

Howth Primary School September 2020 Newsletter



Special points of interest:

- ☺ Covid-19—Please read
- ☺ News from the classes
- ☺ Farewells
- ☺ Update for School Extension
- ☺ September Birthdays

As this will be my final newsletter, I would like to express my gratitude to the teachers, school staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management (past and present) of Scoil mhuire Howth Primary School who have been so supportive and inspirational in equal measure during my time here as a teacher and as principal.

I want to make special mention of Joe Kirwin who was a serving Board of Management member when I was appointed to this role sixteen years ago, to Aisling Heerey, our Deputy Principal for her unwavering support; to Joan Lyons our school secretary with whom I have worked so closely and to Darrell Clarke our caretaker who has made such a contribution to the school over those years.

I have also enjoyed working with our Parents Association over the years and want to acknowledge with thanks the present PA (Lisa O'Neill, Aisling O'Sullivan, Tara Mullen, Clara Connolly, Deirdre Grant, Sarah McDonnell & Sarah Callaghan) for their ongoing work on behalf of the school.

It has been a pleasure working with Fr. Gerry Tanham P.P. and the Parish groups who do so much to enhance faith formation in Scoil Mhuire. Many sporting and cultural groups on the peninsula (too many to mention) have been involved with our school down the years. These interwoven school/community strands have made my time in Howth Primary School enjoyable and enriching.

At time of writing, the school's next principal has not yet been selected. In advance of this upcoming appointment, I wish whosoever is chosen every success and happiness in this demanding but rewarding role. Aisling Heerey, our Deputy Principal, will be acting Principal until a new Principal is appointed on 2nd November, Claire Mannix will act up as Deputy Principal for this duration.

Ar aghaidh le chéile John Chambers

Inside this issue:

Home/School Liaison	2
Top Tips/Hair Care	2
Covid-19	2
School Extension	3
Covid-19 Arrangements	4
News stories	5
Calendar Farewell	6



Child Protection



As you know our school Child Protection Safeguarding Statement along with the assessment plus information notices with regard to the Child Protection Designated Liaison Person (John Chambers) and the Child Protection Deputy Liaison Person (Aisling Heerey) are displayed on the school reception area (adjacent to the office of the School Secretary) and have been posted on the school's website—www.howthprimaryschool.ie. A copy of the Child Safeguarding Statement has been provided to all school personnel, our Parents Association and to the school's Patron. Copies (hard or soft) are also available on request. The Child Safeguarding Statement is reviewed every year. We hope to conduct this year's review of the Child Protection Safeguarding Statement before Easter. Pupils, School Staff, parents and members of the school's Board of Management are invited to contribute suggestions as part of the review. Copies of the current Child Protection Safeguarding Statement are on the schools website—www.howthprimaryschool.ie or on request at the school office. Our Child Protection Risk Assessment has been revised in the past month to take account of Covid 19 pandemic arrangements

DLP and DDLP have undertaken Child Protection training as have school personnel/Parents' Association. New staff and/or others who may not yet have completed CP training are regularly encouraged to do so. Teachers include Stay Safe/Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) plus Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) modules in their planning and are made aware of their responsibilities as Mandated Persons. Teachers also communicate with the children in class to discuss Child Protection areas such as safety/bullying/attendance etc. The school has conducted a pupil survey. Responses from this survey indicate a very high awareness of these areas and an affirmation by the great majority of children that their school is considered to be a safe environment and that they are familiar with the core elements of the Stay Safe Programme.

Home / School Liaison

Is féidir le tuismitheoirí cabhrú linn in a lán slite chun oideachas maith a chur ar fáil anseo i Scoil Mhuire. Seo roinnt de na rudaí ar féidir le tuismitheoirí a dhéanamh. Bíodh do phaiste ar scoil in am, idir 8.40 r.n. agus 8.50 r.n. Cuireann páistí dé-anacha isteach ar an rang agus caileann siad féin obair ranga. Ná tog laethanta saoire i rith na scoilbhliana gan gá. Tá orainn liosta a chur ar fáil don Oifigeach Leasa Oideachais de na daltaí a chaill 20 lá nó níos mó. Cloigh le rialacha an bhóthair agus tú ag tiomáint nó ag páirceáil i dtimpeallacht na scoile. Léirigh meas ar muintir na háite agus ar a ngeataí. Bíodh an éide cheart scoile ar do pháiste gach lá.

