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St Louis G.N.S.

Newsletter

Term 1 2014/2015

We welcome everyone to the 2014/2015 school year. Ba mhaith liom fáilte a chur romhaibh agus muidne ag filleadh ar an scoil.

A very special welcome to the 45 new girls in second class and the other ten new girls who have joined us in other classes. We hope you will be very happy in our school and that you will enjoy learning, making friends and growing up with us.

After a particularly hot and sunny summer, we are thankful for the time we have had to relax, have fun and enjoy the freedom of the holidays.

*To stay in touch with our news, events and activities, log onto the **school's website at www.stlouisgns.ie**. The website is updated on a weekly basis by the Deputy Principal, Mrs Farrell.*

School Activities

*In our Physical Education Programme, the children take part in the five strands of the curriculum. They are games, athletics, dance, outdoor activities and swimming. Each class has 6 weeks of swimming lessons in one school year. Each lesson costs €3-50 and this is a compulsory part of the curriculum. The money for the lesson is collected each week by the class teacher. Please encourage your child to attend her swimming lessons as it is very important for children to learn how to swim while still young. Please do not ask for your child to be excluded from swimming except in exceptional circumstances. Your child's class teacher will inform her which day will be PE day for this year. On PE day, the children wear their tracksuits and ordinary runners. **Please note that converse runners are not allowed.***

Homework

*Homework is very important to progress learning and to link home and school. Always take the time to help your child with her learning homework especially her tables, spellings, reading and learning off. As well as hearing your child's reading, try to take the time to read to her or with her every evening. The **Homework Club** runs each week from Monday to Thursday and is a great opportunity for your child to get her homework done early and to get assistance from the supervising teacher if needed. If you would like more information, call Mrs Gallagher on 086-8128946.*

Clubs

*The **Friday Fun Club** promotes the development of social skills and self-confidence in a fun and relaxed atmosphere through a wide range of activities. The information is attached and if you would like further information, please contact Mrs Flynn or Miss O'Reilly.*

*We regret to announce that we will be unable to run the **Breakfast Club** this year due to having reached the end of the Peace Three funding. If funding becomes available again, we will inform you immediately.*

*The **Be Active Club** for second class students will begin on **Monday October 6th from 3-4pm**. This is a free activity for our second classes. Information will be sent out a week in advance and we will be relying on assistance from parents to help us to run this special activity successfully. Please consider helping us if you can.*

*Details of the **Rainbows Programme** are attached. If you feel your child would benefit from participation in it, simply fill in the attached form and return it to the school office in a sealed envelope. The Rainbows Programme is a completely confidential service for the children who participate in it.*

***Basketball** for fifth and sixth class students will continue in October courtesy of the staff and pupils of St. Louis Secondary School. Dates will be sent out closer to the time.*

A new **Student Council** will be formed by the end of September. We would like to say a very sincere thank you to the outgoing council who took part in a variety of projects over the past two years and did a wonderful job. The members were: Aine Mc Elwain, Arpitha Muthalagu, Aimee Mc Carron, Sarah Douglas, Anna Mallen and Natalia Badawika.

Guided Reading and Lift Off to Literacy will take place using the **Station Teaching method** with second and third class this school year. Information sheets will be sent to the parents in these classes and a meeting will be held to explain the process. Over €3,000 of Parents' Association funds went towards resources for this programme at the end of last year so we look forward to its success. We are very grateful to the Parents' Association for this funding.

We are very pleased that Miss Úna O' Reilly is undergoing training for the **Reading Recovery Programme** this year. This reading initiative is an evidence based programme which greatly improves standards of literacy, particularly in reading ability.

Some Important School Rules

Please remember that each student should arrive at school each morning before 9-00a.m. The security door will close at 9-10a.m. each morning and from that time on, pupils will have to ring the bell to get in. Being late really disrupts the teaching and learning in the classrooms so please try to be on time. Supervision takes place in the PE hall each day from **8-35a.m. to 8-50a.m.** supervised by a member of staff on a rotational basis. The children walk to their classrooms at 8-50a.m. where they are met by their teacher. If your child arrives before 8.35am or is left after 3pm the school is not responsible for them under the terms of our insurance policy.

