



Newsletter November 2021

Change of School Start Time

We have been monitoring the start times over a number of weeks before the mid-term break, and the vast majority of children, in all classes, are in school by 9.10am. The level of supervision required at gates, at all doors into the school, and on all corridors every morning is no longer justified for the small numbers arriving between 9.10am and 9.20am. For this reason, we ask that from next Monday, 8th November, all children should be in school by 9.10am. Formal teaching will commence at that time in all classes. **From next Monday, 8th November, all children should arrive from 8.50am – 9.10am.**

Yellow Day for Rebecca

Thursday 21st October was an incredibly moving day in Scoil Mochua. Children and staff throughout the school were decked out in yellow, Rebecca's favourite colour. Lots of parents also donned yellow for the school drop off. We sent as much love as we possibly could to Rebecca that day. Her own 6th class were overjoyed when she arrived outside the school as they were running their Couch-to-5K. She spent a few minutes with her friends before her mum brought her home again.

Thanks to your incredible generosity, we raised a whopping **€7, 705**. This amount will go a long way to help Rebecca and her family. What a wonderful, supportive school community we are part of. Many thanks to each one of you. We wish Rebecca all the best, and we look forward to welcoming her back to school before too long.

Enrolment

Enrolment for Junior Infants for September 2022 will take place over a 3-week period, from 10th January 2022 – 28th January 2022. Application forms will be available on our website soon. During the 3-week window above, completed Application Forms can be posted to the school, they can be hand delivered to the dedicated post-box at the main entrance to the school, or they can be emailed to enrolment22@scoilmochua.com. Full details are on our website [here](#). Please spread the word.

Absenteeism

Non-Covid Related Absences

If your child is absent from school, please send a note to the class teacher on his / her return to school, noting the reason for the absence. For Senior Infants – 6th class, the absence notes are in the back of the homework journal. As Junior Infants do not have a journal, please email the teacher on your child's return, stating the reason for the absence. All absences are recorded on our administration system, and the reasons for the absence are also recorded. (There are particularly important when the number of absences surpass 20 days). Roll call is taken at 10am every morning. Any child not in attendance at that time will be marked absent. If your child has a morning appointment, and will be arriving to school after 10am, please inform the class teacher in advance.

Covid-related Absences

Covid-related absences are dealt with in a slightly different manner. Please alert the class teacher, via email, as soon as possible if your child's absence is covid-related, i.e. your child has Covid symptoms and is awaiting medical advice / a Covid test, your child is a close contact of a confirmed case and has been advised by Public Health to restrict movement, or your child tests positive for Covid. This will allow the teacher to mark the absence as Covid-related on our system.

The school is obliged to report all absences of over 20 school days to Tusla. This is automatically generated by the online system. Covid-related absences are NOT included in the 20 days.

Return to School Declaration Form

Part of our Covid prevention measures in school is the Return to School Form. We acknowledge that this is yet another thing that busy parents have to remember to do in advance of their child returning to school after an absence. However, it is part of a suite of measures that have helped, to date, to keep the school community safe. Please submit this form after every short absence from school. This is in addition to the note in the journal or email explaining the absence. The link to the Return to School Form is on our website <http://www.scoilmochua.com/return-to-school-declaration-forms.html>.

Covid

As you are well aware from the media, there is currently no contact tracing in school when a positive case arises. However, we feel it is important to keep you updated should there be a case in your child's class. This is not to alarm people, rather it allows you to be extra vigilant to any symptoms your child might develop. Symptom-free children should continue to attend school. We need your permission to inform the parents in your child's class (obviously no names will be shared) and we would appreciate your support with this. In short, please inform us if your child tests positive, and we will ask for permission to inform the rest of the class of the confirmed case.

Homeless Street Café

A parent in our school, Denise Carroll, runs the Homeless Street Café. Denise and a team of helpers provide much needed hot meals, clothes and other essential supplies to many less fortunate people on the streets of Dublin.