Parental support in the following

areas is much appreciated: Ensure your child arrives in school between 8.40 and 8.50 a.m. Late arrivals cause disruption. Try not to take holidays during school time. We are now obliged to inform the Education Welfare Officer of any child who misses 20 days or more during the school year. The Education Welfare Board has applied new rules with regard to pupil absences from school. It is now necessary to keep a written account of absences and of reasons for them. If a pupil is absent we must receive a note from the parent/guardian giving a reason for the absence. A phone call to the office or a word with the teacher is no longer sufficient. The notes we receive will be kept as a record of absences.



Top tips

Mornings—Pre-school hours are usually hectic. To smooth the morning's rough edges invest time to teach your children valuable life skills such as dressing themselves, brushing hair and tying shoelaces. Re-set your clock 15 minutes early and allow yourself plenty of time

Pack a healthy lunch—Sneak in some healthy options using plenty of fruit and vegetables if you can. Fresh ideas include: a small tub of coleslaw, fruit yoghurt or yoghurt drink, dried

fruit or nuts and a carton of pure orange juice. **At the end of the day**—have a healthy snack ready to give your child to replenish energy levels. Allow some behavioural leeway for the first couple of weeks as they settle into a new routine which is often exhausting

Bedtimes—get into a routine of preparing for school the night before. Let your child become involved with packing lunch or laying out clothes. Also, start finding a bedtime routine

and get them to bed early.

MORNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ MAKE BED
- ☐ EAT BREAKFAST
- ☐ GET DRESSED
- ☐ PUT ON SOCKS AND SHOES
- ☐ BRUSH TEETH
- ☐ LUNCH IN BACKPACK
- ☐ HOMEWORK IN BACKPACK

Hair Care



Tá fadhb Leagúnach le snéacha uaigne sa scoil. Iarraimid bhuir gcabhair chun an fhadhb a choimeád faoi smacht. Seiceáil gruag do pháiste gach deireadh seachfaine. Úsáid cíor fineálta chuige seo. Má tá gruag fhada ag do pháiste ceangal suas é. Cuir fios ar an múinteoir má fheiceann tú snéacha.

We have, as most schools do, a problem from time to time, with

hair infestation. It would help if every child's hair was checked and finely combed at weekends. Long hair should be tied up. If infestation is discovered please treat immediately and inform the class teacher.

All information is dealt with discreetly.

Sixth Class Pupils have made their informed choices regarding Post Primary Schools for next year. Best wishes to them and to their

Post Primary Choices

teachers Mr. Burke & Mr. Flynn in the challenging year ahead. Unfortunately due to Covid 19 the usual Open Days held by the Post Primary Schools cannot take place.

Covid-19

It has been an unprecedented start to the new school year. No one in our school community could have envisaged scenes of masked parents dropping their children to school (in alphabetical order) with masked / visored school staff welcoming them back. Social distancing, hand sanitizers, one way system, hand hygiene - these words are part of a familiar vocabulary to most of our pupils as we journey through these strange times. In a first class, I was advised by one child that I should keep my office well ventilated!

On the plus side, our return to school has been a credit to the amazing adaptability of our children who have come to terms so well with this strange new world imposed on us all by the pandemic. I would also like to acknowledge the help and support of parents/guardians who have trained the children regarding hand washing, sneezing, coughing etiquette, social distancing etc. and who have cooperated with us by wearing masks on the way to/from the school. We also appreciate that the staggered drop off/ collection schedules have had a significant impact on some parents work/childminding arrangements and are deeply thankful of your ongoing cooperation.

Great credit is also due to our Return

to Work Task Force (John Chambers, Aisling Heerey, Claire Mannix, Audrey Clarke, Caroline McEldowney, Darrell Clarke & Joan Lyons) who met regularly during the summer break so that arrangements were put in place to ensure our school could re-open as planned on August 31st as a safe manner. Our In-School Management Team (Aisling Heerey, Claire Mannix, Audrey Clarke, Laura Anderson, & James Burke) have also worked closely with me throughout that time putting structures/ procedures in place so that Scoil Mhuire would be fit for purpose.

