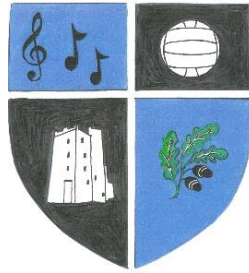


Scoil Chéile Chríost Rathmore N.S.

Newsletter September 2020



Website: www.rathmorens.ie Phone 045-862145

E mail: office@rathmorens.ie

Welcome back to another school year in Rathmore N.S. The teachers, staff and I are all happy to be back at work following the successful re-opening of our school on Thursday, 27th August and it is lovely to see happy children returning to their classrooms and meeting up with their friends once again. I would like to extend a warm welcome back to all the staff of Rathmore N.S. who will be working with your child this year. We are delighted to welcome back teachers **Mr. Walsh** and **Ms. Murphy** and new teacher, **Ms. Swanton**. We say 'goodbye' to class teacher **Ms. Brady** and wish her the very best in her future career. A special welcome to our many 'new' pupils throughout the school and especially to our Junior Infant little boys and girls. We hope that each child has a wonderful experience with us this year and continues to flourish under the care of our dedicated team here in Rathmore N.S. We need to work together as partners in your child's education and we look forward to working with you again this year.

Kind regards,

Lucy Travers

School Principal

Please complete the details in the front two pages of your child's Homework Diary so that we have all your up-to-date details, especially your PHONE and EMAIL ADDRESS.

Rathmore N.S. School Re-opening Logistics Plan

You have already been advised of our *School Re-opening Logistics Plan* for the safe reopening of the school which is also available to view on the school website. May I take this opportunity to thank the members of the *Covid-19 Response Team* who came together during the Summer to draft our Re-opening Plan to ensure all the necessary public health guidelines and physical distancing measures were implemented. We have worked hard to upgrade our school routines to ensure that there is as much physical distancing as is possible in our building and that stringent hygiene and sanitation procedures are in place.

We will make these routines enjoyable activities for the children, emphasising safety at all times. While all children are welcome back to school, we would remind parents that, where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms, they should not be sent to school. Children who display such symptoms while in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school. Further information on COVID-19 symptoms in children is available at: -

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html>

All teachers have been making children aware of the proper hygiene procedures regarding hand washing and etiquette related to sneezing, coughing or spitting. We would be grateful if you could also emphasise safe behaviour in this regard to your child at home.

Our aim is to ensure the school remains open and operates in a safe and orderly manner, while reassuring the children and making them feel comfortable, safe and connected with their friends in the new school environment. This will be achieved by all of us working together towards this common goal.

Punctuality and Safety in Car Parks

A big thank you to all parents/guardians who have been co-operating with our new car parking arrangements and staggered opening and closing times. The school day begins at **8.45am** when the school bell rings and the assigned **Entry Zone** doors for each class level are opened.

*Children should not attempt to enter the school building before the school bell rings at **8.45 am**.*

All Entry Zone doors will then be locked at **9.15 am** and **late pupils should enter through the main school entrance door at Zone A.**

Please do not leave your child unattended on the school premises as we cannot take any responsibility for their safety outside of school hours.

- Please remember to park **in reverse** in a designated parking bay and stand beside your car to await collection of your child.
- **No parking** is permitted **along the school driveway** outside of the marked spaces. This allows cars to enter and leave and also provides the necessary space for busses to enter and leave safely.
- You are welcome to use the overflow car park to the rear of the Community Hall if necessary.
- Please be **vigilant at all times**, as young children are liable to run behind cars if they are not properly supervised. Once children are collected, they then become the **responsibility of parents/guardians**.

- **School Opening and Closing Hours**

| <u>Arrival</u> | <u>Class</u> | | <u>Dismissal</u> | <u>Class</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| 8.45 am | Junior and Senior Infants and older siblings | | 1.30pm | Junior Infants |
| 8.55am | First and Second Class and older siblings | | 1.40pm | Senior Infants |
| 9.00am | All other Classes | | 2.30pm | First and Second Classes (& siblings on buses) |
| | | | 2.40pm | All other Classes |

Sacramental Preparation

The children in **Ms. Lancaster's** and **Mr. Ryan's** former Second Classes after a very long wait will receive the **Sacrament of Communion** on **Saturday 12th/Sunday 13th September** and **Saturday 19th/Sunday 20th September** in the **Church of the Immaculate Conception, Eadestown**.

Mass will be celebrated by **Fr. Comer** and musical accompaniment provided by teachers **Ms. Roe** and **Ms. Gleeson**. Special thanks to **Ms. Lancaster** for all her work in preparing the boys and girls to receive this special Sacrament.

The **Sacrament of Confirmation** will also be celebrated for **Mr. Collier's** last year's Sixth Class pupils in three separate ceremonies on **Saturday 17th October** in Eadestown Church. We look forward to these long-awaited special days of celebration ahead.

New School Email Address

Please note that we have changed our school email address to office@rathmorens.ie. The school Reception Office telephone number remains the same: Telephone 045-862145.