We are very proud that the children's attendance records have continued to improve. We will continue to present Awards Certificates each June to ensure excellent attendance. We ask you not to take your child on holidays during the school year as this is seriously disruptive to their learning.

If your child is absent from school, please send in a note to her teacher on her return or give the school office a quick call to explain the absence. This is very important as we record each absence on our student management system. Children who miss 20 days or more will be reported to the National Educational Welfare Board. You will be informed when this is necessary and asked to attend a meeting.

If you have a query or concern about your child or any aspect of her learning, please make an appointment to meet with her class teacher to discuss the issue. Please remember that the principal only becomes involved if issues remain unresolved. Your child's class teacher together with our Learning Support and Language teachers work with your child every day and are best placed to discuss her with you. If at all possible, please avoid dropping into see the teacher in the morning as class is starting, as this first stage of the day is a very important one for the children's learning. It is important to remember that September is a settling in month which your child will adjust to in her own time as she gets to know her teacher and her teacher gets to know her. However, if you are concerned about any aspect of her schooling, you are more than welcome to make an appointment to meet with us.

It is important that you remember the terms of our **Mobile Phones Policy**. We would ask you not to send a mobile to school with your daughter unless you feel that it is absolutely necessary. The students are not allowed to have their phones during the day. Each phone is handed to the teacher first thing in the morning. They are stored securely during the day and returned before the students go home at 2-45pm. If it is necessary for your daughter to take her phone to school, you must write a note to her teacher informing her that she will have a phone with her this year. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to have a phone in her possession during the school day or to send messages, make calls, go online, access social media sites or take photographs or recordings. Students are not allowed to have their phones switched on during morning supervision or before they leave the school grounds at 2-45pm.

Any form of bullying in the school will be taken very seriously and dealt with according to the School's Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy. Cyber bullying will be dealt with in the same way. Advice and assistance will be sought from the Home School Liaison Officer and Monaghan Garda Station. An Anti-Bullying Report will be made to each Board of Management Meeting from this September.

Administration of Medication

We are unable to administer any kind of medication without the written consent of parents. If it is necessary for your child to take medication for a short period, you must come into the school office to sign written permission. If your child is in need of long-term medication, there is an application process to the Board of Management which we will be happy to explain to you.

Child Protection Guidelines

St. Louis Girls' School has adopted the Child Protection Guidelines for Primary and Post Primary Schools for schools according to the Department of Education and Skills. All members of staff have received instructions to report any form of abuse to the Designated Liaison Person. The DLP in the school is the principal, Mrs Anna Mai Rooney and in her absence, Mrs Bernie Farrell, the deputy principal, takes on the role of DLP.

Parents' Association AGM

This will take place on **Wednesday, 24th September at 8pm** in St. Louis GNS. An agenda and more details will follow later.

Recycling

We will have a clothes recycling collection on the **30th of September**. Please bring in your clothes and shoes in black plastic bags and there will be collected point at the front of the school.

Parent Workshop

A range of parent workshops will be available to the school in the coming terms. They will be hosted by Mr. David Mc Cague Family School Liaison Officer. These workshops will look at;

- Anti-Bullying
- Cultural Diversity
- Importance of Parental Involvement in school going children

Details will follow shortly

School Self-Evaluation

A Self-Evaluation Report was presented to the BOM and the Parents' Association on Tuesday, June 24th. The following is a summary of the report:

St. Louis GNS has strengths in the following

- Pastoral Care
- Collegiality and Relationship
- Staff Collaboration
- Dedication to the highest possible quality of teaching and learning
- Significant Improvement in Maths and Spelling results
- Increased awareness and involvement in Active events following the attainment of the Active Flag
- On-going development of the Green Flag Initiative following the attainment of the Energy and Recycling Flags