There were, of course, cancellations and deferrals arising out of the Covid-19 crisis. Our Annual Tea/Tissues Reception for all new parents, traditionally held on the first morning of the school year had to be cancelled. Confirmation ceremonies, deferred since May 2020 and scheduled to take place on September 26th/27th have again been deferred. We hope that plans for First Holy Communion scheduled for October 17th and 24th will go ahead but this will depend on public health directives. Our very popular Music Makes Magic programme, where every child in the school learns to play violin has been deferred. We hope to reschedule these classes in the near future..

Meanwhile, work in classrooms and in our Special Education wing (The SNUG) continues with teachers presenting the full range of curricular areas in a phased basis as advised by Department of Education and Skills on account of the disruption caused by the nationwide closure of schools from March 15th. We are including Wellbeing modules to address the children's concerns/worries as a result of the pandemic.

If your child is unwell please keep your child at home and follow the HSE advice in the following link:

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

And if you are unsure please contact your GP for advice. If a suspected or positive case arises in the school we will follow strictly all Public Health and HSE advice

Please see Covid-19 Arrangements details on page 4

School Extension

As you know, construction work around the country was put on pause following the lockdown before Easter. This caused significant delays to our school extension project which had started on October 14th 2019. To add to these problems the firm subcontracted for the roofing stage went out of business because of Covid 19 and we had to search for an alternative supplier during the summer. However, to the credit of the builder (CJ Callan) and our school architect (Michelle Sweeney of Oppermann's

Associates) and that thanks to support from the Department of Education & Skills Building Unit we were able to be back on track by mid summer. We now hope to be able to access the new building immediately after the Halloween break. The three temporary classrooms on site will be removed as they would overload the school's electricity board if left in operation after the opening of the new extension. We have decided that the three classes currently working out of the prefabs (Ms. Reilly's 4th class, Mr.

Flynn's 6th class and Mr. Burke's 6th class) along with Mr. Devlin's 3rd class who are currently based in our Multipurpose Room will occupy the new classrooms from November 2020 to June 2021. From the next school year onwards it is likely that our Infant classes will be based in the new building.



Covid—19 Arrangements

We do not have any confirmed positive cases of Covid-19 in the school. However, it is only prudent that we consider what procedures are in place to deal with such a situation were it to arise, so that all of us are aware in advance of what happens in such an event.

Safety and Control Measures

The BoM, school leadership and staff are very conscious of the paramount need to keep all pupils, staff and visitors safe while in the school. The school is a controlled environment. There are control measures in place to combat the introduction or spread of Covid-19. These are based on:

- Physical Distancing
- Hand Hygiene
- Respiratory and Hygiene Etiquette
- Mask Wearing, where necessary

When a person displays symptoms of Covid-19

The following steps are taken when a person (child or adult) in the school presents with suspected Covid-19 symptoms:

- That person is moved to an isolated area prior to going home. In the case of children, their parents will be asked to come to the school, take them home and contact their GP for a free telephone consultation
- If the GP recommends that the person (child or adult) go for a Covid-19 test, that person is now considered a query case for Covid-19 and all of his/her household members are removed from the school and must restrict their movements until the results of the test come back
- In the case of a negative result (98% of cases), the GP will advise when the person should return to school—usually after 48 hours
- In the case of a positive result (2% of cases), Public Health will, by law, be informed. This may take a matter of hours due to legal and volume of work issues. The risk has been removed from the school as the person who tested positive and his/her household are at home

Public Health Intervention

The Public Health Department of the HSE is the agency responsible by law for dealing with positive cases of Covid-19:

- Once notified by the HSE testing regime, Public Health Doctors assume total control of the situation and will carry out a risk assessment. Based on questioning, the person with the positive result, they will ascertain if they were within the school setting when they contracted the virus. If not, there is no need to contact the school
- If the person was within the school setting when they contracted the virus, Public Health will contact the principal to carry out a Public Health Risk Assessment. This is a set of questions to see who might have been exposed to the virus and who needs to be excluded or tested. This risk assessment will be unique to each school
- The principal and BoM have no function in the risk assessment other than to provide whatever information is required by the Public Health Medical Officer conducting the risk assessment
- The principal and BoM may be asked to assist the Medical Officer by sending a message from them to the relevant families identified in the risk assessment. Public Health will not contact other members of the school community
- The principal and BoM are not permitted to inform members of the school community of the identity of the person or persons who have tested positive for Covid-19 for the following reasons:

* Doctor—Patient Confidentiality * GDPR legislation prevents the publication of personal data without consent

Classroom News 2nd Class 6th Class 1st Class

Ms. O'Halloran's 2nd class have been learning all about our Well being and how important it is to be kind to ourselves. We have done lots of guided meditation and mindfulness exercises.

