



Newsletter - August 2009

Message from Michael Moretta, Head of School

I trust that you all had a wonderful break this summer. All too soon the long summer break comes to an end and thoughts begin to turn towards the new academic year. I have a lot to tell you in this newsletter. Once again our maintenance team have been extremely busy over the summer. The third science laboratory has been completely refurbished as have the six classrooms in the L-shaped Block in the Orchard. The students will be coming into a set of renewed classrooms that will certainly enhance their working environment. We now have three very well equipped science labs which will I know enhance the opportunities of all our students in this important set of subjects. Our Leaving results were also very impressive. I hope you have had a chance to look at the website so that you can absorb the data for yourselves. I have one or two announcements to make and I want to outline some of the initiatives we intend to pursue over the course of the year.

You will of course be very aware that this academic year will be very difficult for all schools and Boards of Management. Most schools have lost significant funds from central government and prudence really is the watch-word for all of us in these difficult times. With this in mind I am letting you know that this newsletter will not be sent out in the post but will appear on our website. All families will be informed by text to look at the website. If you require a hard copy of the newsletter we will of course be happy to provide you with one. Just pop up to school and one of the office staff will give you a hard copy.

All communications except the reports will be delivered in this way from now on.

First Week of School

The first week back after the long summer break is always frenetic and I thought it best to explain in some detail the arrangements of the first few days from Monday 24th to Friday 29th August.

Monday 24th: The Staff of all divisions of the school have their business meeting from 9:30 – lunchtime. In the afternoon from 2pm until 3:30 we run our Induction Programme for all new students in the Secondary School. Prefects, Form Teachers, our Counsellor, Librarian and other staff are on hand to provide all the information needed to ensure a smooth entry into the school.

Tuesday 25th: On Tuesday we have a Full Staff In-Service day on assessment. No student from any division is required in school all day.

Wednesday 26th: This is a half day for all divisions. We begin the year with an assembly and then form periods. This is an important time to enable teachers to deliver timetables, assign lockers, hand out homework diaries and important information.

At 12 noon the Secondary school will close. All staff will be attending an in-service session on Social, Personal and Health Education delivered by representatives of the Education Department.

The Junior and Intermediate Schools will also be in staff meetings for the afternoon and lessons will end at 12.30pm.

Thursday 27th and Friday 28th

Classes will be as normal for all divisions of the school from this time.

Inside this issue:

Message From Michael Moretta
Head of School

- **First Week of School**
- **New Times of School Day**
- **Uniform & Behaviour Policy**
- **Swine Flu**
- **Driving on School Site**
- **Canteen**
- **Communication with The School**

Message From Liam Burns
Intermediate School Principal

- **New Term Information**

Message From Geraldine McGuire
Junior School Principal

- **New Term Information**

New Times of The School Day

You will recall that in my last newsletter I announced changes to the Senior school day that we meet the requirements of the Departments directives on the number of hours of contact time. The school day is as follows:

1.	8.45 – 9.25
2.	9.25 – 10.05
3.	10.05 – 10.45
	BREAK
4.	11.05 – 11.45
5.	11.45 – 12.25
6.	12.25 – 1.05
	LUNCH
7.	1.45 – 2.25
8.	2.25 – 3.05
9.	3.05 – 3.45

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday is slightly different. We will begin the day with a short assembly from 8.45-9.00am and classes up to break will be 35 minutes long.

After break lessons revert back to 40 minutes. Wednesday afternoon will still be allocated for matches, science and clubs and Art Club.

A session of supervised study is also available for students who wish to study in school from 1.45 –3.30pm.

Students wishing to stay for evening study, will be supervised in the Library until 4.45pm.

Since school finishes at 3:45 I have had to adjust the times for after school prep. This now takes place from 3:50 to 4:50 pm. I have also instructed the Moyclare bus to pick up students at 5 pm from now on. Given that this is a somewhat longer day I have made prep voluntary for all year groups. If your son or daughter prefers to work home in Years 1 – 3 they can choose that option – with your approval. If you wish your son or daughter to stay in school for prep time could you ensure that they fill in the necessary form (available online in the “Back To School” section and return it to their form teacher. Prep will begin from Monday 30th September.

Evening Study will also begin on Monday 30th September and take place from 5:30 to 8:45 pm.

Wednesday will also be slightly different this year.

Uniform & Behaviour Policy

I am very grateful to the Board of Management for providing a clear visual version of our Uniform Policy. Attached to this newsletter on the web is a leaflet regarding the correct wearing of uniform. I hope that this clarifies the do’s and don’ts regarding uniform. I shall speak to all the students at assembly reminding them of the rules and the sanctions in place if these rules are disregarded. We have a very liberal policy on uniform and I feel it completely reasonable that we keep to the clear boundaries. I know that I can rely on your support in this matter.

This year all Year Heads will vigorously check up on attendance and unauthorised absences. We will be in contact with you if we observe any patterns of absence or lateness and once again can I ask that you support our endeavours to enforce regular attendance patterns. The school year is very short and there is a direct correlation between achievement, academic success and high levels of attendance.

