

LETTER TO PARENTS CHRISTMAS 2017

Dear Parent / Guardian,

20<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Please find enclosed your son / daughter's academic report for the end of this first term. I strongly recommend you take the time to examine the report, comments and marks provided by subject teachers and overarching evaluation by relevant Year Head.

School finishes for the Christmas holidays at 12.20pm on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017. The new term begins on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 from 8.30am.

Please take note of the following key dates:

The school will be closed on the following days to enable school personnel to attend essential training in connection with the implementation of the new Junior Cycle curriculum:

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018                      All day

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018                      All day

In addition, all schools countrywide have been asked to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the New "Children First" legislation 2017. Schools are required to have all new procedures in place by March 2018. To achieve this there will be **two separate half day closures between January 2018 and March 2018**. Be advised the school will close on the following half days:

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2018                      Classes will finish at 12.20pm

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018                      Classes will finish at 12.20pm

All other key dates are as scheduled in the academic diary 2017 – 2018.

It is important to bring your attention to the challenges experienced by the school community at lunchtime. I previously communicated to you that horseplay and dangerous behaviour will not be tolerated. I should point out that these behaviours are exhibited by a minority of students; the vast majority of our students behave respectfully and responsibly. School staff have agreed on the following procedures to be adopted at lunchtime with effect from (at the latest) the beginning of the new term in January 2018.

Students will be expected to congregate in three specific areas: The canteen area, the study hall area (which doubles as a social area) and one area outside the school building (weather permitting). There will be limited access to corridors at lunchtime. Simple rules at lunchtime will apply and these will be communicated to students and on display in the school building. These will include for example, no congregating in large groups, no running and no dangerous behaviour or horseplay. Students who wilfully disregard these reasonable expectations with regard to appropriate and sensible behaviour will be placed in lunchtime detention supervised by teaching staff.

The school underwent a subject school inspection on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017. The subject inspected was German. While the report will be issued in due course and available on the Department's own website I wanted to give you a sense of the inspector's main findings. The inspector commented on the observation of very good teaching, good rapport between students and staff and good quality subject planning. It is affirming that the standards we set and our objectives with regard to good quality teaching and learning are observed by the Department of Education and Skills' own school inspectors and commented favourably on.

The Board of Management have asked that I remind you of the events of the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2017 when as a result of a school based incident school senior management began an investigation that remains an on-going one. We are awaiting further information from An Garda Siochana which may assist the Board of Management in their deliberations and ultimately, decisions which they may take. The existing school investigation cannot proceed any further without additional direct evidence, proof or any other legitimate confirmation. We are very conscious that this incident has impacted the school, its students and the wider school community and we will endeavour to find the closure that the school community requires.

All that remains is to wish your family a very peaceful Christmas and very best wishes for 2018.

Your sincerely,

Dermot Lavin

Principal