

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we come to the end of Term 1, I want to express my **gratitude** to everyone in our school community: cleaners, caretaker, office staff, SNAs, Parent Association, Board of Management, parents/guardians/grandparents and last but certainly not least our amazing boys! We've stayed open & we've stayed as safe as possible and we should all be very proud. This is not an easy time, and the staff has responded incredibly as they always do. Míle buíochas to all.

Christmas holidays are always special, but perhaps more so this year. It is also a difficult time for those who have lost loved ones and for those families who are tending to the sick. Some families may also be in financial difficulties as a direct result of the pandemic. Our school community expresses solidarity with you all.

The four candles on the Advent Wreath represent: **HOPE, LOVE, JOY & PEACE**. Let's reflect on those four themes as Christmas approaches.

"As the last curtain falls on a spent year, a new year pirouettes to centre stage with the elegance and charm of a prima ballerina – and delivers the promise of peace, hope, love and joy."

Retirement

To say it's the end of an era is an understatement. Our most senior colleague and Deputy Principal Mrs Lucy Ryan's retirement is imminent. She has taught here since April 1982. We will miss her greatly. Her presence has brought great reassurance to us all over the years and we wish Lucy, John and all her children the very best in the years ahead.

IF you so wish, we are asking for a small donation (€2) from each pupil or family to buy a present for Lucy on behalf of our pupils. We will present it to her at a special assembly next Monday. We'll collect any donations at the door during this week.

Deputy Principal Appointment & Maternity Leave

Mrs Bríd Callanan (1st class teacher) has been offered the post of Deputy Principal and she has accepted. Bríd will commence her deputy principalship on Wednesday 6 January 2021 and we wish her the very best in this new role. I'd also like to take this opportunity to wish Mrs Catherine Kelly every good health and happiness as she commences her maternity leave.

Parent Association

Our PA continues to work really well together for our boys. The staff and I applaud its work. The 'Halloween' & 'Winter Wonderland' displays - amongst many other initiatives - are testament to the Association's commitment to putting smiles on our faces during the pandemic. Go raibh maith agaibh go léir. We look forward to your ongoing efforts in the new year. Watch out for its "Coach to 5K" initiative after the holidays.

Board of Management

Monica Shannon, our chairperson, along with Julia, Liz, Seanie, Paddy, Fr Enda, Lucy and I make up the Board of Management. We are responsible for managing the school on behalf

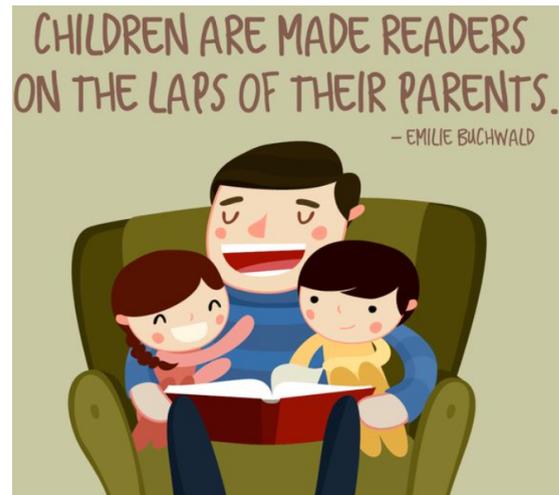
of the patron. Monica would like to express her thanks to you, the parents/guardians, for your support since we reopened in September and hope you all enjoy the Christmas holidays with your families.

Reading

"When asked about their home lives, two-thirds of second class pupils reported that they were 'never' or rarely read to."

This is according to research in a recently published report by "Children's School Lives". More at <https://cslstudy.ie/>

This is a worrying statistic. We must take time to read to and with our children *throughout* primary school. It is one of the keys to educational success.



We will be rolling out our **Accelerated Reader** initiative during Term 2 in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th classes. More information to follow in the new year. In short, however, AR monitors and managers independent reading practice, hopefully motivating our boys to read more often for pleasure.

Reminder of Collection Times (as per "12 day of Christmas calendar")

School Finishes Early on Thurs 17th

(Termly staff hours - half-in half-out)
1.00pm (J1 to 1st)
1.15pm (2nd-4th)
1.30pm (5th & 6th)

School Closing for Christmas holidays on Tues 22nd

12.00pm (J1 to 1st)
12.15pm (2nd-4th)
12.30pm (5th & 6th)

Christmas 50/50 Draw (Draw 6 of 6)

Thank you very much for supporting our 50/50 draw over the past five weeks. One draw to go. Hope it's a bumper one! Draw will take place on the day of the Christmas holidays, Tuesday 22 December.

Homework Pass for Thursday this week

I have a homework pass because...

Mrs Ryan is retiring and we want to mark this special occasion!

signed.....*W Ryan*.....

Nollaig Shona Daoibh go léir.