

# First Year Newsletter

OCTOBER 2022

## YEAR HEAD WELCOME

Welcome to our First Year newsletter for parents. The students have settled into St. Caimin's Community School and are embracing their new life in Secondary School. We captured some images of the student's first day at school and they are available [at the following link](#)



They have adapted to their new school environment with ease and are working really well in all their new subjects.

First Year is a busy year, settling in and embracing all the new subjects.

A reminder to parents that:

1. Absent notes need to be uploaded on VSware so that they can be authorised by us.
2. If a student is leaving for an appointment or returning to school from an appointment, they need to sign-out and sign-in at reception. It should also be recorded by the parent on VSware.
3. All behaviour issues are now recorded on VSware -parents/guardians should check this feature regularly to keep track of how their child is doing.

On return from the October Mid Term break, students need to get into a good routine of completing all homework and learning and studying their subjects each night in preparation for their upcoming exams at Christmas.



## A NEW START – BY GEMMA & HANNAH

Our time in St Caimin's has been great. All the teachers and staff are nice. Our Year Head is Ms. Dalton. She has been helpful and very patient with us. Mrs. Dalton is one of the people who can help if you're struggling with your timetable or if you are feeling ill, she'll answer all your questions. We've really enjoyed changing classes and finding the day goes by faster!

Talking to many of the people we have met over the last few weeks, we have all said that having the responsibility to get to class on time with the right equipment makes us feel more mature. We all feel that changing classrooms and teachers every forty minutes (unless it's a double class) makes the class more enjoyable as it's only for a short period of time. The canteen is huge and is a hive of activity at break times, you can buy hot lunches if you want but in our opinion the donuts are to die for! We have recently discovered that there are many different types of activities and clubs during lunch, if you're interested in any of them you can go to the room that is holding the activities as Mr. Cunningham is a great source of information.

Overall, we are having a great time at St. Caimin's and we can't wait to get up to more mischief with all our new friends!

## HOMEWORK

In terms of Homework, we expect that there is a genuine attempt made by the student to complete the homework to the best of his/her ability and to submit the work at an agreed time.

Homework is a very important part of learning. It helps us;

- build on what we have learned in class
- practice skills



- ensure we understand new topics/concepts
- prepare for the next class
- prepare for examinations

The Homework Journal:

Is the place where all homework is recorded. Homework is recorded at the end of each class and students have been reminded that there are many different types of homework. Parents and guardians should ensure that the student completes all homework to the best of his/her ability and should sign the students journal each week.

First year students should be completing approximately 1.5 hours of homework a night.

If there is a problem completing homework parents/guardians should inform the teacher of any difficulties by means of a written note in the journal.

There is no such thing as no homework - students are encouraged to revise what they would have covered in class that day. The topics/concepts covered in class should be written into the journal as a reminder.

## SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD AND THEIR LEARNING

St. Caimin's Community School has a number of resources on their website that might be useful to parents/guardians in supporting their child and their learning and their wellbeing. These include:



**Learning 2 Learn Resources:** Learning to Learn aims to strike a balance between the development of subject knowledge, thinking abilities and key skills enabling students to develop a number of essential learning habits such as:

- Checking and Reflecting (making links, setting targets, question and extend learning)
- Framing Learning (identify learning and make connections)
- Collaboration (Give and receive help, listen actively, express opinions and be a leader)
- Problem Solving (spot patterns, take notes and research)
- Working Independently (organise information, be accurate, use resources and persist at a task)

Learning to learn is supported through a variety of activities in St. Caimin's Community School. For more information follow this [link](#)

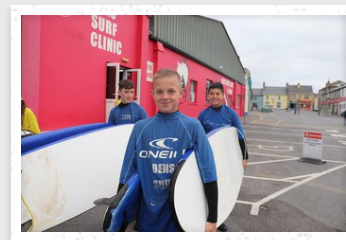
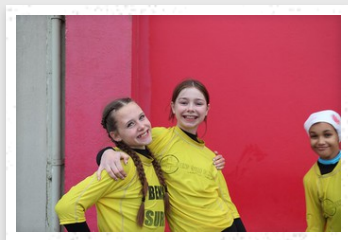
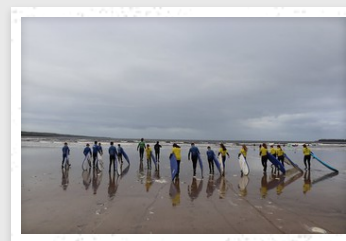
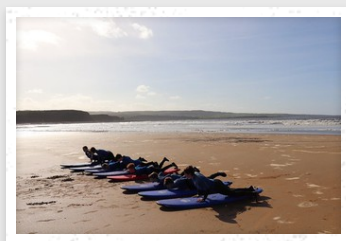
**Special Educational Needs (SEN) Resources:** The SEN Department have created a Padlet wall with information and supports available for various learner and in particular those with additional needs. To access these resources please follow this [link](#)



