

St. Joseph's Newsletter

September 2014



Website: stjosephskilcock.com

Email: stjosephbns.ias@eircom.net

Ph: 6287-628

Phone/Fax: 6287-689

Welcome back to yet another year and what a year since I have been away? We are going to be in a wonderful new building by Christmas 2015 at the back of our site AND we are going co-educational next year! (see more details below). I hope everyone has had a great summer and delighted that the sunshine is still with us and long may it last!

*A special welcome to our new Junior Infants and to all new pupils to our school. We are delighted to have **Ms. McNickle** and **Ms. Shiel Nolan** return to us as permanent members of staff. **Ms. Butler** is with us again and replacing **Ms. Murray** who has moved to Cork. We wish them both well. We have established a second Autism Class this year and I am delighted to see the progress our boys have made under the care of **Ms. McNally Codyre**.*

*Sincere sympathies to Mr. Costello whose father passed away over the summer RIP. We offer him our heartfelt condolences and sympathies. **Kehinde Omolaoye**, currently in Fifth Class, also lost his Dad, Akin a few months ago. Our thoughts and prayers are with both families.*

*Congratulations to **Ms. Orla Fitzsimons**! She played for **Ireland** in the **Women's Rugby World Cup** over the summer and I hope you all saw her on TV. We are so proud to have such an outstanding sports star in on our school. What a role model for our boys and what an honour for our school to have her as one of your son's teachers?*

*I would like to thank **Mr. Costello** for his on-going dedication and commitment in working with and caring for the entire school community of St. Joseph's in my absence. He rose to the challenge and did so with ease and confidence aided by the very capable **Ms. Doherty**. Well done and huge thanks to both! And finally, I am confident that we will all have another great year in St. Joseph's and please come in and talk to us should you have any concerns or worries about your son.*

Ann McQuillan, School Principal

A SPECIAL VISITOR AND PAST PUPIL WILL MEET OUR BOYS AT THE RUNNING TRACK NEXT TUESDAY AT 11AM, PAUL ROBINSON. He recently competed in the European Athletics Championships and came fourth. Watch this space! Don't miss this opportunity to meet him and give our local hero a hero's welcome.

ALL WELCOME

Co-education and St. Joseph's

We are about to embark on a very exciting journey for our school, and more importantly, for the people of Kilcock. To date, there have been a few meetings with Boards of Managements, together and separately, to discuss the **two options** proposed by Bishop Nulty and the Department of Education & Skills. The first option is to merge as one large school, like they did in Kildare town, where there is one Board, one Parents Council, one staff on two sites. The second option is to have two separate schools like we currently have but one school has children up to Second Class only and the other has the children from Third class upwards.

Predictably there is some conjecture as to what the outcome of all this will be. I want to assure you that absolutely nothing has been decided in relation to this matter to date. **All current and 'future' parents of Kilcock will be consulted prior to any decisions being made** in relation to where your child will attend school next year and thereafter. I would ask you to trust the Boards of Management in this matter and I can assure you that we will consult and communicate before any key decision are made.

Bishop McNulty has organised a facilitator to work with both Boards of Managements to guide us **and** the Kilcock community during this first phase of transition. We are meeting on **Mon, 22nd September** where we hope to have a plan for the future for the children of Kilcock. We will keep you up to date on all developments as soon as we have any information.

Board of Management Annual Report 2013 2014

Our BoM completed an extensive Annual Report for you regarding the activities of our school community over the past year. Lots of updates are included in relation to our new school building, accounts, school self- evaluation, staffing and training, co-ed, achievements and parental involvement, etc. It was compiled by Gerry Lawless. On behalf of the Board and school community I would like to thank him for completing this Report. It is available on our **website at stjosephskilcock.com**.

Photographs: As a welcome to visitors from our boys we place their individual photos on a Noticeboard inside the front door. We include **first names only**. We are updating the photos at the moment and if you would prefer your child not to be included please let me know.

Anti Bullying Policy: A final Draft of this extremely important policy is almost ready to go and we would appreciate it if you could take time to look at it on our website. Your thoughts and opinions would be most appreciated. We will text you when the 'Draft version' it goes 'live'. Final version will be amended after we hear from you.

Annual School Contribution: Boards of Management across the country struggle to meet the daily costs of running a school. We are forced with no option other than to request a contribution from parents to help us meet utility bills such as heating, refuse, electricity, phones etc. We request a contribution of **€100 per family** (*or €50 to each school if you have a girl in the Girls School*).

We ask that you pay this at your earliest convenience but appreciate that some families are under considerable financial strain in striving to meet basic bills at the moment. Should you

find yourself in the unfortunate position of not being able to pay these expenses, please pay whatever you can, whenever you can. Rest assured, that ALL children participate in ALL activities whether or not his family are experiencing financial difficulties. When times are better we know we can rely on you to help us and others less fortunate.

