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Dear Parents

Issue: 01

August 30th 2024

The staff and I wish to welcome you all to the beginning of this new school year at Athenry Primary School. We hope that pupils, staff & parents will have a safe and happy school year.

Staff News:

- Congratulations to Mr Cian Burke who has been appointed as the new teacher in 5th class B for the coming school year. We welcome back Ms Finnula Kennedy who returns to our school having worked in another school last year. Ms Kennedy will teach 3rd class B for the coming school year.
- Congratulations to Ms Róisín O'Connor & Mrs Linda Madden Coyne who have been appointed to run the Special Class which will be operating out of Campus A
- Mrs Comer will be job-sharing with Ms Alice Uí hAodh this year as part of the Special Education Team operating in Campus A.
- Ms McKenna will be job-sharing with Mr Stephen O'Gorman this year as part of the Special Education Team operating in Campus B.
- Ms Belinda Murphy returns to teach 2nd class A this year, while Ms McHugh is on leave.
- With increasing enrolments in the school over the summer, the school applied to the department of education for additional teaching resources. We were subsequently granted an additional teaching position. We have decided to employ the additional teacher in 1st class. This new class is 1st class C and will operate from room 11 within Campus A. We welcome Ms Katie Lambe to our school, she will be the teacher of this new class.
- We welcome Mary Feeney to our staff. Mary is the new SNA in the school.
- We also welcome Amy Morris, Sarah Hynes and Rachel Conneely who will be on the Supply Panel with the school for the year.
- We also welcome back Mary Melville who returns to the school working as a support teacher operating in Campus B.

Start of Term Reminders:



In Campus A children should be brought to the bottom yard before 8.45am. When the bell rings, the children will line up in their class groupings (there will be signs to indicate where the lines are, on the first few days of school). The pupils will then be brought to their classrooms / prefabs. Class starts at 8.50am.

Parents of all children are requested to say goodbye to their children in the yard and let them enter the building / prefab by themselves. This is to foster your child's independence.

Pick up for Infant Classes is 1.30pm (**Junior Infants go home at 1.30pm from Monday Sept 9th**)

Pick up for 1st class to 6th class is 2.30pm

When the school day is over the following arrangements will apply:

- **Jun Inf & Sen Inf:** teacher will bring children to their designated exit door and will release the children into the care of the adult who is there to collect them. *Please be aware that there are classes working in the prefabs. We would be grateful if your children could be kept reasonably quiet while passing. Please remind them also, that they are not allowed to go up and down the steps of the prefabs.*
- **1st Class:** Please make sure that you arrange with your child where exactly you will collect him/her at 2.30pm, e.g. in the yard, at the front wall, at the Church etc. We would ask that you phone or email the office to let teacher know that you are happy that your child knows where they will be collected. They will then be allowed to exit the school through their exit door & make their way to their agreed collection point.
- **2nd – 6th Class:** teacher will allow the pupils to leave the classroom at 2.30pm (*Please ensure your child knows where they will be collected e.g. Campus A school yard, front carpark, church carpark, Bridge St., Court Lane*)

Any pupil who gets anxious for whatever reason after leaving the school is asked to return to the school via Door 1 (beside secretary's office) and sit outside Principal's office where they will be supervised until contact is made with their parents.



Please label all children's clothes and belongings clearly including lunchboxes, drink containers, jumpers, cardigans & coats etc.



The school uniform comprises of navy joggers, a light blue polo shirt and a navy crested sweatshirt. Knee-length navy shorts are also acceptable. Both the School wear Centre, Liosbaun Ind Estate and GM Designwear, Claregalway are stocking shorts that contain the school logo. Otherwise the shorts should be plain navy shorts with no logos. Leggings are not permitted.

The uniform can be purchased from National schoolwear centre in Liosbaun, GM Designwear in Claregalway or Anthony Ryans in Galway city.

The old Scoil Chroí Naofa or Athenry Boys school uniforms may still be worn.

We will be strictly enforcing the observation of the school uniform and your co-operation to ensure that your child wears the full school uniform every day is most appreciated. Staff will be carrying out uniform spot-checks to ensure compliance.




