**Scoil Bhríde**

*Nurney, Co. Kildare*

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23rd June 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

**Principal’s end of year letter**

Please find the Principal’s end of year letter on the reverse of this note

**Covid-19 and Schools in September 2021**

A letter from the Department of Education this week to schools, states that it expects schools will continue to operate with the current infection prevention and control measures in place to support their safe operation during Covid-19 when they reopen in August/September. Schools have been advised therefore to plan to reopen in August/September and continue to operate in line with their Covid-19 response plans. Schools will be supported in terms of the additional resources necessary to provide for these measures. These plans are based on the Government’s Work Safely Protocol which reflects the most up to date public health advice for the workplace. It sets out the range of measures required to prevent the spread of Covid-19. The Department of Education will undertake a communications campaign with parents and pupils in advance of school reopening to inform and remind them of the arrangements in place in schools operating during Covid-19. This will include specifically targeted information at new pupils entering primary and post-primary schools to ensure they are familiar with the new arrangements.

**Book Rental Committee**

A huge word of thanks to the Book Rental Committee of Edel Donohue, Vinny Thorpe, Catherine Lennon, Ms. Owens, Ms. Ivers, Ms. Nolan, Julie Harper and Mary Murray who have worked really hard over the last few weeks keeping your stock of school books clean, organised and ready for your children.

**Book Rental Payment**

Thank you to those who have paid their book rental payment in full and on time. School books will be available and labeled for your child in September. **Where full payment for Book Rental has not been received for a pupil, the school does not have the money to purchase books for that pupil.**

**Sixth class Graduation**

Best wishes and congratulations to all our 6th class pupils who leave our school for the final time on Friday June 25th at 3pm. We wish them all the luck they deserve as they head into Post-Primary School. They celebrated their graduation from Primary school at our outdoor June School Assembly last week in basking sunshine. Thanks to Vinny Thorpe and all the staff involved in putting the day together with music, balloons, goodie bags, ice cream, graduation certificates and sports events. A special word of thanks to Fr. Adrian for saying a few words on the day and singing a few songs! Photos and video footage of the day will feature on our school website shortly.

**Sports Day**

This year’s outdoor Sports Week took place over the last week or so with great weather! Congratulations to all the teams who took part. A big thank you to all the staff for all their work in organizing these active days. Fantastic work! What a team!!! A special word of thanks to Julie Harper and Catherine Lennon for organizing all the equipment and a special word of thanks to Ms. Owens and Vinny Thorpe for organizing the timetable. Photos will feature on our school website shortly.

**School Assembly**

Well done to all our pupils who received well done awards over the last month for great lining up, working hard, following teacher instructions, playing fair and nice in our school and following in the footsteps of Jesus by showing kindness, compassion, respect, saying sorry and offering forgiveness. Congratulations to the following pupils who were pulled out of our “Well Done Award Prize Draw” ***Reece – Junior Infants, Jack – 1st class, Luca – 3rd class and Jack – 5th class***

**Talent Show Winners 2021**

Well done to all the children and parents who contributed in any way to our talent show. It was wonderful to see some of the fantastic talent in our school community and a real joy to see online all the children smiling and enjoying themselves. Many thanks to Vinny Thorpe for organizing the event and collecting and editing all 35 video entries into the small wee hours of the night! Congratulations to the following winners:

School Junior section: ***Frankie – 1st class***

School Senior section: joint winners!!! ***Kiera – 4th class, Sarah – 3rd class***

**Additional requirements**

Some items need to be purchased and labelled by parents in advance of their child starting in their new class in September. These additional requirements are now fully listed for each class on our school website [www.nurneyns.com](http://www.nurneyns.com) under the *‘Parents’* tab. A copy will also be included with your child’s Summer Report.

**COVID-19 and Education**

For all the latest updates and parent supports please check daily our dedicated COVID-19 school web page [www.nurneyns.com/covid-19](http://www.nurneyns.com/covid-19)

**Parenting Supports**

For information on parenting supports and services in Co. Kildare & West Wicklow please check out [www.parentingsupport.ie](http://www.parentingsupport.ie/)

**School Uniform Recycling**

Please feel free to leave any unwanted school uniform items washed and dried and on the table in the school porch during the week and by the same token have a look and take any items you may have a use for by June 30th. Thank you.

**Dates for your diary**

* Summer closure – ***School closes at 12.30pm on June 30th and re-opens on Tuesday August 31st at 9.20am.*** Bus told.

**Principal’s end of year letter**

Dear School Community,

As we approach the end of yet another school year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all. They say your character defines who you are by the actions you take. So, thank you for being kind in your words and actions. Thank you for giving and not taking. Thank you for focusing on an ocean of positives and not a puddle of negatives. Thank you for offering healing and not conflict. Thank you for shining a light of love and hope for us all to see in these dark and difficult times.

