



ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

BALLINAMUCK

CO. LONGFORD

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22nd February 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians

It is very welcome news that on return of the children after the mid-term break COVID restrictions will be removed within our school. What this means in principle is that as and from the 28th February, children from 3rd to 6th class will no longer be required to wear face coverings. Furthermore, pod systems will be abandoned in schools giving children more freedom and allowing for more collaborative/cooperative learning, something which the children have missed out on over the last number of years. Our GP hall will be made available for the first time for whole class groups which will be fantastic for physical education and drama activities. Good ventilation and hand sanitising practices will continue to be promoted and remain part of the day to day running of our school.

On Friday, 11th February, the school had an **incidental inspection** by an inspector from the Department of Education. Two classrooms were observed and feedback was given to the class teachers. Later in the day, the inspector sat with the principal and deputy principal where an advisory session took place. The inspector commented on the good practices in relation to teaching and learning observed in the school. We will continue to work together as a staff and embrace change to promote best practices in relation to teaching and learning for the betterment of all our children.

The children in our sacrament classes have been busy preparing for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Thank you to Fr. Hogan for the lovely enrolment ceremonies over the past number of weeks held in our school hall and also for coordinating the partaking of children and parents in the weekly masses held in St. Patrick's church. Mass on Sundays in Ballinamuck is at 9.30am.

We are in the process of working towards a **Well-Being Health Promotion Framework** which is required in every school by 2025. We will be asking you to complete a questionnaire in the coming weeks. This will help inform our planning and forms a crucial part of the School Self Evaluation Process. We will also be asking for your input over the coming weeks as we review both our Anti-Bullying and Child Protection Policies.

Cumman na Mbunscoil will begin after the mid-term break. This is an exciting time for children from 3rd to 6th class as they get the opportunity to take part in cooperative games whilst also representing their school in a mixed team event. Further details and information regarding fixtures will be communicated to the children and yourselves in the coming days. Active School Week will be held from 3-6th May. Emphasis will be placed on health promotion and the value of exercise and physical activity in our lives.

Scór Longford will be working in conjunction with Ms. Mulligan and children from 5th & 6th class to put together a local representation to take part in the Recitation competition which will be held on the 18th March 2022. Further details will be communicated to you and the children after the mid-term break.

The Parents Association have advised us that their new chairperson is Aisling McLoughlin and the post of secretary is being filled by Aisling Donnelly.

Is mise le meas,

Damien McIntyre
School Principal

A few dates to note are as follows;

- Mid-term break – Thursday 24th & Friday 25th February 2022
- March – Thursday 17th & Friday 18th – public holidays
- Easter Egg Hunt for Infants children – Friday 8th April
- Easter Break – Monday 11th of April to Friday 22nd April 2022
- Confirmation Ceremony - Saturday 30th April – 11am
- First Holy Communion – Saturday 7th May - 11am
- On account of the new public holiday introduced for Friday 18th March, our end of year school closure is now **Tuesday 21st June 2022 at 12pm**