



22nd April, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardians,

Term 3 is always a busy term. The following is an outline of some key activities planned.

Wellbeing Celebration Day: Last year our school worked extremely hard on the promotion of wellbeing and positive mental health. So much so that we were awarded an Amber Flag. Due to circumstances out of our control and in a Covid-19 context, we were not in a position to celebrate this wonderful achievement or to hold a flag raising ceremony. However, plans have now been devised to celebrate this achievement in a safe manner on Friday, 30th April.

Lots of fun activities are planned. On this date also, children are invited to wear bright, colourful clothes and families are asked to contribute €2. All funds raised will be donated to Pieta House. Contributions can be made via Aladdin Connect from next Monday/ by bringing €2 to school on Friday, 30th April. We look forward to a great day!

Virtual Assemblies: Due to current restrictions we are unable to hold our regular school assemblies. We miss these occasions as they contribute to the community element and celebration of successes within our school. To overcome this challenge, we intend to commence virtual assemblies on Friday, 14th May. Whole school student of the week efforts will recommence on this date also.

School Facebook/Instagram Account: In the coming weeks we intend to establish a school Facebook page and Instagram account. The aims of a school social media presence are as follows:

- To continue to advance our school communication system with information shared via Facebook/Instagram, along with the existing methods of text messages, email, Aladdin Connect and the school website.
- To publicise school events, and increase awareness about the school.
- To announce any updated information that appears on our website via Facebook/Instagram.
- To highlight positive school achievements in a forum where they can be shared by the school community.
- To make school announcements.
- To use Facebook/Instagram as a means of marketing the school to a wider audience.
- To engage the community that St. Mary's serves and act as a key component of our school's online presence.
- To facilitate communication and networking opportunities between parents, especially new or prospective parents.

As a means of achieving the above aims, teachers intend to share photos and videos of class and pupil achievements. Before we can do this your consent is needed. You are asked to keep an eye on the permissions of tab on Aladdin Connect next week and submit/refuse your permission once the option is made available.

A policy outlining the parameters of a school Facebook page/Instagram account is available under the policies tab on the school website. You are invited to view it and any questions/queries/input should be forwarded to office@stmarysncobh.com before Friday, 30th April.

Standardised Testing will take place in May. Children from 1st-6th class will complete the Micra T Reading test, the Drumcondra Spelling test and the Sigma T Maths test over a number of weeks. Results will be communicated to parents through the end of year report.



Standardised tests were not administered last year due to the school closure. Children have not experienced a regular school year either this year or last year and there is no doubt that this may impact pupils' test scores. With this in mind, it is important to remember that Standardised tests are merely a snapshot of our pupils' development and standards of attainment. They do not measure the skills of strength, compassion, kindness, courage, diligence, common sense, ingenuity, effort, wit, resilience or creativity. They are only one aspect of your daughter's schooling.

For more information on standardised testing please visit www.ncca.ie

6th Class Graduation: Teachers are currently putting plans together to celebrate 6th Class' graduation. All plans will of course have to be mindful of current Covid-19 guidelines. More information will follow in due course.

School Tours: Traditional school tours will not be taking place this year due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, lots of fun onsite/local activities are planned for the weeks ahead.

Sacraments: Bishop William Crean has advised us that Sacraments will not be celebrated in May. God willing, ongoing rollout of the vaccination programme, along with the diligent observance of personal best practice, will enable the parish to plan for celebrations in the month of June and beyond.

Homework: June will hopefully be a month where families will be able to get out and about a bit more. If the weather is favourable it can be very difficult for children to maintain motivation to complete homework. Therefore, a whole-school decision has been made to eliminate written homework following the June Bank holiday weekend and cease homework completely after Friday, 21st June.

School Reports, class allocations, booklists and a calendar for 2021/2022 will be sent to all families via Aladdin Connect on Wednesday, 16th June.

Reminder: As per the school calendar distributed to all parents in June 2020, the school will be closed for the week beginning 3rd May and will re-open on 10th May. Friday, 30th April will be a full school day.

Health and Safety: We want to continue to keep everyone safe. Please remember the following:

- Arrive to school at the correct designated time
- No congregating
- Adults to wear masks
- Keep your distance
- Communicate with the school via phone/email only
- If your daughter is unwell she shouldn't come to school
- If any member of the household is displaying symptoms of Covid-19, your daughter should not come to school.
- A return to school declaration form must be completed after every absence.

Sincere thanks to all families for your continued efforts to adhere to all health and safety measures in place at his time.

Wishing everyone a good week.

Le gach de-ghuí,

Fiona O'Callaghan