



# JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

OLD CONNA, FERNDALE ROAD, RATHMICHAEL, CO. DUBLIN.  
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1<sup>st</sup> October, 2017

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

I hope you and yours have settled back into the routine of school. We are delighted to see all of our students again. Here are some notices that may be of interest:

## **Philosophy Themes**

To stimulate young minds some of the themes for the past few weeks have been:

How can I be courageous?  
Why Pause?  
What is True?

The aim of the weekly themes is to promote curiosity, critical thinking and kindness.

## **School Closed for New Junior Cycle Planning Day- Friday October 13**

The Department of Education has sanctioned 3 planning days when schools will close to enable teachers to receive professional development on the teaching and learning principles behind the new Junior Cycle.

One of these days was originally scheduled for Friday Nov 24<sup>th</sup>. However based on the availability of the Department of Education agency that provide the training, this date has now been changed to Friday Oct 13<sup>th</sup> and there will be no school for students on Friday Oct 13<sup>th</sup>.

We believe that such days really help in raising the standards of learning and teaching in the school and we thank you in advance for your co-operation and support with this.

## **Open Day**

You and your families and friends are cordially invited to our Open Days at Old Conna where you will get the opportunity to see our beautiful new campus and see the school in action.

The Open Days will take place on

**Thursday Oct 5<sup>th</sup>, 11.00 to 12.30 pm**

and

**Sunday Oct 8<sup>th</sup>, 11.00 to 12.30 pm**

During the visit, you will meet our outstanding subject teachers, see different subject displays and activities, receive guided tours of the school facilities by 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students and talk with students about their experiences in John Scottus School. Please visit and get a taste of our school ethos that believes in empowering the greatness within through academic, cultural, social and spiritual development.

Please bring along any friends or family who may be interested in hearing about the education we offer in John Scottus School and share the link promoting the Open Day: [JSS Open Day](#).

### **New Campus**

Our first day of school on Monday August 28<sup>th</sup> was an exciting day and we were blessed with beautiful sunshine as our students arrived in buses and cars. Students and teachers alike have really settled into our new campus: assemblies now take place in the main hall, we now have a new art and science room, over half of the classrooms have new projectors installed and classrooms have been refurbished with new carpets and fresh paint and our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year Academy students have a new study and common room. It is great to see that at lunch-time that many students go outside to eat at our new picnic benches absorbing the fresh air and beautiful environment we are surrounded with. To see some pictures from the first day please click [First Day in Old Conna](#).

### **Phones**

Apologies must be given for the technical glitches in the past few weeks on getting the phone system up and running. There was apparently a random error recurring, which would stop the system working, even when we thought it was working perfectly. We are now confident the system is fully functional. Please note you can contact the school on two numbers:

The original school number: 01 668028 or a second number 01 6908840.

### **UNESCO Youth Summit**

A number of students in 5<sup>th</sup> year, Transition year and 3<sup>rd</sup> year who are participating in a very exciting UNESCO Sustainable Living Project attended a Youth Summit last Saturday Sept 30<sup>th</sup>. This is the first part of a year long project where students will discuss topics related to sustainable living with MEPs and other students, and feed into future European policy.

### **Environmental Education**

Frequently during the week you can see our TY students moving around outside on the grounds in Wellingtons stewarded by Ms McGoldrick. This is part of their Transition Year Environmental Education module, which among other things involves building and managing a raised bed for vegetables and creating an outside meditation centre.

### **Transition Year Update**

Some of the modules Transition Year students have started this year include Website Design, Food Nutrition and Toastmasters Speech making. Their first week also began with a module with Bridge 21 in Trinity College where they worked on projects aiming at developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as innovation, team-work and critical thinking. To see some pictures of TY in action please click:

[TY:Bridge 21](#)  
[TY Goal Setting](#)

### **Sports Update**

The extra-curricular sports schedule has commenced rapidly since the start of the year. Wednesday afternoon soccer and hockey has started with teams entered in soccer and hockey leagues. In addition, lunchtime sports activities in Ultimate Frisbee, athletics and soccer have also started.

