reduce vulnerability to child abuse and bullying through the provision of a personal safety education programme for children at primary school level. Children will also engage in internet safety lessons during the 2nd term at a level appropriate to their class. These lessons educate our pupils on staying safe online and the appropriate use of the internet and various apps.

Enrolment:

Enrolment Application forms for children starting school in September 2020 are now available from the school. We would be delighted if you informed parents in the local community whose children have not yet started school that these forms are now available for the next school year. We will also inform new parents through the ‘Vale Star’ and ‘Limerick Leader’ newspapers and church announcements in the coming weeks.

Activities for Term 11 & 111

Learn IT- Robotics Challenge	Jan 15 th	6 th class
Gaelic Games	School hurling Blitzes After School Training Mini- Sevens Hurling/Camogie Hurling and Camogie Leagues	3 rd -6 th class 5 th /6 th class 4 th /5 th /6 th class
Science Blast	May 2019	5 th /6 th class
Discover Primary Science Awards	Terms II /III	All classes
Art classes	Thursday, Mary McSweeney, 3.00pm-4.00pm	1st-6th class
Speech and Drama	Thursday evenings	
Swimming	February/March/April	1 st /2 nd class
Irish Dancing	Fridays + after school. Breda Mulcahy	Jnrs-6 th class
Relationship and Sexuality Programme	June 2019	6 th class

First Holy Communion	9 th May	2 nd class
Stay Safe Programme	Term II	All classes
Easter Concert	April 2 nd	3 rd -6 th class
Food Dudes Programme	Term II	All classes
Active School Flag Activities	Terms II/III	All classes
GAA 5 Star Centre	January to June	All classes
School Tours	June	All classes

School closures:

School closures are listed below for the next two terms. Please take note that the school will close at 12.30pm on Friday 13th March to facilitate in school training for teachers on the Primary Language Curriculum. There will be a second half day closure in the third term to facilitate more training and this date will be finalised closer to the time. As noted below the school is closed on Monday 16th March and Tuesday 17th March for St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

School Closures Term 11 & 111

Month	Closure	Dates
February	Mid-Term Break	Thurs 20 th & Fri 21 st
March	Primary Language Curriculum Training	Friday 13th March. School will close at 12.30pm .
March	St. Patrick's Day/Public Holiday	Monday 16 th /Tuesday 17 th
April	Easter Holidays	School will close at 12.30pm on Friday 3 rd and will reopen on Monday 20 th at 9.20am
May	Public Holiday	Mon 4 th
May	First Holy Communion	Sat 9 th May 11.00 am
June	Public Holiday	Mon 1 st
June	Summer Holidays	25 th June at 12.30pm

Regards,

Principal.