



May 2021

Dear Parents,

I would like to start by extending sincere thanks to all of you for helping to keep our school as safe as possible. You have also been marvelous to keep your children at home when unwell or when close contacts have been tested. That sense of responsibility on your part has helped to keep us all safe, thus far.

The children have also been terrific in complying with challenging requests and accepting some difficult restrictions and we're proud of them all. I also want to thank my colleagues for their continued compliance and vigilance and they have contributed hugely in keeping all members of our community safe. However, the virus hasn't gone away and I would ask everyone to remain cautious and take no risks regarding symptoms or close contacts as society opens up. Hopefully, little by little, some normality is returning and we all look forward to a brighter future.

We have been advised by the Department of Education that Standardised Tests in Literacy and Numeracy must be administered as normal at the end of the school year. The tests will be administered later this month. Children have been engaged in remote learning for six months over the last two years. It is therefore inevitable that the standardised tests will reflect this shortfall. Teachers will explain to pupils that there may be aspects of the test, he or she may find challenging due to the school closure and will reassure them that this will be true for every child. It is so important to note that standardised tests are only one of the measures your child's teacher uses to build a picture of your child's learning. They are a snapshot of how a child performs in maths and English on a specific day and should be interpreted with caution. Please consider this and do not share them with your child as it can lead to unnecessary comparison with peers and consequently anxiety and disappointment.

Once again I would like to remind parents that they need to drive and park responsibly when dropping and collecting students from school. We ask you to respect local residents by refraining from parking in, or obstructing, their driveways. Also please refrain from parking up on the footpaths. On any day within 10 minutes 95% of children have been dropped off or collected, therefore patience and courtesy is paramount. It is wonderful to see so many pupils cycling to school. It is such a healthy activity. Thanks to Richie Clifford who spoke with the pupils about cycle safety. It is so important to ensure your child is visible and has the correct safety gear, high viz jacket, helmet etc. I would also ask all our parents and road users to be extra vigilant of the children cycling particularly at drop off and collection. We have recently expressed an interest in the new "Safe Routes to School" Programme. This has been developed in response to ongoing issues of safety and congestion at the school gate and on routes to school nationwide. Selected schools will be supported to promote active travel to school.



We plan to make May and June as enjoyable as possible for the children. While we may not be able to have traditional school tours and fun days, we will be creative and arrange alternatives where possible. We can't be definite about the dates for all our final term events at the moment as we await more guidance from the DES.

We have been informed that First Holy Communion for our second class pupils will be postponed until the new school year. We are hopeful that Confirmation for our 6th class pupils will take place before the end of June, as soon as we have a date we will let you know.

Helen O'Dea will address the parents of 6th class pupils on relationships and sexuality education on Wednesday 2nd June at 7pm via zoom and the children on Thursday 3rd June. Limerick Youth Service will run a transition programme for our 6th class pupils on the 9th and 10th June. We hope to have a junior and senior sports day in June.

The Parents Association are organising a virtual school walk and Split the Pot draw in June. More details will follow.

School Calendar 2021/22: We will return to school on Thursday 26th August. Once all dates are finalised the calendar will be available to view on our school website.

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL FEENEY
PRINCIPAL