

Coláiste na hInse



Friday 22nd January 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to our 3rd end of week briefing.

I would like to commend all múinteoirí and daltaí on another very successful week of remote teaching and learning. The systems for academic and attendance monitoring seem to be working with over 90% of students consistently engaging in their remote lessons. Contact was made this week with students who are not fully engaging and most issues causing disengagement have now been resolved where possible.

Classroom discipline has been excellent this week with only two minor incidents reported – both of which have been dealt with. If students disrupt classes, generally they will be suspended from that class until they make a commitment to the teacher concerned to conduct themselves properly in the class if permitted back. One other issue we are seeing this week is that a minority of students are logging onto their classes and then leaving their screens on while going off to do something else. The class is continuing without them being present. Obviously, we would like students not to do this.

Christmas reports have been submitted by all múinteoirí this week and will be posted out by the main school office from Monday.

We will be carrying out an online survey among all daltaí about their experiences of online teaching and learning. The results of this survey will highlight any outstanding issues that need to be resolved.

Since Christmas there has been extensive building work going on in the school to resolve several structural issues in the school. This building work is due to be finished today. Our cleaning staff are all coming in all next week to do a deep clean of the entire school to allow us to open on February 1st if permitted by public health. We sincerely hope this comes to pass.

A very productive meeting was held this week in relation to the school extension. The Department of Education and skills have approved the extension and we are now negotiating the room configuration of the extension. We are hoping to include 11 new general classrooms, a science lab, a technology room, 1/2 home economics kitchens, a 150M² social area and a learning support suite. We emphasized with the architects that we did not want the extension to compromise outdoor recreation space as we will be hoping soon to improve our outdoor playing facilities.

Iníon Harte our new deputy principal who is also a music teacher has invited all daltaí to enter a new song writing competition. Iníon Harte has sent out details of this competition to all daltaí. We are challenging daltaí to compose and perform a song which might incorporate one or more of the Coláiste's guiding principles of positivity, pride and ambition - dearfachas, bród agus Uaimhian.

Entries must be submitted by Friday 26th February 8PM. The winner of the competition gets a €100 cash prize, the winning song will be arranged and recorded by Mark Cahill of 'The Ivory sessions' and the song will be aired on 'The ivory sessions' in March.

Details of the Robert Ballagh art competition were sent to students this week. This is an annual art competition run by LMETB. There are always great prizes for winners in each category. This might be something daltaí would like to put their mind to during the coming weeks.

Other year groups have been set fun challenges. Iníon O'Neill's 1st years have been asked to create a piece of artwork. It must symbolise something positive that the COVID-19 Pandemic experience has taught them. Daltaí are asked to take a photo of the finished piece and submit via email to Iníon O'Neill or Iníon Harte on their school email addresses.

Iníon Mc Cormack's 2nd years have been asked to compose a slogan or a poem with a message of Dóchas (hope) or Dearfachas (positivity) to encourage us through the Covid-19 pandemic. Entries should be emailed to Iníon Mc Cormack or Iníon Harte.

Máistir Hopkins' third years are asked to try to take part in physical activity this week and to upload their picture to the 3rd year Microsoft TEAMS page.

Máistir Mc Cabe's 5th years are being asked to take part in a bake off and to email pictures of their finished creations to him. Prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th year challenges are €20 one4all vouchers. IB are continuing with various challenges as they have been all year. We thought that 6th years had enough to concentrate on so did not set them any additional challenges this week.

5th years have also been asked to put their thinking caps on and submit ideas for whole school challenges that could be used to promote wellbeing among both daltaí and múinteoirí in the school. The person with the most suitable idea will also be given a €20 one4all voucher.

Normally we hold an options night for 3rd years and IB at this time of year. This year this will have to be done virtually. Options night will start with an information session on IB, leaving certificate and leaving certificate applied. It will then follow with a video input on all option subjects offered here in the Coláiste explaining what each subject involves, how each subject is assessed and also the careers that this subject can lead into.

In a normal year our incoming 1st year entrance exam would be held tomorrow. We intend to hold our entrance exam on the first Saturday after the school reopens. We have 35 general classrooms here in the school so daltaí will be safely socially distanced taking this exam. When this is complete, we will hold a virtual options night for incoming 1st years and their parents explaining about the school generally and subject choices.

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us via email on colaistenahinse@lmetb.ie.

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Eilís Flood