



# JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

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30<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

As we come to the end of a very different academic year due to Covid 19, I will take this opportunity to summarise some of the events of the year and to outline some of the plans for next year.

But first I must praise the fantastic work of our students and teachers who have very flexibly and quickly adapted to distance learning in the past few months. The manner in which learning has continued in such a vibrant and dynamic manner really is incredible.

### ***Planning for next year***

Planning for a normal 20/21 academic year is taking place at the moment. At the same time, a physical distancing contingency planning for a return to school where physical distancing is a requirement is also taking place alongside this. It will not be until later in the summer that some of these decisions can take place, but we will endeavour to let you know as soon as we can of any changes that may be necessary.

Some aspects of physical distancing contingency planning include: scheduling of classes, room allocations, the role of technology, movement of students, assemblies, lunch, transport, and hygiene.

The main point to emphasise is that learning and teaching will proceed regardless of whether it is face-to-face, distance learning, or a blended combination of both.

If you have any ideas to help us with advance planning of potential social distancing requirements, please let us know. Your insight and creativity to help us plan for these unprecedented times may be invaluable.

### **ICT Devices**

To participate fully in online learning there is a need for students to have suitable ICT equipment. It would greatly help if parents could ensure that their children have the appropriate technology to participate in classes. This device should enable them to attend classes remotely, work on assessments comfortably, submit work and receive appropriate feedback.

### **Transport Credit for school year 19/20**

The Board of Management has made the decision to reimburse parents for transport fees paid for bus transport during the period where distance learning was in operation. If you have paid such transport fees, you will be refunded on a pro-rata basis for the number of school days since March 13<sup>th</sup>. This will appear as a credit note in your statement or for 6<sup>th</sup> years leaving the school a refund will be given.

## **Transport Services for next academic year 2020/2021**

We are currently compiling your preferred modes of transport to travel to school for next year. Thank you for the many people who have got back to us. If you have not done so already, please contact the office. This information is essential in the planning of transport requirements particularly in the event of physical distancing being required.

Just a reminder that the services on offer are:

- City Centre (N11) . They will bring students from the city centre to school for the start of the school day and will depart at the end of the school day.
- Shuttle buses to and from the DART (Shankill stop) and LUAS (Brides Glen stop) at start and end of normal school days.
- For students who engage in after school activities, there will be shuttle buses to and from the DART (Shankill stop), LUAS (Brides Glen stop) and Shankill.

Please note for a normal school year next year, the fees payable will be same as this year.

## ***Academics***

### **Summer Assessments**

Summer assessments have taken place for all years and students will have received feedback directly from their teachers on learning to date. All reports will be accessible using our VS Ware student administration system. With the username and password provided to you, you should be able to log in and see all results. If you have any issues accessing the system, please contact our office at [secondary@johnscottus.ie](mailto:secondary@johnscottus.ie). An email will be sent to you when progress reports on learning will be available for viewing.

### **Transition Year**

Transition Year students have had many highlights during the year. These include the trip to Nepal ([here](#)), Gaisce Challenge ([here](#)), Young Environmentalist Awards ([here](#)) European Food Day, Model Council of Europe Debate, Junk Kouture, Volleyball Coaching and numerous out-door adventures. Well done to all involved, particular thanks must be given to our Transition Year coordinator Mr Telford.

### **Graduating 6<sup>th</sup> Years**

We wish our graduating class of 6<sup>th</sup> year best wishes in their future studies. It really has been an unsettling time for them all, with this happening at this particular point in their studies. At the moment, teachers are working through the Calculated Grades process and students are expected to be receiving offers for courses around the same time as other years (that is in mid-August). We thank them all for their resilience at this time and we wish that they each get offered places in their preferred college courses. We look forward to having a proper farewell for them when we are all able to reconvene next year.

## ***Extra-Curricular***

### **Extra-curricular clubs and activities**

An extensive range of extra-curricular activities were organised during the year by various teachers. The clubs included: Soccer, Basketball, Golf, Sailing, Hiking, Frisbee, Yoga, Green Schools, Chess, Choir, Socrates, School Magazine, Art, Film, Coding and Gardening. We were delighted to see great interest among students in the various clubs on offer.

### **Theme weeks**

There have been many theme weeks during the year focusing on particular aspects of academic, personal and social development. These have included:

Science Week (click [here](#))

Literacy Week and Speech competition (click [here](#))

Philosophy Week (click [here](#))

Maths week

Thank you to all the respective teachers for organising these weeks and the many students who engaged in the various activities.

### **School Events**

There have been many other school events during the year including the Wellbeing trip to India ([here](#)), theme weeks, parent meetings, Founders day, Open Days, Annual Church service, Halloween Dress up and Christmas Carol Service. There are many posts on the website illustrating these events and I hope you get the chance to read some of them.

### **Physical Education and Sports**

Mr. Pender and Ms. Sweeny have led a very superb Sports and PE program during the course of the year. The Ultimate Frisbee Teams were very competitive winning numerous matches. Of particular note was our Junior team playing their first ever basketball game, see [here](#). Some links to sports event during the year can be found [here](#) and [here](#). Thanks to many challenges posted each week by Mr. Pender and Ms. Sweeny, we hope that all have been keeping fit and active.

### **Daily Management of School**

The daily management of the school involves a variety of activities from refining the ethos of the school to improving the way learning and teaching takes place in every respect. To help manage all these activities we have a Senior Management team in place that comprised of Ms. Franklin, Mr. Kortenhorst, Mr. Telford, Ms. Swan and myself. Ms Creaney also contributed enormously, managing our learning support provision. In addition we have our Premises Manager and Bursar Ms. Madden who looks after finance, transport, catering and buildings maintenance. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Senior Management Team for all their hard work, enthusiasm and creativity when dealing with the many issues that have arisen.

### **Communications**

We endeavour to ensure there is good communication with the school community using parent meetings, the website, parent newsletters, class representative meetings, Board of Management meetings and staff meetings. Your input is greatly appreciated and we greatly encourage parents to participate in the various structures in place.

**Administration and support staff**

We are very fortunate to have great support staff in Ms. Telford and Ms. Griffin as administrative support, Mr. Farren as grounds man, Mr Mc Guirk as driver and Ms. Salmon in cleaning. A special thanks must also be given to the Catering team of Grainne, Tracy and Caroline for their creativity in producing tasty food. Thank you

**Summary of Events coming up**

Start of school – Monday August 31<sup>st</sup>

Start of year meeting with Principal and Class Teachers- Thursday September 3rd

Founders Day – Friday September 18<sup>th</sup>

Please note many of the dates of calendar may be subject to change if physical distancing is a requirement. If there are changes we will let you know as soon as possible.

**A philosophical thought for the day**

“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail”  
– Emerson

There is a huge team effort involved in running a school and huge thanks must be given to all teachers and support staff for their daily commitment to the welfare of our students. I cannot thank them enough. Of course none of this would be possible without your children. Thank you parents for your dedication to our school community in choosing us to educate your children.

I hope you and yours have a safe and restful summer delighting in the present and we look forward to seeing you again in August.

Yours warmly,



Dr. Declan Kelly

Principal

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