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Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe that we are already coming to the end of October. The first half term has flown by – time flies when you're having fun!!!! I sincerely hope the children have really enjoyed been back at school after such a lengthy time away. We are all thrilled to be back at school and really hope we can keep moving forward as we have been up to now.

I'd like to thank the whole school community for really pulling together over the last two months to help get our procedures running smoothly. We have been very lucky so far, and have not had a single confirmed covid case in the school. As the situation in society becomes increasingly concerning, I hope we can all continue to keep working together to keep our numbers down, ensuring all our children, families and staff are safe and healthy to come to school.

We were all sad to see Mr Murphy leave us last week, but were delighted to be able to give him a nice send off which he really enjoyed. Mr Murphy gave so much to this school over the 26 years he was here and he will be sorely missed. We will notify you in good time when a new Deputy Principal has been appointed.

We had a lovely prayer service on the Webcam at the end of September to mark the start of the school year. Many thanks to Fr McDermott for facilitating us, to Ms Hanly for organising the blessing and to Ms Cronin, Mr Murphy, Ms Dunleavy and the boys & girls from 6th for their involvement.

While the half term has flown by, we are all in good need of a nice break over the Halloween. I hope you all have a lovely week off with family and get a well-deserved rest. We would like to urge the children to keep safe over the Halloween and stay clear of situations which may appear dangerous.

There are some important pieces of information for you in this month's Newsletter.

Keep safe
Alan Hobbins

Morning Gates.

We have really tried to keep things moving in the mornings, but we still have congregation at the gates in the mornings. Could we please try to reduce this as much as is possible and wear masks where necessary. To help with the congestion at the gates, we have worked with the bus drivers to get the bus children in a couple of minutes earlier to free up space for people waiting outside. We will put out some cones in the bus bay to accommodate this further. We'd ask people not to park in the bus bay when the buses have left.

Please Remember
Caragh School is →



Parish Field

We'd like to continue to encourage families to use the Parish Field where/when possible as this will reduce the numbers standing at the school gates each morning. The back gate is open for everyone to use each day

What if my Child's Class have to stay home?

We have been very lucky to date in that we have not needed to ask a class to stay home following a positive case. However, it is important that we have a plan in place should this arise. Should it come to pass, your child's class and some staff members may have to stay home for up to two weeks. The HSE will advise us further and you will be informed by the school if deemed necessary.

- **Google Classroom / Seesaw.** Teachers will upload work for the day on these platforms. This will prove as a great method to engage with the children.
- **Zoom.** Zoom will be used during the day to engage with the children. The class teacher and Support teacher will carry out whole class and/or small group Zoom meetings during the day to ensure the children are up to speed with the work. This will be co-ordinated as required.
- **Work Pack.** Teachers will be sending home a work pack shortly which should only be used as directed by the teacher in the event of a class closure.

While we will use Zoom as a way of engaging with the children it will be difficult for formal teaching to take place in this way. However, we will do our best. We would ask parents to supervise, but not to communicate with teachers on this platform. If needed parents can communicate with teacher through email or Aladdin.

While we hope this will not come to pass, it makes sense for us to be ready for every eventuality. We do not envisage a whole school closure unless we are directed by the Government following further restrictions.

Google Classroom / Seesaw Apps

Google Classroom. We have all the children signed up now to Google Classroom and the teachers are explaining to them how this works. We hope to use this through out the year for different activities for the children. Should you have any questions or concerns about this please let us know. This is for children from 4th- 6th. At this stage all the children in these classes have their logins for this system.

Seesaw. This is another platform for Infants to 3rd class. We have sent home the relevant login details to you all at this stage. Should you have a few siblings using this app, it will be necessary to log out and log in on the app for each child in turn to see their work. So, it will be necessary to hold onto the QR code for this.



Witch Walk / 5K Run

A large feature of this term traditionally is the Halloween Witch Walk and 5K. Last year the weather really did not help and this year this pandemic is doing its best to dampen our spirits. But we are determined to do something for the children before our Halloween break.

This year our Witch Walk will have to be a little bit different. While we were at Level 2 restrictions, we were keen to press ahead as before. However now that the restrictions have moved to Level 3, we will have to alter our plans somewhat.

We will be asking all the children (& staff) to come to school in their costumes on Friday 23rd. During the day, the children will go for their Witch Walk, but in smaller groups and spread out right throughout the day.

Since we are at Level 3 Restrictions, we are asking parents not to come to the Witch Walk or 5K run this year.

Of course, we would much rather celebrate our Witch Walk with the whole school community, but due to the current situation we cannot. This will be a day for the children to dress up and head off for their walk as a class group. We will take plenty of photographs and videos during the day and share these on our website.

Our 5K will be held during the week with the children also and again we are asking parents not to attend.

Due to Covid, we feel it would be best not to send out the **Sponsorship cards** this year and not to have to deal with cash coming into the school. To this end we will set up a voluntary donations page on the **Aladdin Payments App**, and should you wish to donate you are more than welcome.

We hope to put the funds raised to good use for the children. We have a fantastic Movement trail in our infant corridor which many children around the school get to use. We are delighted to have mud kitchens in place in our sensory garden. We are also investing in much outdoor equipment for the Aistear programme and we are hoping to get some colourful markings for the yard for extra activities for the children. Any donations received for this will really go a long way.

Thank you for your continued support.

Congratulations

A huge congratulations goes to Annie Roche former pupil and daughter of our caretaker Liz who was crowned Irish Senior Ladies Cycle Cross Champion recently. This is a fantastic achievement and we are delighted for Annie, Liz and all involved. Watch this space folks!!!!



Parent Teacher Meetings.

We normally carry out our parent teacher meetings in November. This year however we won't be able to facilitate these meetings in the usual way. Simply put it is not possible to have adults waiting around the school for meetings in the current climate. To this end we are going to delay the Parent Teacher meetings until **February**. Hopefully at that stage restrictions may have eased somewhat and we will be in a position to facilitate these meetings.

In the meantime contact the school if you have any concerns.

First Communion

Congratulations to our 3rd Class pupils who received their First Holy Communion this month. We look forward to another lovely ceremony for those children in Ms Troy's class whose ceremony had to be postponed unfortunately.

Last year's confirmation ceremonies are also planned for the midterm break.

We wish all these pupils the best of luck and thanks to Fr McDermott for all his work with these children.

Basketballers

We'd like to express our sincere thanks to the Tuesday night basketballers who have been unable to play here due to Covid restrictions. They made a very generous donation to the school which allowed us to purchase and replace our outdoor basketball hoops. Unfortunately, the hoops were damaged during the summer months.

Holidays 2020/2021

October (Mon.) 26 th – Friday Oct. 30 th	Mid - Term
December 22 nd	Christmas Holidays
January 6 th	Return to school
February 18 th + 19 th	Mid - Term
March 17 th	St. Patrick's Day
March 26 th	Easter Holidays
April 12 th	Return to school
May 3 rd – 7 th	Bank holiday + holiday
June 7 th + 8 th + 9 th	Bank holiday + holiday
June 30 th	Summer Holidays

After & Pre School Care.

Only 2 places remain!

Before and after school minding for a small pod of children in my home - Caragh, Naas.

Open 8am to 6pm.

- Garda vetted.
- Fully insured.
- Member of Child Minding Ireland.
- HSE 'Children First' certified.

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Happy Halloween