Please ensure your child brings their raincoat to school for days that will be wet. Outdoor activity is encouraged by the Department of Education.




Please make sure you have downloaded the Aladdin app on your phone and have notifications turned on, as teachers may be using it to correspond with parents during the school year.

If your child has been absent from school please record the reason for the absence on the Aladdin app (*you will need to wait until teacher has marked your child absent first, before you will be given the option to record the reason*).


If you choose; you may share your own contact details with other parents of children in the same class as your children, but please be reassured that this information will not be shared unless you choose to share it. This can be done via the "Class List" option on Aladdin


 Staff request all outstanding monies for school costs be paid as soon as possible. Please do this via the Aladdin app, if at all possible. *(Any issues please contact the office).*


 No adults, other than staff members should enter the building. Messages for teachers can be sent by email or phoning the school office.


If an adult has to collect a child during the school day, the following arrangement will apply:

- When adult arrives at the school, they should go straight to the secretary's office via the front door of the school (Campus A: red sticker on door)
- The child will be brought from their class by a member of staff
- The adult who is collecting the child will be asked to sign the child out
- No adult should enter the school building, unless invited to do so.

 Pupils and staff will wash & sanitise their hands regularly and will be reminded of technique. We ask each pupil to wash their hands at home before coming to school.

 Pupils should not attend school if they are generally unwell. 48 hour rule in place for vomiting or diarrhoea. Children must be kept at home until 48 hours have passed from the last episode of illness

 We have a nut free policy in the school due to allergies, please ensure your child does not have products containing nuts in their lunch.

 Our school is included in the Department of Education's roll out of the "Free Hot School Lunches" scheme. There is no charge to parents for this service

The provider of this service in our school is the Galway-based "HotSchoolMeals.ie".

Parents are able to choose a Hot lunch for their children and these lunches are delivered hot to the school each day. (Junior Infants will receive their lunches from Monday September 9th).

HotSchoolMeals.ie have a wide menu to choose from and they cover most allergies and dietary requirements. Please visit www.hotschoolmeals.ie for full menu and nutritional breakdown of meals.

All the children have been assigned their Username & Password to access www.hotschoolmeals.ie. (If you have misplaced your access details please contact the office). *Junior Infants will receive their codes early next week.*

Children should still bring a snack to school for small break and also a drink. We ask all pupils to consider milk or water as their school drink.

Children have a 15 min eating break after they come in from their two yard breaks (10.30am and 12.30pm). *A colour-coded summary of our Healthy Eating policy is attached. **Please be mindful of the foods that are not permitted (red column)***



It is school policy that invitations to birthday parties are not distributed at school out of respect for the non-receiver. You can join a “Class list” on Aladdin, by changing your security settings – this allows you to see contact details for parents of other children in your child’s class, provided you have given permission for your details to be shared also.

Health & Safety:

1. No cars are allowed onto school grounds except in exceptional circumstances agreed with principal. All cars should be parked outside the school grounds. In Campus A, please park in car park outside the school gates and at the Church. In Campus B, there is limited parking available outside the school building. Please consider parking at Court Lane or on Bridge St.
2. Please ensure that your child does not walk on the walls outside the school buildings
3. Families attending Campus A should note that Coláiste an Eachréidh and Gael Scoil Riada are operating out of the old Presentation Secondary school building. As a result there can be difficulty parking and a lot of traffic at drop off & collection times. We ask everyone for extra patience at these times.
4. If you are driving to school, please be vigilant and extra cautious while driving. Please drive slowly and always be aware of the present of children.

The Board of Management ***will not accept responsibility*** for children in either school yard before 8.45am or after 2.30pm, unless they are attending an Athenry Primary School after school activity.

General Reminders:

- **Punctuality:** The staff of Athenry Primary School consider punctuality to be of paramount importance. Please ensure that your child is in school by 8.50am (at the latest) to avoid disruption to the beginning of the school day for teachers. Roll call is taken in the early morning, every day. If your child arrives late to school, they should go to the main front door (red door 1) where the secretary will let them in & bring them to their class.

EVERY DAY COUNTS!!

DID YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD’S BEST LEARNING TIME IS THE START OF THE SCHOOL DAY?