**Wellbeing:** The school's wellbeing committee have gathered resources to help with mental health and the promotion of student wellbeing. Information on the various initiatives coordinated by the wellbeing committee will also appear on this page. To access these resources please follow this [link](#)

## SURFING TRIP

In the days leading up to the October break, our first-year students embarked on their very first school trip with their friends and classmates in St. Caimin's Community School. The location – Lahinch, Co. Clare. Lahinch ticks all the boxes - with a long sandy beach, waves ideal for surfing, and beautiful views across Liscannor Bay, it was the perfect day away from the classroom for our students. Our first years enjoyed various activities on the day, including surf lessons, a dip in the ocean, a trip to the local playground, a walk and kick around on the beach and a well-earned ice-cream at the end of the day. The surfing lessons were provided by qualified ISA surf coaches and beach lifeguards and the students picked up lots of new information on all things surf-related - waves, environment, tides, and surfing techniques, with plenty of entertainment and games from the instructors thrown in for good measure. The students were given great care and attention from the team of instructors, and they had a ball. For the majority of our students, it was their first experience on a surfboard, but the crew in Lahinch were very encouraging and supportive. Students were provided with all surfing equipment on the day, including foam boards and wet suits. Overall, the day was a great success and gave students an opportunity to enjoy some well-deserved sunshine, waves, and fresh air. Thanks to all teachers and staff who helped to make it such a memorable day!



## VISIT FROM AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

On Thursday the 21st of October, members of An Garda Síochána spoke to our first year students about keeping safe during the Halloween holidays. They warned them of the dangers of bonfires and fireworks. Fireworks in particular can cause great damage and the age group that is most likely to be harmed by them are 12 to 15 year olds. Students were also reminded that pets can be very distressed around fireworks and to look after their pets during the holidays. They also spoke to them about the teenage disco's and to mind each other when they are going out.



## HALLOWEEN RULES BY AVA & KAYTEE

When the guards came in, they talked to us about the dangers of fireworks and if fireworks were legal or illegal in a situation. They also went over the rules for the teenage disco in Ennis that most students attend called 'Queens'. They advised us not to drink and smoke as we are far too young. They also told us to take care of each other while we are out and always keep our wits about us.

## GIDDY UP!

Class Iarla recently enjoyed a wonderful day trip to Liskennett Farm in Co.Limerick. They enjoyed an equestrian trail around the scenic grounds of the farm and made great use of



Liskennett's autism friendly facilities while they were there, including their playground and sensory space. And of course, they met lots of four-legged friends along the way! Liskennett Farm is a development by St. Joseph's Foundation for children and adults with autism and was officially opened in September 2015. It incorporates therapeutic day and residential services for adults and an Equine Therapy Centre for both children, over the age of 4 years and adults.



## ACCELERATED READER

Most classes are up and running with their Accelerated Reader books and are really enjoying getting stuck into some great stories! Keep up the great effort, reading will bring you huge rewards! We greatly encourage our students to read and accelerated reader motivates, monitors, and manages students' independent reading!

### How it works:

Here in St. Caimin's we use a 'digital learning platform' to assist with teaching learning and assessment. Working on the Microsoft 365 platform, students have access to Microsoft Teams where they can communicate and collaborate on classwork as well as receive updates on what is happening in general school life. Students also have free access to apps like Word, Excel, PowerPoint where the school have a subscription on the student's behalf. These can be accessed via the



main Office 365 Portal at [www.office.com](http://www.office.com). At the beginning of the year all first year students attended an ICT induction session where computer account details were provided (see sticker added inside journal) and students got up and running with computers for the first time. Many students are now also actively using Microsoft teams on their mobile phones. We encourage parents/guardians to be aware of their children's use of this platform and engage with them on this. Where technical issues are encountered, and support is required the school operates an ICT Helpdesk which is available to students, but parents can now also feel free to use this support. Students also have access to an ICT support team in Microsoft Teams.



## HALLOWEEN MOVIE FUNDRAISER

On Friday the 28th of October, all first-year students enjoyed a spooky movie showing of 'Hocus Pocus 2'. The event kick-started the Halloween festivities for the first years and marked the end of what was a busy and successful first term at St. Caimin's. The event was planned and organized by a group of Link Modules students, as part of their mini enterprise project. All funds raised on the day will be donated to their chosen charity, The Clare Crusaders. The first years took the opportunity to sit back, relax and enjoy the film, before breaking up for mid-term. Thanks to everyone involved and to our students for contributing to a truly great cause in our home county.



**WE AT ST.CAIMINS WISH YOU A  
WONDERFUL MID-TERM AND A HAPPY  
HALLOWEEN!!!!!!!**