Home/School Communication: Rathmore N.S. Homework Diary

The **Rathmore N.S. Homework Diary** is the main channel of communication between home and school and the teachers check it daily for any messages written in it for their attention by parents/guardians. **Martina**, our school secretary can be contacted in the school office at **045-862145** for any urgent message or through the school office email address office@rathmorens.ie.

We kindly request that you do not contact your child's class teacher directly by email unless absolutely necessary. Teachers will do their best to respond to your query within school hours up to 4pm daily.

It is important that all parents/guardians ensure that their contact details are up to date.

*Please contact **Martina** to advise of any changes to your home address, telephone number or email.*

After School Activities

As part of the measures which have been put in place to ensure the safe re-opening of the school in line with public health advice, the school *Covid-19 Response Team* and the *Board of Management* have taken a decision to limit visitors to the school to a minimum. Therefore, there will be no after-school activities taking place in the school building/on the school grounds for the moment. A review will be carried out in the coming weeks subject to updated public health advice.

Healthy Lunches

We have a *Healthy Eating Policy* in the school and parents are encouraged to support this healthy eating initiative. Children are permitted to include one treat in their lunch box on Fridays. We will be having a '*Healthy Eating Week*' across the school shortly which will provide a great opportunity to foster healthy eating habits in our children and remind us of some of the healthy foods to pack in your child's school lunch box. We are also encouraging the children to use *less packaging* and *reduce single use plastic items* in their lunches in order to minimise the amount of waste generated in the school.

Important: Please note that the HSE have advised that school lunch boxes and drink bottles should be washed/sanitised daily as the Covid-19 virus survives for longer on hard plastic surfaces.

Homework & Remote Learning Policy

It has been agreed at whole school level that class teachers will not assign formal homework during the month of September as the children re-adjust to the daily school routine. An emphasis will be placed on pupil wellbeing and the need for teachers to provide reassurance that all public health advice is being adhered to and the school environment is safe. "*Slow down to catch up*" is the key message from the National Psychological Service (NEPS) to schools.

As part of our contingency planning in the event of a school closure, teachers will all be using the *Seesaw App* to continue learning remotely. You should now have received the login details for *Seesaw* from your child's class teacher and all class teachers will begin assigning a weekly activity shortly on *Seesaw* so that children and parents can become familiar with this learning platform.

School Expenses

Thank you to all parents/guardians who have paid their school expenses in full using the recently launched *Aladdin epayments* cashless payment facility. School expenses are payable at each class level and should be paid by 30th September. A breakdown of fees is listed on each class booklist and covers your child's stationary supplies, book rental, art and craft, digital licences and photocopying costs in school. If you have any difficulty, please talk to your child's class teacher or to me.

School Garden

We are lucky to have a beautiful school garden complete with polytunnel for the children to enjoy and do some gardening. Thanks to **Brigid Judge** and her team of Volunteers for giving of their time and expertise. The children really enjoy having their own class plots and engaging in seasonal planting activities. It is a very positive activity which also promotes wellbeing among children and adults. If you

have some expertise in gardening or are interested in getting involved with planting and maintenance of our school garden, we would love to hear from you! Please get in touch with **Martina** in the school office.

School Photographer

County Photos, (professional school photographers) will be coming to the school on **Tuesday, 29th September** to take photos of the children in both Junior Infants Classes, our First Holy Communicants and our Sixth Class. Details will be sent home in your child's school bag shortly.

REMINDERS

UNIFORMS: Please note that the school uniform is inter-changeable and pupils can wear either the uniform or school tracksuit to school. However, all children in 6th class are required to wear the school uniform for *Confirmation*. Your class teacher will advise on what days P.E. is taking place when your child should wear the school tracksuit. Please ensure that your child has a light, rain-jacket or coat for school and remember to check that all items of school clothing are clearly labelled with your child's name.

VETTING: As part of **Child Protection Guidelines** it is a requirement that all parents helping out with school activities are **Garda-vetted**. This process is confidential and once the initial application is submitted by the school, the process is online for the applicant. Therefore, parents/guardians who may become involved in school activities such as Sports Days, Tours, Library, matches or who wish to help out with children in the school must first be *vetted*. All details on Diocesan Vetting requirements can be obtained from the School Office.

Dates for your Diary

Hallowe'en break commences on Monday, 26th October to Friday 30th October 2020

Christmas Holidays: Tuesday 22nd Dec at 12.30pm and school re-opens on Wednesday 6th Jan 2021.

Mid-term break: School closed on Thursday 18th and Friday 19th February 2021.

St. Patrick's Day: School closed on Wednesday 17th March 2021.

Easter Break: Starts at 12.30 pm on Friday 26th March 2021 and school re-opens on Monday, 12th April 2021.

May Bank Holiday: School closed from Friday 30th April until Wednesday 5th May 2021.

June Bank Holiday: School closed from Friday 4th June until Wednesday 9th June 2021.

Summer holidays commence on Fri 25th June, 2021 at 12.30pm.