He/She is only missing just ...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that’s...
10 mins per day	50 mins per week	Nearly 1.5 weeks per year	Nearly Half a year
20 mins per day	1 hour 40 mins per week	Over 2.5 weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 mins per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years

- **Absences:** In accordance with Section 18 of the Education Welfare Act 2000, when ***a pupil is absent for part or all of a school day***, parent(s) must notify teacher or Principal of the reasons for the pupil’s absence. If a pupil is absent for more than 20 days during the school year, the school authorities must inform the Education Welfare Board who consult with parents. In order to comply with the Act, staff and I need your cooperation with the following:
 - a. If your child is absent, please log the reason for the absence on the Aladdin app

b. If your child has to leave the school during the school day, the person who is collecting your child must sign him/her out at the Secretary's Office.

- **Child Protection:** The Department of Education has introduced Child Protection Procedures for Primary Schools in relation to *Child Protection and Welfare*. The Board of Management has adopted these procedures as School Policy. Consequently if there is a matter of concern in relation to the abuse of children we are obliged to report this to Túsla, who will assess the case and provide the necessary support for the child concerned.
- **Medical Problems:** Please make the school aware if your child has any medical problems. The information given in this regard will be treated with total confidentiality. In the case of a child needing urgent medical attention and where parents cannot be contacted, he / she will be taken to a local doctor or A&E.
- **Head Lice:** Please check your child's hair regularly and treat any infection immediately. Children with long hair should have it tied back.
- **Change of Address:** If you *change address, email or phone numbers*, please inform secretary so she can update school records. Regular school newsletters will not be handed out to the children, they will only be e-mailed, so please ensure that we have your most current e-mail address on file.
- **News Publications:** During the coming year we will be submitting articles and photos to local publications. If you do not wish your child's name or photo to be submitted please contact the school.

Rugby Training:

- Pupils from 5th & 6th class will be taking part in a Rugby blitz at Monivea rugby club on September 18th.
- This event is being organised by Connacht rugby.

Ladies Football:

- We will be entering a Ladies football team from the girls in 5th & 6th class, in the Mikey Vaughan Cup & Kate Moran Shield which is being hosted by Monivea-Abbey Ladies Football Club on September 23rd at Monivea pitch.

Athletics:

- The Galway AAI Primary Schools Cross Country Championship semi-finals will be held in the playing fields of Nolan Park, Renmore in Galway city on Tuesday September 24th
- The event is organised by Galway Athletics Ireland County Board to give schools and pupils an opportunity to take part in a fun but competitive cross-country event.
- The championships are open to pupils from 3rd up to 6th.
- We will hold trials for pupils who are interested in taking part

Band:

- Practice will commence in a few weeks' time. The increased numbers of pupils due to the amalgamation have caused a review of how the band will operate. This will be detailed over the coming weeks.
- The band usually performs at the following 2 events annually:
 - Turning on the Christmas lights: end of Nov / early Dec
 - St Patrick's day parade: Monday March 17th

Youth Academy:

- The University of Galway Youth Academy works with high ability 4th, 5th & 6th class primary school pupils.
- To attend Youth Academy students must present one of the following:
 - Most recent standardised test report showing below result in English, Maths or Gaeilge
 - STen score of 9 or 10

- Standardised score of 123 or above
 - 95th percentile or above
- A copy of an educational psychologists assessment with ability scores included and demonstrating high ability
- Parents apply to the programme directly by completing an online application form at: www.universityofgalway.ie/youthacademy.
- Applications will be open from Sept 4th and close on Sept 11th.

Community Links:

- ***Athenry Music School*** would like to invite you to ***DrumÓg***, an exciting samba drumming experience for those in 5th or 6th class, or in secondary school. Classes start on Wednesday September 4th from 6-7pm in Clain college. The fee is €50 per child per term and all instruments will be provided during rehearsals.
Sign up for DrumÓg [HERE](#)
- If you have any questions or access requirements please drop us a line at athenrymusicschool@gmail.com.
- The ***Children's Liturgy*** at Church of the Assumption Athenry will return this Sunday (Sept 1st). It takes place in the Pastoral Centre attached to the church, during the Sunday 11am mass. It runs during term time i.e. any Sunday when there is school the following day. A few things to keep in mind:
 - Currently it is only being offered to children in Junior infants, Senior infants and First class (numbers are restricted due to a shortage of adult volunteers)
 - Please contact eithnamoran@gmail.com or Deirdre at 0870984379, if you are interested in volunteering.
 - Parents are asked to sign a consent form the first time their child attends the children's liturgy. This consent form is kept on file.
 - Maximum capacity is 16 children at the moment, so you need to get in early if you wish your child to attend every week.
 - Please watch for your child to come back into the church (at the start of the Our Father prayer).