In particular, thank you parents and guardians for your help and support during what has been a busy and difficult year in school. Thank you for all your involvement in your child’s education at home. We greatly appreciate your efforts at home during remote learning and in reinforcing the learning we give your children every day here on the school campus. We cannot thank you enough for the important work you do in reading to your child, monitoring their homework and discussing expectations regarding conduct and citizenship, all crucial skills for a successful life. We cannot thank you enough for supporting and following our school’s Covid Response Plan. We, parents and teachers, are all on the same team trying to ensure that your child succeeds in education and life. We cannot stress to you enough how valuable you are to this mission and to our school community. Thank you.

I want to thank our wonderful frontline teachers and SNAs, secretary, caretaker, cleaners, the Board of Management, Parents Association, Father Adrian, Father Andy and the Parish team and members of the wider Nurney community who have given their time, energy and enthusiasm, for the development of Scoil Bhríde this year. There is nothing more beautiful than someone who goes out of their way to make life beautiful for others. Thank you so much.

To re-open the school and keep it open fully staffed has been tough going. To my staff it may be said wasn’t it lucky we didn’t have much COVID-19 in our workplace. I believe luck had nothing to do with it. It was due to your hard graft, cleaning and scrubbing chairs, tables and equipment each and every day. It was down to following the public health guidelines religiously, wearing stuffy masks all day long and organising 210 children washing and sanitizing their hands at least 6 times a day. It was down to wrapping up and teaching in cold classrooms during the Autumn and Winter months with windows and doors wide open for ventilation. It was down to supervising all 210 children in overcrowded and unmasked classrooms with great vigilance, not allowing the bubbles and pods to mix. It was down to urgently cleaning floors and toilets of all accidents and constantly replenishing bathroom supplies. It was down to being alert every day to any possible spread of infection and moving on it to shut it down. You have simultaneously educated and preserved life. What a team. You have been immense. You have my utter respect. Thank you so much. Well done to the entire team and a special well done to all our wonderful pupils, who through these tough times have remained resilient, kind, upbeat, grateful and helpful to us all and each other.

Although June is a hectic time of year, it is the time when I most realize how blessed we all are to be part of the Catholic mission of Scoil Bhríde, committing our time and energy every day towards creating a nurturing environment in which all our children can thrive! Well done to the entire team! The time given by parents and staff in goodwill to extra activities for the children inspires every day. Be it giving up lunch breaks or time spent on activities/meetings long before or after working hours. The work that these people do is not taken for granted and is appreciated on a daily basis. To them all I say thank you!

On a personal note, I wish to thank everyone for their support during my 7th year here in Scoil Bhríde and my 11th year as a school principal and my 26 years of teaching! I have really enjoyed it! This is a wonderful school community with wonderful people and children. As Principal I will always aim to foster positivity and Christian caring and compassion here every day. In all children is a seed of goodness as all children are made in the image of God. My role is to see that they all get the chance to flourish, grow strong, resilient and independent. This is a challenge I look forward to everyday with a smile on my face and a positive attitude, with both your help and Gods. This year has been all about finding the calm in the chaos. While others may lose their heads, I have to keep mine! I think that’s why they call me ‘Mr. Calm’ both here and in my hometown of Newbridge!

I would like to wish our outgoing 6th class the very best as they continue their journey in life and on to secondary school in September. I know that they will do themselves proud and we look forward to hearing how they get on. My advice to you all is based on two simple words my Mam taught me…. *“I am”*. Two of the most powerful words you’ll ever say, for what you put after them shapes your reality, so choose wisely girls and boys. To those families who are not returning to our school you will continue to be in all our prayers as you make your journey on to new places. May Gods blessings go with you all.

To all of us who have suffered and lost loved ones due to COVID-19, and continue to bear the heartache and ill effects of the disease, I am thinking of you all and you are in my daily thoughts and prayers. Hope is on the horizon, keep strong and keep safe my friends.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy, safe and enjoyable summer. Please be sure to take time as a family to talk, play and pray together. I hope that you all have a fabulous time with your children, and I look forward to seeing you all safe and sound in the new school year. God Bless…

***Wednesday Note and school information also available***

***on* www.nurneyns.com**

***Thank you for your co-operation with the above.***

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**Vinny Thorpe – Principal**

*(Doctoral Student) M.Ed (SL), MA.Comp.Mus, H.Dip.Prim.Ed, H.Dip.Mus.Tech, P.Grad.Dip.Ed.St(SEN), B.Mus.Ed(H.Dip.Ed), Dip.Mus.Ed, T.Dip.ICT*