



Scoil Mhuire, Green Lane, Leixlip

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8/1/21

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas break and I wish you and your families a very happy New Year. As you are no doubt aware, in response to the rapid spread of Covid 19 in recent days, the government have announced that all schools are to remain closed until February 1st and education is to continue via remote teaching and learning for all students.

We are not having the start to the year that any of us would have hoped for but thankfully we are more prepared this time for the school closure. We had a very successful first term and if we work together, I am confident we will succeed with continuity of learning.

We adopted the classroom platform Seesaw in September in case a school closure should happen and this is the platform that staff and children will use in the coming weeks. This platform we hope will encourage meaningful student engagement. Every child was given an access code for Seesaw in September and had the opportunity to submit work and receive feedback from the teacher so they should all be ready for work on Monday morning. Please remember that it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to monitor what children are submitting to the teacher via the Seesaw app.

During this school closure teachers will be assigning very specific work in the core subjects and will leave subjects like Art, Music, PE and mindfulness to parents. We ask parents to encourage their children to do some form of physical activity outdoors everyday and perhaps once a week to engage in art activities or to listen to a piece of music and discuss it with their children. We'd also encourage children to continue to read a few pages of a book each evening before bedtime. This time teachers will be assigning specific work as opposed to a menu of work but a list of extra activities and useful websites can be found on the school website if any parent is looking for extra activities for their children.

We will be delivering education in the coming weeks in line with our Remote Teaching and Learning Policy which was drawn up in consultation with parents at the start of this year. This policy can be found on our website. Please find a summary of our approach below so you are aware of what to expect:

Plan:

- Work will be posted to the platform before 9.20am each day.
- In the Junior classes teachers will address work in 3 subjects each day – generally English, Irish and Maths.
- In the Senior classes teachers will address work in 4 subjects each day – English, Irish, Maths and one other subject (History, Geography, Science, SPHE or Religion).
- Junior teachers will include 1 or 2 teaching elements daily via short pre recorded lessons.
- Senior teachers will include 2 or 3 teaching elements daily via short pre recorded lessons.
- Junior pupils will be required to submit **1** piece of work each day and teachers will provide feedback on this work via voice notes/ comments/ corrections.
- Senior pupils will be required to submit **2** pieces of work each day and teachers will provide feedback on this work via voice notes/ comments/ corrections.

- Pupils from 3rd to 6th classes will be expected to complete their spelling workbook and tables champion task for that day and their mental maths, if applicable.
- Teachers will provide Senior pupils with correction sheets for mental maths activities, tables work and spelling workbook activities for the pupils/parents to self correct. These will be available on the website the following day.
- From 3rd to 6th classes teachers will administer the usual spelling test on Fridays or as regularly as they usually provide spelling tests.
- Special Education Teachers will continue to engage with pupils on their caseload as frequently as they would under normal circumstances.
- SNAs will make contact with the children they work with, if they need support.
- We usually have assembly via Zoom every fortnight. This will continue. Links to Zoom will be sent to each class the day before.

This plan was drawn up to ensure meaningful continuity of learning. We understand that this is a stressful time for parents and children so if your child or a family member is sick or if for any reason your child is unable to engage in schoolwork, please let the class teacher know. We also appreciate that parents will be juggling work and homeschooling. We are trying to strike a balance and cater for the needs of all pupils in our school during this unusual time.

As a school community we made great efforts before Christmas in order to keep the school safe and I thank staff, parents and children for all their efforts. The public health teams and government are urging people to adhere to the level 5 restrictions in order to save lives, safeguard the health system and to allow schools to reopen. I encourage everyone to play their part so schools can reopen as soon as possible.

Teachers sent home most of the children's books before Christmas but the school will be open next week if any parent needs to collect books. If you do not have your child's Seesaw code, please contact your class teacher.

As always if you have any concerns or worries, please don't hesitate to contact me via email on office@scoilmhuireleixlip.com or contact your class teacher.

Please stay safe, stay home and take care.

Kind Regards

Nora Mescal