

Tús maith, leath na h-oibre

**St. Joseph's National School,
Leitrim Village,
Co Leitrim.
N41 EC81
Charity Name: Leitrim Mxd NS**

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Theme for School Year 2020 – 2021
“Childhood is a journey, not a race”

Principal: Richella Kelly Deputy Principal: Siobhán Finnegan McElgunn

5th November 2020

November Communication Letter

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Staff Changes

We welcome Ms Sorcha Bruen to the teaching staff in the school. Ms Bruen will teach Senior Infants for the duration of Ms Kilkenny's maternity leave.

Combating the Spread of Covid 19

Thank you for your support and co-operation to date with our measures to combat the spread of Covid 19, keeping it out of the school and keeping the school open. As we are now in flu season we will need your support and co-operation even more to ensure the school can remain open. If your child is unwell please keep him/ her at home. This 'If unwell, stay at home' policy will apply to staff also. Please make contact with the school on the first day of your child's absence so we can record the reason for his/her absence on Aladdin (our digital Roll Book). Please complete an Absence Sheet (either hard copy or electronically) when your child returns to school.

Please ensure that your child/ children bring a **coat** to school every day. We aim, if at all possible, to get fresh air every day. If your child's coat does not have a hood, please ensure that he/ she brings a hat to school. Thank you for your co-operation in relation to this.

Remote Learning Plan

In the event that the school has to close due to Covid 19 or a class/number of classes, a Pod or number of Pods were advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements the staff and BOM have developed a Remote Learning Plan, in line with DES guidelines. This (Draft) plan has been uploaded to the school website and can be found under the policies tab and the Covid 19 tab. If you have any comments or suggestions in relation to this plan please e-mail them to the school, leitrimns@gmail.com before Monday 23rd November 2020. You will be informed when this plan has been ratified by the BOM and a final policy will be uploaded to the school website.

ICT and Internet Survey: Thank you for completing this survey. The information has been compiled and the survey sheets have been shredded. This will be important in the event that the school has to close and remote learning commence again.

November: Remembering our Faithful Departed

We usually have a Remembrance Tree in our Sacred Space in the school to remember all our loved ones that have died over the years. Due to Covid 19 leaves for our Remembrance Tree were not sent home. Deceased family members, neighbours and friends will be remembered in class prayers during the month of November.

County Photos **CHANGE of DATE**

A photographer from County Photos will now visit the school on **Wednesday 2nd December 2020** (not 18th November) to take individual and class photos of pupils in **Junior Infants and Sixth Class pupils only**. As classes cannot mix it will not be possible to facilitate family photographs this year. This is a BOM decision

Parent Teacher Meetings

With Level 5 restrictions in place until 1st December it will not be possible to facilitate Parent Teacher Meetings before Christmas. We are still waiting on DES guidelines in relation to how to hold Parent Teacher Meetings in a safe way for both parents and teachers. At the moment the earliest Parent Teacher Meeting could possibly take place will be February 2021. This is the usual time for these meetings in some schools and we held out Parent Teacher meetings in February a few years ago. You will be informed when actual dates have been decided.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns about your child, please contact his/ her class teacher via the class e-mail address. Please remember that teachers cannot reply to your e-mails during class time. Teachers will reply as soon as possible inside 24 to 48 hours.

Tin Whistle and Creative Writing

In light of the current Level 5 nationwide restrictions to curtail the spread of Covid 19 the BOM have decided not to facilitate private Tin Whistle lessons in the school this school year. Pdraig Sweeney started giving private tin whistle lessons in St. Joseph's Centre. Please contact Pdraig, privately if you wish to avail of tin whistle lessons for your child.

Creative Writing workshops with Mr Boland will not take place before Christmas. The BOM will discuss Creative Writing workshops again at the end of January and make a decision at that time regarding the remainder of this school year.

Wellbeing Programme in the Junior Classes

A new Wellbeing Programme is being taught in most Junior Classes on a trial basis. Other teachers are using element of other programmes and themed Library and resource books, in addition to the Stay Safe Programme, to focus on pupils wellbeing.

Christmas 2020

Due to Covid 19 we cannot have our traditional Christmas Celebrations, Concerts and Carol Services this year. This is disappointing but pupil and staff safety must come first. Pupils will not be designing Christmas Cards for Sale this year.

Folens Christmas Annuals

As a treat for all pupils and to try to bring a little joy to all this Christmas the BOM have decided to buy a Folens Christmas Annual for every child in the school. This is a once off. Your child will receive their Christmas Annual and a free pencil or pen towards the end of November. We hope your child will enjoy this gift.

Admission for the 2021 – 2022 school year.

Our Admission process for the 2021- 2022 school year is now open. You will find all the information you need (Admission Policy, Application Form for Admission and Annual Admission Notice) on the Admission Tab of the school website, www.leitrim-ns.ie. You can also request an Application Form for Admission from the school. The closing date for admissions for the 2021 – 2022 school year will be **14th January 2021**. There will be 27 places available for Junior Infants again next year.

Please note that returning a completed application form with a copy of your child's birth cert and utility bill does not guarantee a place in the school. In the event that the school is over- subscribed the Admission Policy will be adhered to in allocating places. Should this arise parents have the right to seek an appeal

Friendship Week and the Stay Safe Programme

Many teachers have been working on the theme of Friendship in class since the start of the school year. This is an ongoing topic. In addition to this the school will hold the first of two Friendship Weeks this school year commencing on **Monday 16th November 2020**. Photos of pupil's work showing some of the activities they participated in will be uploaded to the school website. This is one strategy used in the school to combat Bullying.

Following DES advice, the Stay Safe Programme is being taught in every class in the school this term. As part of this programme your child may have worksheets to complete at home. This is specifically designed to serve a s home school link. For more information on the Stay Safe Programme please visit either of the following websites: - www.staysafe.ie or www.pdst.ie/staysafe

Policy Review

Two important policies are currently under review in the school: - The RSE Policy and the Stay Safe Policy. A draft version of both of these policies have been uploaded to the school website, under the policies tab. If you have any comments or suggestion in relation to either or both of these policies please e-mail them to the school, leitrimns@gmail.com, before Monday 23rd November 2020. You will be informed when the BOM has ratified these policies and the final policy will be uploaded to the school website.

Yours sincerely,

Richella Kelly

Richella Kelly,
Principal.