



Assumption Junior School

Newsletter

December 2014

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Additional Staff Allocated

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The Staffing Appeals Board is an independent body which decides the level of staffing a school should have. At the end of October, the Board upheld two appeals which we had lodged, giving the school one additional permanent teaching post and a second, temporary post which will be reviewed at the end of the school year. One of these posts has been filled since September and we expect the second to be filled by the end of this week.

We will now be in a position to provide as much support teaching as possible inside the classrooms making most use of time. We can break class groups into smaller units for some topics, especially Reading and Maths, so that each pupil can get the support s/he needs immediately. Those children who need consistent support on an individual basis will still get that support.

The organisation will vary a little from one class level to another; Junior Infants, for example, will have a form of station teaching for part of each day when language development and early maths activities will be done in small groups of 6 or 7 children per adult. The older classes will be grouped according to the pace that best suits the children and the topic.

It will take a week or two to get things operating smoothly but there should be a significant benefit for the pupils. If you have any questions about how this may relate to your own child, feel free to call in to the office or speak to me in the yard.

Book Fair

The Book Fair comes to the Junior School this week, running from

Thursday, 4th to Tuesday 9th December.

Books will be on display and for sale in the Blue Hall each day from

9.30 to 10.30 and from 1.30 to 3.00.

Last year some **parents helped out with the organisation and selling of books** and we could do with similar assistance this year. If you could be available at any of the times, on any of the days listed, We would be glad to hear from you.

One of our goals in school is to encourage children to enjoy reading and to expose them to as many good children's books as possible. With this in mind, the School Book Fair might be a good opportunity for some early Christmas shopping and an opportunity to encourage early reading at home as well.



Junior Infants Nativity Play

On **Thursday, December 18th**, the 6 Junior Infant Classes will take to the stage, bringing us some hymns and songs for Christmas. There will be two shows, so everyone who wants to come will be accommodated. The times will be confirmed closer to the date but are most likely to be 10.15am and 12.15pm. Your help at home with the words of songs/hymns would be appreciated and we may also need a few extra hands on the morning of the show to get the children ready.



Coffee Morning

The Parents' Association Christmas Coffee Morning will take place from **9.15 - 12.30** on

Friday next, December 5th in the Hall.

The Committee would welcome donations suitable for spot prizes, and cakes, buns or biscuits would also be gratefully received.

If you can lend a hand in the hall for a couple of hours on Friday morning, it would be a great help. Give your name and a contact number to Nora or to one of the committee, please.

Reindeer Food

When you stocking up for visitors, don't forget the animals, please. Reindeer food will be available from December 5th - 19th @ €2 a bag.

Renovations

Work is almost complete on the two toilets at the Infant end of the school and this will see the end of building work for a while. Thank you all for your patience.

The list of work done is quite extensive and we are grateful to the contractors who have done such good work. When everything is finished, we'll do up a report, including a financial report, and make it available to everyone.

There are other projects at planning stage but, for now, the priority will be to get some serious cleaning and polishing done during the Christmas holidays.

Sponsored Walk

So far, almost **€11,000** has been raised in sponsorship which is a wonderful support for the schools. We are very grateful to all concerned.

There is a small number of people who have yet to bring it the money that was pledged on their card. Please do your best to get it in as soon as you can.

Children who are ill

We are often asked if a child who is ill should be sent to school or kept at home. It is very difficult for us to judge and the family GP is better placed to answer that question.

Our rule of thumb is **if a child is well enough to work and to go to the yard, they can be at school.** The reverse also applies, **if they are well enough for school, they are well enough to go to the yard.**

Head Lice

It's the time of year when we ask parents to check their children's heads for signs of head lice, please.

First Communion

The girls in Second Class, their parents and the staff who work with them, have all become involved in the preparations for First Communion. Dates to bear in mind are:

- ◆ Wed Dec 10th Pupils' Mass at 10am
- ◆ Wed Feb 25th Pupils' Mass at 10am
- ◆ Mon, March 9th First Confession at 7pm
- ◆ Wed, April 29th Pupils' Mass at 10am
- ◆ Sat, May 16th First Communion @ 11.30

Help Simon to help the Homeless

In the run up to Christmas, we're asking if people would donate hats, scarves and gloves which we will pass on to Simon for distribution to people who are homeless.

Look out for collection boxes at the entrances to the building.



Christmas Annuals

These Christmas Annuals, produced in Ireland, can be ordered using the form distributed with this newsletter.



If you want a copy, just fill in the form and return it with **€4** to your child's class teacher by **Thurs, Dec 11th**

Scarves, Hats and Gloves in the Yard

For their own safety, we do not allow the children to wear **scarves** to the yard. There is too great a risk that someone will be tempted to tug at a scarf, scaring the wearer or worse. If the weather is very cold, we'll stay inside during the breaks so there is really **little need for scarves and gloves** at all. You might consider leaving them at home?

Dropping or Collecting Children on Wet days

It would speed things up a lot on wet days if parents could wait in the sheds until the staff come to collect or bring out the children. If you stand near the number on the wall that matches your child's class, we can bring them there or take them from there much more speedily. Please try it out next wet day.

Website and Consent Forms

We are about to launch a new website and blog which will showcase the pupils' work and the activities they have at school. Before we can do this, we will need to have signed consent form from a parent or guardian of each child. These will be distributed shortly. Please get yours back to us as soon as you can.

Christmas Holidays -

◆ The school will close for **Christmas holidays** on **Friday 19th at 12.00**. There will be no After School on that day.

◆ In line with instructions from the Department of Education & Skills, schools will reopen on **Monday, January 5th, 2015**.

Please ensure that we have a current mobile number in case it is necessary to contact parents at any stage during the holidays or if winter weather becomes a problem.