The following areas are prioritised for improvement

- Oral Language
- Problem Solving in Maths

The School has examined the Legislative and Regulatory Requirements and are pleased to state that we are compliant with all of the requirements while a review is planned for the RSE Policy and the Attendance and Participation Strategy

Text-a-parent

Our **text-a-parent** service will be in use shortly again. For those of you who are second class parents and new parents to the school, we are asking your permission to use your mobile phone number which has already been supplied to the school for the service. It is a system which enables the school to send messages directly to parents' mobile phones informing them of upcoming events, changes in plans or school emergencies. There is no reply facility to this service. It is simply for information only. It has provide to be an invaluable means of communication between the school and you as parents. If you have any questions about this service, please feel free to contact us. If you have any concern about your number being included in this service, please let us know. Please always inform us immediately if you change your telephone or address details.

Coláiste na bhFiann

Coláiste na bhFiann holds their weekly Gaeilge classes in the school hall from 5pm for children of primary school age and there is a later class for older children. Please drop into meet with the leader on Wednesday evening if you would like your daughter to take part in this class. Classes will resume in the school hall this **Wednesday 17th September 2014**

Pupil Personal Accident Insurance

Please consider purchasing the Pupil Personal Accident Insurance for your daughter. Cover is provided in the form of a series of benefits, including medical and dental expenses provided they are not recoverable from any other source. This insurance can be claimed as a result of non-culpable accidents. You can choose a premium of **€9** per annum for 24 hour cover or **€6** per annum for school activities only. It is important to point out that this insurance is entirely optional, but it gives you the opportunity to claim for accidents which happen to your child whether during school hours or for the entire day. If you would like further information, it can be found online at www.allianz.ie/schools. Please fill up the attached application form if you wish to avail of this service and send the form and the correct amount of money into the school in an envelope by Friday 26th September.

St. Mary's BNS and St. Louis Infant School

Both of these schools, together with our own will continue to work as a community of schools. Sharing resources, policies, play areas and equipment, and special celebration days and events into the future. The principals meet monthly to further this valuable link and to enable the strengths of each school to benefit all three.

Talented Youth Ireland

The Centre for Talented Youth in Ireland, situated in Dublin City University, provides specialised courses for young people with exceptional academic ability in verbal, numerical or abstract reasoning. Children must have a certain level of ability to participate in these courses. For more information, see the Parents' Notice Board at the main door or go online to www.dcu.ie/ctyi. The nearest assessments take place in Letterkenny in November.

INTO - Room to Bloom

The Irish National Teachers' Organisation are planning a pre budget campaign to insure no increase in class sizes in the forthcoming budget. We will be assisting them with this project in our school. More details later.

School Holidays and Important Dates

Friday, October 24th School Closing for Midterm

Monday, November 3rd School Re-opening

Thursday, November 27th Parent Teacher Meeting

from 3 to 6 pm

Friday, December 19th School Closing for

Christmas Holidays

Monday, January 5th School Re-opening

Thursday & Friday, February 19th & 20th Midterm Break

Thursday, 5th March First Confession

Tuesday, March 17th School Closed for St. Patrick's Day

Friday, March 27th School Closing for Easter Holidays

Monday, April 13th School Re-opening after

Easter Holiday

Saturday, 2nd May First Communion

Monday, May 4th School Closed for May Bank Holiday

Tuesday, May 5th School Closed

Monday, June 1st School Closed for June Bank Holiday

Friday, June 26th School Closing for Summer Holidays

Staffing Schedule

Principal: Mrs Rooney

Rang II: Ms. Brady & Ms. O' Reilly

Rang III: Mrs A Mc Kenna & Mrs Treanor

Rang IV: Mrs Treanor & Mrs T Mc Kenna

Rang V: Mrs Mc Geown & Mrs Toal

Rang VI: Mrs Coyle & Mrs Farrell

Learning Support/Resource/Language: Mrs Gallagher,

Mrs Flynn, Mrs Healy,

Mrs Gilliland & Mrs Hannon

SNA's : Mrs Dowd & Mrs Dunlop

Secretary: Ms. Mullen

Caretaker: Mr Fanning