

17th December 2020

Eolas na Nollag 2020

Dates for your diary

Christmas Holidays

The school will close on Tuesday December 22nd at 12.30pm and reopen on January 6th. ***Children who travel on the bus will finish at the earlier time of 11.30am.*** This earlier time is to facilitate the bus driver who must collect secondary students later in the day

Mid-Term Break

The school will be closed from Monday 15th to Friday 19th February 2021 inclusive.

Feast of St. Patrick

St. Patrick's Day: The school will be closed Wednesday 17th March 2021

Easter Holidays

The school will close at 12.30pm on Friday 26th March and reopen Monday 12th April

School News

It has been a term like no other in Bishop O'Brien National School where staff, children, parents, Parents' Association and Board of Management had to adapt to new routines and protocols in new and challenging circumstances. As a school community we pulled together and supported each other and got used to new ways of communicating, working and learning. The mutual support and unity, evident throughout the school term, was undoubtedly a lived expression of our school motto, "Ní neart go cur le chéile", (There is strength in unity). I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to staff, parents, Parents' Association and Board of Management for their hard work, co-operation and support in making our first term a happy and successful one for all. A very special *go raibh mile maith agaibh*, is extended to our wonderful pupils whose resilience and kindness is an example to us all. We are lucky to have such fantastic children in our school and I am certain that Santa Claus will be good to each and everyone of them this year.

Even though many of our usual activities were curtailed this year, we still managed to celebrate Maths Week, Science Week and Friendship Week. You can check out some photographs of these events on our newly updated school website.

A big thank you to the 5th and 6th class children who are performing a 'live crib scene' in the school entrance each morning from now until the Christmas holidays. They will also perform some tinwhistle tunes in the morning on the school yard over the coming days.

Our new classroom is progressing nicely and should be ready in early January. Painting has been completed and work has commenced on the external area which will incorporate a brand new handball court.

This term also saw the retirement of our colleague and friend, Caroline Lane. Caroline taught in the school for twenty three years and she is missed by the whole school community. Caroline will be invited back to the school for a proper send off once life has returned to a bit more normality.

Welcome to Fiona Keane who has joined the staff in a temporary capacity until June 30th this year.

We also got some good news this year when our school received the Discovery Primary Science and Maths award once again.

We began to use Seesaw during the period in which the school was locked down and this term saw its continued use to great effect.

We are looking forward to the second term with renewed optimism as the rollout of a vaccination programme in the New Year gives hope that the worst of this pandemic may be soon be behind us. It is so important that we all continue to carefully observe the procedures and protocols that have kept us safe as this crisis is far from over yet. We have amongst our staff, parents, pupils and extended families, people who are particularly at risk from this virus. We must continue to do all that we can to protect them.

Communications with the School

As you are aware we have had to implement new protocols this year which you are reminded of below.

Lunches or other forgotten items may be left in the drop-off box which is left outside the gate every morning. Please phone the school and advise Imelda that you have left items in the drop off box.

It has been necessary for us to avoid face to face meetings this year. If you need to communicate with the class teacher or principal, you may use the email addresses below and the relevant member of staff will contact you by email or phone call:

principal@bartlemyns.ie
paudywalsh@bartlemyns.ie
michellenoonan@bartlemyns.ie
orlaglavey@bartlemyns.ie
catherinepower@bartlemyns.ie
vickiosullivan@bartlemyns.ie
emmasavage@bartlemyns.ie
fionakeane@bartlemyns.ie

From time to time a parent may have an issue/cause of concern or complaint. On these occasions it is important to be aware of the correct procedures for bringing these issues to the attention of the school. For this reason, a copy of the Parental Complaints Procedure is available on the school website. If the concerns relate to issues regarding your child and his/her class, the concerns should be addressed to the class teacher in the first instance, as per the Complaint Procedure. To find the Complaint Procedure, go to the newsletter tab, then information for parents and scroll to the bottom of the page. This is a standardised complaints procedure used in all primary schools. We sincerely hope you have little occasion to use it!

Absence Notes

If your child is absent from school, you must, at all times, provide an explanation for the absence through the Aladdin Connect App. Once the class teacher has recorded the child's

absence as unexplained in Aladdin, the parent will receive a request to input a reason for the absence. In addition, all parents will be prompted to record a Return to School Declaration through the Aladdin App. If no reason for your child's absence is provided, the absence will be recorded under the category, 'Unexplained Absence', in the TUSLA (Child and Family Agency) Annual Attendance Report. If your child is absent for twenty school days or more, the school is requested by law to report the absences to TUSLA. Parents will be notified by the school, as a reminder, when their child has missed fifteen school days. N.B. It is very understandable that children will from time to time miss more than twenty school days due to illness, family bereavements or other such valid reasons. It is particularly understandable this year, that children may miss more days than usual, due to the global pandemic. In these circumstances there is no need to worry once there is a valid, written explanation. TUSLA become concerned when there are **multiple unexplained absences**.

Healthy Lunches

As you are aware, the school operates a Healthy Eating policy in order to assist in enabling your child to develop good, healthy eating habits from a young age. Please continue to supply your child with a lunch free of crisps, chocolate, sweets and fizzy drinks. Try to include servings of fruit and vegetables. Milk and water are excellent choices for drinks. Yoghurt is another very healthy choice but try to avoid Frubes, especially with younger children, as they can be very messy and difficult for children to open themselves. It is more important than ever that children can manage the contents of their lunchbox with assistance from an adult. Nuts are not allowed due to the high incidence and severity of allergic reactions to them.

Buíochas

The school community is very grateful to a number of parents, who offer their skills, time and equipment to help maintain the school. This is done quietly and without fuss and we are most thankful for their generosity of time, resources and spirit. This generosity saves the school a lot of money in a time when school budgets are extremely hard pressed.

Thank you to the members of the Parents' Association who do so much for the school on an ongoing basis. They are an incredibly hard-working bunch of people who have done trojan work in terms of fundraising, arranging treats for the children and helping with the clean up of the school grounds.

Thanks to parents who organised book rental and cut the grass on a regular basis.

Thanks to the Board of Management for all their hard work over the past year. The work of the Board is done quietly in the background without any fuss and they contribute to the school in so many different ways from doing accounts, to helping with policies and planning, to helping with maintenance issues and lending their expertise in their various fields.

On behalf of the whole school community, I would like to thank our teaching and S.N.A. staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

On behalf of the school staff, I wish to thank the whole parent community for their partnership and support throughout the year. As a staff we feel incredibly lucky to work within a lovely community of supportive parents and a fantastic bunch of children of whom we are immensely proud.

Child Safeguarding Statement

Reminder: If you wish to report child protection concerns please be aware of the following;
The D.L.P. (Designated Liaison Person) is Joanne O'Brien Kennelly.

The D.D.L.P. (Deputy Designated Liaison Person) is Paudy Walsh

As per school policy the Stay Safe Programme programme will be taught in the second term of the school year. As per school policy the R.S.E. and Stay Safe Programme are taught on alternate school years

Timely reminders

Our insurance provider requires us to remind you of school opening and closing times. In school supervision is provided from 9.10am in the morning and to 3.10pm in the evening. Very often in the evening, the teachers have meetings or planning work going on. In the unlikely event that your child is left in the school yard after 3.10pm they will be brought back into the school and supervised there.

Gifts

Christmas is an expensive time for families and this year in particular, many families are under pressure. Please remember we have a 'no gifts for staff' policy in the school.

Beannachtaí na Nollag

The staff and pupils of Bishop O'Brien National School wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year .

Beannachtaí na Nollag oraibhse go léir.

Joanne O'Brien Kennelly