A committee of staff members has also been working on our Behaviour Policy. We have high expectations of the students and behaviour in school is generally very good. Nevertheless, it does no harm to remind the school community of our rules and to show everyone that rules are there to enhance the learning of everyone. These rules will be explained to the school at assembly and they are prominently displayed in the classrooms. Clear steps are in place and in rare cases that we need to impose sanctions these are clear and graduated. We have decided to abandon Friday detentions in favour of Saturday detentions from 9am – 11 am. You will be informed of any major breaches of behaviour and there is a system of warnings in place before the sanction of detention is issued. Further details can be found in the relevant section of the handbook, but once again can I ask you to support us in the implementation of this policy.

Swine Flu

An important item on our agenda this term will be planning for what could be a very challenging epidemic this autumn. While I do not want to appear alarmist in any way it is important that we have contingency plans in place and do our very best to limit the opportunities for the virus to spread. We are following the very detailed guidelines we have received from the department for Education and the HSE. You will see posters placed around the school and cleaning dispensers at key points around the site. We have plans to ensure that students can be isolated if they become ill in school and we will do everything we can to ensure that lessons are covered and students can catch up on work they may miss due to absence.

Important information can be gained from www.hpsc.ie and if you have any concerns do not hesitate to contact me or the school nurse who will hopefully put your mind at rest. If you feel that your child is in one of the categories at risk from catching the virus it is very important that you ensure we are informed. Moreover, if you have changed your contact details over the summer can I ask you to let us know at your earliest convenience. The lines of communication between the school and our parent body will have to be very clear this year.

Driving on the School Site

Those who regularly drop students to school in the morning or pick them up at the end of school do not need me to tell them that we have a congested driveway up to and including the roundabout. I would like to remind all drivers that having so many cars on a site with young and vulnerable children often crossing busy sections of our driveway is very much a health and safety issue. Matters arising from this issue regularly appear on Board of Management agendas. We are all agreed that we only permit parents to drive on our site for the convenience of the great majority of our community. Such access is not common to all schools and rests on the assumption that we exercise due caution and maintain common sense and common courtesy. In this spirit I want to remind everyone of the long standing guidelines we have drawn up over the years:

No students are allowed to drive on the site during school hours. Students are only allowed to drive on the site for evening study – that is at 5:30 pm. Towards the end of last year we had a number of 6th Years parking surreptitiously. This year I will remind students with cars to give Veronica their numbers so that we can monitor any student cars that appear during the day. These cars will first receive a warning on their windscreens and if the unauthorised parking persists, they will be clamped. The Board of Management quite correctly feel that having students cars coming and going at often busy times could pose a serious risk to the younger children at Sutton Park.

Could I also remind parents that if they wish to come into school and talk to the teachers in the morning or the end of the day that they park their cars in a designated area or park outside the gates. Very often large queues are formed by a car being left on the roundabout for some considerable time constricting the smooth flow of traffic. Our school bus must also have free access to pick up or drop children at very busy times.

The Board of Management are monitoring the situation very carefully. For the first few weeks I shall ensure that the cones are placed around those areas most likely to lead to congestion. Could I respectfully remind everyone to keep to the clear road markings and only park in the designated areas.

Canteen

In an attempt to lesson the congestion in our canteen we have installed vending machines in the Atrium area for the students. These will provide the students with an opportunity to purchase sandwiches and hot drinks during lunch break. The students will have an input in what goes into these machines and I have every hope that the older students especially, will choose to use this facility rather than fill up our already crowded canteen. We will still provide hot meals at lunchtime in the canteen, but it is envisaged that fewer students will use the canteen area this term. As with all new initiatives, I will keep you regularly informed about the progress and please do not hesitate to give me feedback.

Communication with the School

My office has spent some time over the holiday period developing and updating our website and working on providing email addresses for most staff. All teaching staff along with administration staff etc can now be contacted via their Sutton Park email address located on the website linked from the “Administration” page. This should enable you all to contact the relevant teacher very quickly if you have a concern or wish to pass on information.

Intermediate School

Message from Liam Burns, Intermediate School Principal

As the beginning of a new academic year arrives I hope you all had a most enjoyable summer and are suitably relaxed and rejuvenated.

May I just remind you that our teachers for Intermediate School are as follows;

Grade 4 **Miss Catriona Loftus**
 Grade 5: **Mr. Liam Burns**
 Grade 6: **Mrs Anne Gibson**

We extend a warm welcome to our new Grade 4 class and also to their teacher, Miss Loftus. I am sure they will settle quickly into their new routine and enjoy a great year in Intermediate School.

As indicated in the last newsletter we are now in a position to make several exciting alterations to the school day particularly at Grades 5 and 6. Mindful of the fact that Intermediate School was initially established to assist in the transition from primary to secondary education the new school day goes a long way to achieving this goal. Essentially the class teacher will take the class for the morning lessons and will be responsible for teaching the core subjects. The second half of the day shall be along similar lines to Senior School where children will enjoy lessons such as Graphic Design, Art, French etc taught by teachers who specialise in these areas.

The Grade 4 day shall follow the normal format with Miss Loftus responsible for all areas of the curriculum, except French, P.E. and Music.