School Improvement Plan: All schools have participated in School Improvement Plans over the past year and we have been focusing on Oral Language. Carmel Doherty and Bernadine Divilly gathered data and analysed it. Our next stage is to test a 'Tracker' group of children in every class and assess their skill level in oral language. All teachers will then follow an Oral Language Programme with their children. Each class will have specific Oral language lessons each week, oral homework will be assigned and we encourage active parental involvement over the year. The 'Tracker' group will subsequently be re-tested and we are very hopeful of positive results for all. It sounds fairly simple but is very scientific and a huge volume work has been undertaken to date.

Fitness Classes: Thanks Ian McGill, Alex's Dad, for the wonderful Fitness classes he conducted here for six weeks prior to the summer. Not only did our parents/siblings get fitter and healthier but he then kindly donated all proceeds to our school. Thank you so much Ian.

After School Clubs

If you or someone you know would like to set up a Club please contact me directly. Our usual clubs will commence from next week. **Football and hurling** will continue with Mr. Costello and Mr. Coulston. **Athletics** for senior boys with Mr. O'Boyle and Ms. McNickle will be on a Tuesday. **Homework Club** every day with Ms. Grogan and Mrs. Divilly. **Choir** is starting on Thursdays with Ms. Shiel Nolan and Ms. Fitzsimons. **Tennis and 'Sho-Co'** are due to return in the next week or so. Individual notes from respective teachers have been circulated. **If fees are charged please pay the teachers directly and not the school office.**

School Books: Please ensure that your son has his School Books as soon as possible. We have very few books on our Book Lists and a substantial number of books are available through our Book rental Scheme which is very keenly priced considering the costs of the books. I would like to especially thank Celine Farrell (Shane and Keith's Mammy) for organising our Book Rental Scheme.

Classroom Expenses: Expenses are listed for each pupil each year and ALL that money is used in YOUR son's class each year for art, classroom resources, photocopying etc. Please pay them as soon as you can but if you are not in a position to pay them please talk to your son's teacher or myself and we will try to work out something that works for all of us.

Art Competition: Congrats to our boys who won the 'Moyglare Art Competition' and will be presented with vouchers at the Curragh Racecourse next Sunday. This is a Family Day and entry is free for children. Their artwork is mounted and displayed on the day. Our winners are: **1st: Michael Byrne, 2nd: Killian Close and 3rd: Shane Bergin.** Well done boys!

Library help: Our boys love their trips to our School Library each week and it helps to encourage a love of reading. Only one, very capable but lonely Mom, Rosanna, organises

the Library visits for almost 200 boys! She is brilliant but would love some help, are you free? She is here almost every Thursday morning from 8.50 to 10.30. Please help or we may have to consider abandoning the Library. Please give a little time, even if you cannot do every Thursday or every 9-10, we'll take anytime at all on a Thursday.

REMINDERS

NO UNIFORM DAYS: Last Friday of each month children wear regular clothes and we ask for a small donation of up to €2 which will be put towards our **new school Hall**. ALL children wear regular clothes on that day whether or not they can afford the donation.

Parking: Do not park in the Staff Car-Park which is the first one as you enter the school. Parking for parents is against the wall. SET DOWN ONLY along by the footpath (the one running inside the school grounds). **Do not park in the BUS BAY** directly outside the school 'exit gate'. Please adhere to our requests to ensure everyone's safety. Do not ask your son to cross the car park without an adult. Remind him how to cross the road safely.

Punctuality & Safety: Please be punctual in collecting and dropping you son(s). School starts at **8.50** and **children are dismissed at 2.30 each afternoon** (Infants at 1.30 from Monday). We open the gates in the morning at 8.40 to facilitate ease of entry but **please remain with your child** until the **pedestrian gate is opened by a teacher**. Do not leave your son unattended as we cannot take any responsibility for his safety outside of these times.

Clothing: Label jumpers, tracksuit tops and jackets. Ensure your son has a **light, rain-jacket** for school. They generally tend to run a lot at break-times so don't need very heavy, cumbersome jackets.

Healthy Lunches: We *discourage foods that are 'high in salt, sugar or fat'* and would ask you to keep these types of foods, if necessary, in the home. **All wrappers and uneaten food** go back home in the Lunchbox each day so you can monitor exactly what your son has eaten.

Dates for your Diary

Midterm –Break: 27 Oct to Oct 31 inclusive

Christmas Holidays: Fri 19th Dec at 12 o'clock and school re-opens on **Mon 5th Jan '15**.

Mid-term break: Feb 16 to 20th inclusive

Easter Break: 12 o'clock on Fri, 27th March and school re-opens on Mon, 13th April.

Summer holidays commence on Fri 26th June at 12 o'clock.

Success for all, a happy school –
Learning and growing together