

September 2019

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school to all our pupils, parents and staff! As we look forward to a great year ahead, we extend a special 'Céad Míle Fáilte' to our new pupils as they settle into life in St. Helen's SNS. We hope that this school year will be great one for all of us! I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some updates and reminders which may be helpful as we settle into the new school routine.

- **Opening time and punctuality:** A reminder that school opens each morning at 8.45 a.m. No responsibility is taken for children arriving before this time. Teaching begins at 9.00 a.m. and pupils should be seated in their classrooms by then.
- **Absenteeism:** When a pupil has been absent, a note explaining the reason for the absence must be brought in to school. Please remember that - by law - children absent for twenty days or more must be reported to TUSLA. Pupils arriving after roll call (9.40 a.m.) must be marked absent. Medical appointments etc should be made outside of school hours whenever possible.
- **Mobile Phones:** Mobile phones and other electronic gadgets are not permitted in school. In the case of mobile phones exceptions may be made on receipt of a written request from parents. Pupils who are given permission to have their phones in school must keep the phone **switched off** and in their school bags until they leave the school premises. The school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to these phones.
- **Allergies:** Please note that we have a large number of children with nut allergies, and for this reason our school is a **NUT FREE ZONE**. Please continue to encourage healthy lunches – no crisps, fizzy drinks or chewing gum.
- **We ask that parents do not drive cars up the driveway to the school.** It is essential for the safety of children attending both schools that we all cooperate with these requests. Please make sure your cars are legally parked when near the school. We would ask parents to refrain from parking cars on double yellow lines or blocking driveways etc. when dropping or collecting children.
- **Contact details:** I am attaching a form with the current contact details for your child. Please check that they are correct and add the alternate contact details. Please nominate a "text a parent mobile number". It is vital that we have up to date, emergency contact details for every child and if these details change during the year, please let us know.
- **A Huge thank you to all parents** involved in the setting up of our new Book Rental System. We need everybody's co-operation in taking excellent care of the books so that they can be passed on next year.
- **Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment:** St. Helen's SNS Board of Management recently ratified our Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment following a comprehensive review in compliance with the Children First Act 2015 and Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary schools. I would like to thank all involved in the consultation process including staff, parents and the Board of Management. The Child

Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment are now published on our school's website [www.helens.ie](http://www.helens.ie) and are accessible to view on the wall to the right of our school entrance.

- **Replacement of Windows:** This project was due to be completed over the summer, however due to delays outside of our control work has only commenced in the last two weeks. It is difficult to say how long the project will take to complete but we are happy that it is progressing well with very little disruption to our classes.
- **Headlice:** Please be vigilant with regard to head lice. Children's hair should be checked frequently. Once a parent informs us that they have spotted headlice in their child's hair, a note or text goes out to all the parents of children in that class to inform them of the problem. We ask that parents make every effort to avoid, detect and treat head lice by taking appropriate steps if necessary.
- Our school calendar can be accessed on our website [www.helens.ie](http://www.helens.ie) under parents/school closures.
- After school activities available at present are listed below. There is a waiting list for the Scratch club. If interested in any activity, ask your child to speak to the relevant teacher for details.

Day	Activity	Teacher	Time
Monday	Homework Club	Mr O'Riordan	2:30-3:30
	Advanced Guitar	Mr Feehan	2:30-3:15
	Scratch (4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> only)	Ms Tuite	2:30-3:30
Tuesday	Homework Club	Mr O'Riordan	2:30-3:30
	Beginners Guitar	Mr Feehan	2:30-3:15
	German Club	Ms Brooks	2:30-3:30
	Art Club	Ms Ward	2:30-3:30
Thursday	Homework Club	Mr O'Riordan	2:30-3:30
	Fitness for Fun	Ms Lawless, Ms Glover	2:30-3:45
	Scratch (4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> only)	Ms Tuite	2:30-3:30
	Beginners Guitar	Mr Feehan	2:30-3:15

Finally, some dates for the calendar:

- Cross Country – takes place 9<sup>th</sup> October after school
- Parent Teacher meetings – take place Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October after school
- Sponsored Walk – takes place week of 23<sup>rd</sup> September, this is weather dependant to we will choose the exact day during that week. We will write out separately about this.

Wishing our whole school community a happy and healthy new school year ahead!



Gwyn Bhreathnach