You will find the following attachments here also:

- School Calendar 2024 / 2025
- Summary of Healthy Eating policy

With every good wish for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

John Connolly

Principal



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SCHOOL CALENDAR 2024/2025

SCHOOL OPENING:	Thursday 29 th of August
MID TERM BREAK:	Monday 28 th of October to Friday 1 st of November School re-opens on Monday, 4 th of November
CHRISTMAS BREAK:	Monday 23 rd of December to Friday 3 rd of January School closes on Friday 20 th of December School re-opens on Monday 6 th of January.
ST. BRIGID'S DAY:	School closed on Monday 3 rd of February
MID TERM BREAK:	School closed on Monday 17 th of February to Friday 21 st of February
ST. PATRICK'S DAY:	School closed on Monday 17 th of March
EASTER BREAK:	Monday 14 th of April to Sunday 27 th of April School closes on Friday 11 th of April School re-opens on Monday 28 th of April
MAY BANK HOLIDAY:	School closed on Monday 5 th of May
JUNE BANK HOLIDAY:	School closed on Monday 2 nd of June
SUMMER HOLIDAYS:	School closes on Thursday 26 th of June.

Please Note: This calendar could be subject to change as part of contingency arrangements to make up for time lost due to unforeseen school closures. You will be given adequate notice of any changes.

ATHENRY PRIMARY SCHOOL HEALTHY EATING POLICY

THE FOOD PYRAMID 	GREEN Foods which are good for every day	ORANGE Foods that can be good once or twice a week or in small amounts	RED Foods that are not necessary for healthy eating or are unsafe and are not to be eaten in school
Top Shelf: Other Foods		School provides chocolates/sweets on feast days	Chocolate products, Biscuits, Sugary cereal bars, Crisps and sweets etc.
Oils, Spreads, Fats	Butter, Spreads		No chocolate spreads
Meat, Poultry, Fish	Chicken, Turkey, Beef, Pork, Ham, Lamb, Egg, Salmon, Tuna, Mackerel	Chickpeas, Lentils, Bacon, Sausage, Salami, Luncheon, Corned beef, Billy roll	Nuts
Dairy Produce	Milk, yogurt, Greek yogurt, cheese slices, drinking yogurt, fruit/plain yogurt, Frubes, cheese dippers	Petit filous, flavoured milk, rice pudding, custard. Cheese strings, cheese spread, cheese triangles	Chocolate mousse, sprinkler yogurts, Toffee/sweet corner yogurts,
Fruit & Vegetables	Apples, oranges, bananas, kiwi, plum, nectarine, peach, pineapple, melon, grapes, mandarins, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, carrots, green beans, mangetout, peppers, fruit salad Carrots, cooked or uncooked <u>cut into bite size pieces (preferably for Junior Infants)</u>	Dried fruit: raisins, sultanas, dates, apricots. Smoothies, olives, avocado, stewed fruit, tinned fruit	
Cereals, Grains, Potatoes.	Wholegrain breads, rolls, baps, pitta, wraps crackers. Oatcakes, banana bread, Oat bars, wholemeal scones, soda bread, brown pasta, rice, noodles	White breads, rolls, baps, pitta, wraps, crackers, rice cakes, Brioche, Plain cake, White scone, Plain bun, Croissants	Chocolate breads, Iced rolls, Danish pastries, sausage rolls, sweet cereal bars eg. Rice Krispie bars
Fluids	Water, milk, soup	Sugar squash, flavoured milks, Tea, yogurt drinks	Fizzy drinks, Energy drinks, Full sugar squash, Capri sun, Hot chocolate