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**School Newsletter**

**Newsletter 4 – December 2023**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This week marks the first week of Advent and our preparation for Christmas. No doubt everyone will be busy in the coming weeks but hopefully you will be able to join the school for some of our Christmas activities.

**School Closure**

The school will be closed for teacher in-service next Tuesday 12th December.

**New Board of Management**

The new Board of Management began its role last Friday 1st December and will serve until 30th November 2027. The members of the new board are Mrs. Dolores Booth (Chairperson), Fr. Simon Jin, Ms. Helen Leen, Mr. Eoin Delaney, Mrs. Emma Cullinan, Mr. Seamus McGrath, Mrs. Catherine Whelan and Mr. David O’Brien. We wish the Board well in leading and managing the school over the next four years.

**Parents Council**

The Parents Council would like to thank parents for their support of the recent clothes collection. Other events happening before Christmas are:

* Tractor Run: After the success of last year’s event the Parents Council are again running a Tractor Run in aid of the school on Sunday 17th December. Registration is from 4pm in The Heath Hall beside the church. A children’s tractor run commences at 4.30pm with the main run commencing at 5pm sharp. As part of the event the Parents Council are running a raffle which parents can support by purchasing tickets in advance through Aladdin or on the day. The cost of tickets is €5. A list of the prizes is available via the Parents Council Facebook page but include a trailer load of timber, a Christmas tree, a fuel voucher from The Gandon Inn, a welding helmet from KWS, a voucher from Stradbally Town and Country, a pet bed from Athy pet supplies.
* Tesco Community Fund / Blue Tokens: Our school has been included in the Tesco Community Fund for the month of December. We need everyone you know who shops in Tesco to take a blue token or two at the check-out and pop it into The Heath NS collection box.
* The Parents Council will be providing a Christmas Hamper for each class in the school. Every child will receive a ticket at no charge. The lucky child who is drawn out in each room will receive the hamper!
* Our thanks to the Parents Council for assisting the school in providing new seating and activities on our infant yard. Watch out for more changes on the infant yard in the coming months!
* Please remember to remind older children of the magic Christmas brings to our younger children and to respect that excitement.

**Charity Donations**

Our thanks to all the parents/children who supported the Team Hope shoebox appeal.

**Parent/Teacher Meetings**

The annual Parent/Teacher meetings will take place in the week of Monday 29th January. The school will notify parents when the booking of time slots opens on the Aladdin app when the school re-opens in the New Year.

**Christmas Plays/Concert/Carol Singing**

Our Junior infant play this year takes place on Tuesday 19th December at 10am in the school hall and our Senior Infant play is on the same day at 11.30am. No tickets are required and all are welcome. Entry via the hall doors.

1st to 4th class will hold a Christmas Concert in The Church of the Assumption, The Heath on Tuesday 19th at 7pm led by Nuala Kelly from Music Generation. No tickets are required and all are welcome. There will be a donation box on the way in to help to cover the cost of running the concert with any surplus being allocated to the cost of Music Generation in the school.

Music Generation have invited 3rd & 4th class to sing at the Christmas Markets on Friday 15th December from 12.45 – 1.30. If you are in town, why not drop by and sing along!

**Junior Infant Enrolment for September 2024**

The school will be accepting applications for junior infant enrolment from Monday 8th January to Friday 2nd February. All details and application forms will be available on our school website from Monday 8th January.

**Other Activities**

* **Swimming:** 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th classes are now half way through their swimming. Please make sure you have paid the fee of €50 for this swimming before the Christmas holidays. Junior Infants, Senior infants, 5th and 6th classes will begin swimming on Wednesday 10th January for five weeks to Wednesday 7th February (normally six but the swimming pool is not offering classes during the February midterm). Junior Infants & 6th class will swim at 11.15 and Senior Infants & 5th at 12.00. The cost for the five weeks including bus and lessons is €42. A link for payment will issue to parents before Christmas and can be paid at any stage over the five weeks of swimming. Infant parents are welcome to come to the pool to watch their children swimming or **to assist in changing their own child only.** Parents assisting their own child must be available for the five weeks, be there before and after swimming and not give or purchase treats for their child. Parents should not feel under pressure to attend as there will be sufficient school staff to assist the infant children. It would be of great assistance if parents practiced dressing/drying etc. with their children in advance. If you have any query, please contact either the class teacher or the school office.
* **Football:** Paul our Heath GAA football coach continues with his weekly classes in the school. Well done to our two boys teams who reached the Cumann na mBunscol football finals held recently in O’Moore Park. Congratulations to our Division 6 team who lifted the cup on the day.
* **Dance Classes:** Juniors, seniors, fifth and sixth are continuing their dance classes at the moment. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th will commence dance in January.
* **Computer Classes:** Computer classes will finish up on Wednesday 13th December and recommence after Christmas.
* **Cross Country:** There has been great participation in our lunchtime runs. Well done to all the children who are running, we have three races left.
* **Reading Month:** A big thank you to everyone who supported our reading month and in particular Ms. O’Connell for co-ordinating all the events.
* **Debating:** Well done to our sixth class debaters who are competing in the primary school debating competition. To date the team have won one and lost one debate.
* **Music Generation:** Music Generation continues in the school for juniors to fourth classes. 1st – 4th classes will perform a Christmas Concert on Tuesday 19th. 3rd and 4th classes will sing at the Christmas Markets on Friday 15th December at 12.45.
* **The Heath Water Scheme:** The school recently had a new water bottle kiosk installed courtesy of the The Heath Group Water Scheme. The idea is to do away with the use of plastic bottles by encouraging children to bring a reusable bottle to school which they can refill at the kiosk during the day. Members of the scheme will visit the school in January to officially launch the kiosk and explain to the children where their water is coming from.

**Christmas Holidays**

The school will close for the Christmas holidays on Friday 22nd December at 12.00. The staff wishes all our parents and children a very happy and peaceful Christmas and thanks you for your support during 2023.