We also created a class jigsaw (on display in the school corridor) showing that even though we are all different, we fit together to make a masterpiece.

In Irish we learned An Haka Gaelach and learned all about the body as Gaeilge.

Mr. Flynn's 6th Class has started their first novel of the year: Wonder by R.J. Palacia. We have discussed and



examined the themes of the story—growing-up, school and family life, written a chapter of the novel from the perspective of the antagonist, Julian; and created mock social media profiles for a range of characters. We look forward to finishing Wonder and learning about the fate of August, Via, Jack and all the characters we have come to know so well.

Both Ms. Tate's and Ms. Peter's First classes have been revising all the letters, sounds and numbers from senior infants since returning to school. Their teachers are very impressed with how much the children remember and how hard they are working. Our topic for this month has been



'change'- we have been discussing the changes we see in nature during autumn and learning about hibernation, migration and harvesting through science, geography and art. We also discussed how we have all changed so much since we were babies and enjoyed sharing our significant memories as well as drawing our personal timelines. Our nature tables are a beautiful display of autumn colours. Look out for our wonderful artwork in the windows over the coming week!



Breaking News

Congratulations to teacher Ms. Ciara Barker on the recent birth of her baby daughter Fiadh and to Ms. Mary McHugh who became engaged during the month.



Well done to all the



Well done—Big Heroes

children from Evora Park who took part in a fundraiser for Our Lady's Hospital Crumlin. They all received a Big Heroes Certificate from the hospital to thank them for thinking of other children and for their hard work.

Lots of boys and girls in our class can now cycle their bikes without stabilizers. We all



Ms. O'Donnell's Class

wrote our own news independently and we have started to read books all by ourselves! The students are rising to the challenges of Senior Infants and having lots of fun on the way.

Farewell Mary

Mary Moore, who has been one of our cleaning team for the past ten years has left to take up a new position. We wish Mary all the very best in the new job. We will miss her around the school at the end of each day.

Best wishes, MARY!



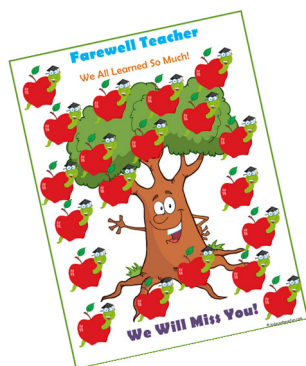
September Birthdays

Happy Birthday to all the children who are celebrating birthdays this month: Jun. Infs., Adam McKay, Sen. Infs. Hugo Zheng, Kayleigh Murphy, Clara Firth, Arthur Nicholas, 1st Class Khashane McKnight, Archie Kelly, 2nd class Harry Howard, Zach Noone, Matthew Lynch, June Soares, Tabitha Molloy, Theo Duffy, Ewan Sheridan, 3rd class Ryan Moore, Amy O'Donnell, Alannah Kinane, Sophia Loftus, 4th class Naran Gillen, Rowan Hughes, 5th class Eilidh McArdle Moore, Conor McIvor, Holly Rose Magann, Max Jordan, Rebecca Jackson, Daisy McLoughlin, 6th class Konstancja Kepa, Emily Cronan, Evan Gibney, India Rose Woods



Outline Calendar 2020

Monday	31 st August	School Reopens	
Mon-Fri	26 th – 30 th Oct	Mid-term Break	School Closed
Wed	23 rd Dec-Tues. 5 th Jan	Christmas Holidays	School Closed
Mon-Fri	15 th – 19 th Feb	Mid-term Break	School Closed
Mon	29 th March-Fri 9 th April	Easter Holidays	School Closed
Mon/Tues	3 rd /4 th May	Public/School Holiday	School Closed
Fri / Mon	4 th /7 th June	School/Public Holiday	School Closed
Wed	30 th June	Summer Holidays	



Happy Retirement!



Mr. John Chambers



Retire and enjoy