The Grades Five and Six timetables are outlined below. Children shall be given copies of these on Wednesday 26th August and shall be given a detailed induction in order to familiarise them with room allocation and the teachers who will teach them.

Grade Six Time Table 2009/10

Lesson	Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	8.45-9.25	ENGLISH	MATHS	SESE	MATHS	ENGLISH
2	9.25-10.05	ENGLISH	MATHS	SESE	MATHS	ENGLISH
Break	10.05-10.25	B	R	E	A	K
3	10.25-11.05	MATHS	SESE	MATHS	ENGLISH	SPELL/MAT TEST
4	11.05-11.45	IRISH	IRISH	IRISH	IRISH	IRISH
5	11.45-12.25	MUSIC	ENGLISH	FRENCH	SPHE	MUSIC
	12.25-1.05	L	U	N	C	H
6	1.05-1.45	SCIENCE	FRENCH	IT Award	PE	SCIENCE
7	1.45-2.25	ART	ICT	Discover Science/Tech Award	ENGLISH	SCIENCE
8	2.25-3.05	ART	PE		INFO TECH	ASSEMBLY 2.25- 2.45
9	3.05-3.45	CLUBS	CLUBS	Drama	CLUBS	

Grade Five Timetable 2009/10

Lesson	Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	8.45-9.25	MATHS	ENGLISH	MATHS	SCIENCE	ENGLISH
2	9.25-10.05	MATHS	ENGLISH	MATHS	SCIENCE	SPELL/MA TESTS
Break	10.05-10.25	B	R	E	A	K
3	10.25-11.05	ENGLISH	ART	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	LIBRARY
4	11.05-11.45	HISTORY	ART	GEOG	ENGLISH	SPHE
5	11.45-12.25	IRISH	IRISH	IRISH	IRISH	IRISH
	12.25-1.05	L	U	N	C	H
6	1.05-1.45	FRENCH	MATHS	Discover Science/Tech Award IT Award Drama	MATHS	FRENCH
7	1.45-2.25	PE	SCIENCE		ICT	MUSIC
8	2.25-3.05	MUSIC	SCIENCE		PE	ASSEMBLY 2.25-2.45
9	3.05-3.45	CLUBS	CLUBS		CLUBS	

Wednesday 26th August. Classes commence at 8.45am and finish at **12.30 pm**. Children should leave their possessions in the cloakroom which has been relocated to the ground floor adjacent to my office. They should then go directly to their classrooms. I shall be on hand to direct our Grade Fours and our new pupils to their rooms. Grade 6 is in the ground floor classroom while Grades 4 and 5 are located on the first floor.

Other information to note is:

School Day

8.45 – 3.45 Monday to Thursday

8.45 – 2.45 - Friday

Homework Club

3.45-4.45 Monday, Tuesday & Thursday. Please note, due to low attendances on Wednesdays last year there will be NO Homework Club on Wednesdays this coming year.

Wednesday Afternoon

Children shall be working towards awards in both information technology and science. These will take at least the first term to complete and it is important that all children attend these classes regularly.

Staff Meetings

As you will see from the school website staff meetings are scheduled for the first Wednesday of every month. This is a return to the previous arrangement with children finishing school at 1.15pm on these occasions. This is unavoidable and I apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Contacting Me

As you are aware I shall be teaching Grade 5 this year and will have a considerable amount of time in the classroom. In order to minimise disruption to my class I would ask that, should you wish to contact me, you do so either before 8.30am or alternatively after 3.05pm. I thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Enjoy the last few days of your holidays and I look forward to seeing you all on your return.

Liam Burns

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Junior School

Message from Geraldine McGuire, Junior School Principal

I hope you had many opportunities to enjoy the company of friends and family during the summer holidays. The new school year is with us again and I am sure that both you and the children are ready to return to school and its structured day.

We will be welcoming a number of new students who I know will be made to feel at home very quickly.

Our teachers for Junior School (J1-G3) are as follows:-

Junior Infants: **Ms Karen Sweeney**
Senior Infants: **Ms Deirdre Hurley**
Grade 1: **Ms Jane Cullen**
Grade 2: **Ms Sinead Curtin**
Grade 3: **Ms Christine Ellickson**

Wednesday August 26th at 8.45a.m tea and coffee will be served in the Staff Room in the Junior School building for all new Junior School parents (and anyone who would like to help serve the tea and coffee and welcome the new parents).

N.B.

Junior Infants finish at 1.15 every day until the October half term. After the half term they will finish at 2.45, the same time as the rest of the Junior School classes.

Please ensure that we have your current mobile phone numbers, as this is the most efficient way of ensuring easy and speedy contact with all parents.

I look forward to seeing you all on Wednesday August 26th. Please note that all classes will **finish at 12.30 pm** on this day.

Ms Geraldine McGuire
JUNIOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

PTA News

Just a short reminder to all of the following events coming up this term:-

Sunday 20th September: B.B.Q in the Orchard
Monday 19th October: AGM

Please check the website calendar nearer the time for details of time & venues.

Nicola Gorman
PTA Chairperson



“We nurture all that is best in all of our Students”