### **Leaving Certificate Results**

Congratulations to the class of 2017 who worked extremely hard and achieved excellent results in their Leaving Certificate exams. Well done to all students and teachers who worked hard to achieve these excellent results.

10 out of the 16 students have started level 8 degree course, 2 have gone abroad and 4 have started other third level courses. Their destinations are many and varied, ranging from TCD and UCD to Pulse College, where they are studying a range of courses that include language, science, business, horticulture and film studies.

To read more about what the class of 2017 are doing please click [here](#).

### **Senior Academy**

On Tuesday September 19th Enda O'Doherty came into our school to inspire our students to be motivated to set goals and introduced them to many helpful study skills. The feedback again was extremely positive and it is hoped that insights they heard will stay with them throughout the entire year. As part of the personalised mentoring program in place for our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year Academy students, one-to-one sessions have started with our Senior Cycle Head Mr. Kortenhorst and our Career Guidance counsellor Ms Maguire Timmins. In addition, leadership training has also started with our new Deputy Principal, Ms Franklin and we look forward to our Academy students organising many initiatives throughout the year.

### **After School Study**

Please note that after school study takes place on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 4.00 to 5.45 pm and on Wednesday from 2.00 to 3.40pm. There is no charge for after school study but students must book a place in advance with Mr. Kortenhorst.

### **1<sup>st</sup> years**

Our new 1<sup>st</sup> years have settled in very quickly. As part of their induction to the school, their class teachers Ms Breen and Mr Pender brought them on the cliff walk from Bray to Greystones. To see some pictures of the walk please click [here](#).

### **3<sup>rd</sup> years**

The pace of change of the new Junior Cycle is rapidly increasing but for 3<sup>rd</sup> years facing their new Junior Cycle exam this year, there are two key changes:

- English is the only subject being taught under the new framework and as part of this they will complete classroom based assessment tasks throughout the year and be graded under a new grading system.

- Philosophy is now a recognised short course and will appear with grades in the new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement that students will receive next September

### **Founder's Day trip to Glendalough**

On Friday September 22<sup>nd</sup>, the whole school travelled to Glendalough as a celebration of Founder's Day. Despite the rainy start to the day, our 5 houses: Poseidon, Aphrodite, Zeus, Demeter and Ares, took part in five different walks. To complete the day a whole school game of capture the flag was played.

### **Parent Representatives**

Thank you to the parents who have volunteered to be Parent Reps. There are still one or two outstanding positions, so if you would like to be part of our regular Parent Rep meetings please let me know. The first meeting will take place before mid-term in Old Conna at 7.30pm on Wednesday Oct 18th.

### **Student Enrollment**

We are delighted to see that 132 students have enrolled in John Scottus this year. Last May there were 125 student, so it is great to see so many families support the move of John Scottus Secondary school to our new location in Old Conna. It is a location that now provides the space and environment to further refine the excellent education on offer in John Scottus.

### **Consent for taking pictures**

During the course of the year the school will be taking pictures of students during various educational, sports and extra-curricular activities. These pictures are used to promote the school and support student learning activities through the school website, school newsletters and school publications. If you do not give your consent to this, could you please contact the office at [secondary@johnscottus.ie](mailto:secondary@johnscottus.ie).

### **Summary of Events coming up**

Open Day, Thursday Oct 5<sup>th</sup>, 11 to 12.30pm and Sunday Oct 8<sup>th</sup>, 11 to 12.30pm  
School Closed for Junior Cycle Professional Development: Friday Oct 13<sup>th</sup>  
Numeracy Week: Oct 16<sup>th</sup> to Oct 20<sup>st</sup>  
Start of year service: Friday Oct 20<sup>th</sup>  
Midterm Break: Monday Oct 30<sup>st</sup> to Friday Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>

### **A philosophical thought for the day**

"Concentration is the secret of strength in war, in trade; in short, in all the management of human affairs" – Emerson

Yours warmly,



Dr. Declan Kelly

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