We know that the children had a great time Trick or Treating at Halloween, and we have heard of large bags of treats stashed away at home! If you have surplus treats, or perhaps some that your child is not too fond of, please send them to school in a bag, and we will collect them for the Homeless Street Café. Many thanks for your support in this matter.

Code of Behaviour Review

We have completed our annual review of the Code of Behaviour. All staff were involved in this review, as were the outgoing Parents' Association. We will be dedicating a night or two of

homework next week to the Code of Behaviour. We will highlight the part of the policy that we would like you to read and discuss with your child. We will also spend time on it in class. We will facilitate you to submit any comments or feedback that you might have, and this feedback will be taken into account for the next review of the policy. We believe that a successful Code of Behaviour is one that is discussed, understood and consistently applied. Discussing the policy at home, in an age appropriate way, with your child/children, while we also discuss it in school, ensures a consistent home-school approach to a vitally important aspect of school life.

We will issue further details on this important homework next week.

School Life

We had a busy, happy September and October in school. Many classes enjoyed Basketball with our coach, David Donnelly, and GAA coaching with the club PRO Jonathan Daniels. The 5th class children are making great strides with their weekly Cycle Safety lessons. All classes are participating in lots of outdoor PE lessons and games. The junior yards were looking lovely for a few weeks with wonderful chalk art creations, with almost as much art on the uniforms as the ground!! Our 3rd and 4th class children are busy learning about the school garden with Tom, the gardener, and they are in the process of filling their class planters with vegetables, herbs, trees and more. Our wonderful Junior Infants have settled happily into life in big school and we couldn't imagine the place without them! The 6th class children have started learning the ukulele and we are very much looking forward to some performances in the not too distant future. The 5th and 6th classes have completed their Couch-to-5K, which involved regular training and lots of dedication. Well done to all of them, and to the teachers who ran with them. We are very proud of their efforts. Many classes have engaged in science projects, proudly presenting windmills to their peers and explaining the problems they encountered and solved along the way. We invested in a new set of netbooks and a charging trolley for the 3rd and 4th classes, and they are enjoying learning new digital skills. All classes are engaging in our new positive psychology programme, Weaving Wellbeing. They are learning crucial life skills such as resilience, gratitude, teamwork and bravery. Throughout the school we have talented and enthusiastic artists, writers, readers, engineers, gardeners, athletes, problem solvers and happy, enthusiastic learners. Despite Covid, Scoil Mochua remains a vibrant, happy learning environment, and the sound of laughter is a common sound throughout the school. A recent supervisor from one of the universities was visiting a student teacher, and she complimented us on the exemplary behaviour of the children. I was happy to report that this is the norm throughout the school.

We are looking forward to the next 7 weeks, and the fun and festivities that lie ahead.

French Language Classes

We are delighted to announce that the school will be participating in a six-week French language sampler course this term. This initiative is funded by the Department of Education and facilitated by Post-Primary Languages Ireland. The course is aimed at generating an interest in, and awareness of, other languages. The classes will be delivered by one of our class teachers who has an expertise in the language.

Parents' Association (PA)

Many thanks to our outgoing PA Chairperson Maria Pollock for her fantastic work and positive attitude over the last few years. Thanks also to the team of PA members who have completed their term. We are so appreciative of all that they have done to make our school the wonderful place that it is.

We are delighted that so many parents have come forward to join the new PA. A very warm welcome to our new Chairperson, Sara El Hashim. I look forward to working closely with Sara and the new team on all the lovely extras that they provide for the children. They certainly got off to a flying start with the super Halloween display which was greeted with shrieks of delight and joy as class after class came to see it. The PA are also organising the much-loved Christmas cards, which is always a great fund-raiser for the school.

Many thanks to the PA for all that they do to support us.

Book Fair

Our much-loved Book Fair, a week where we promote reading, will take place in the same online format as last year, on the week of the 15th November. We are very excited about it and know the children will love it. Further details to follow soon – but keep that free for lots of reading! There will be opportunities for parents to stock up on lovely Christmas presents.

Updates

Please keep an eye on our school website, www.scoilmochnua.com, for updates, and follow us on Twitter @ScoilMochua. Our PA also have an active Facebook page.