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***October Newsletter*** October 4th, 2017

**Morning Supervision**

I’ll remind you that morning supervision does not begin until **9:10am** each morning. Therefore, your child should not be on the school premises before then.

**Uniforms and Tracksuits**

Please ensure that names are written on all jumpers and tracksuits as we continue to have issues with misplaced clothing. With the exception of Junior and Senior Infants, school tracksuits should only be worn on designated PE days. These days are published on the school website; [www.ballyadamsns.com](http://www.ballyadamsns.com)

**Attendance/Absences**

In compliance with Circular 0028/2013, we must complete the roll within one hour of instruction time commencing. It also states that *‘a pupil will be marked either present or absent at the time of roll call and there will be no provision for adjusting the Roll Book (Leabhar Rolla) where a pupil subsequently does not complete the full school day or arrives after the roll call’.* Therefore, if your child is late coming to school and has a note to explain why they’re late, we still cannot adjust the roll once it’s completed. However, at the end of year presentations, late days (with notes) will not be considered absences when handing out certificates of attendance.

Also, The Education Welfare Act obliges us to report any pupils who exceed 20 days absent in an academic year to the Education Welfare Service. The only exception is for those with valid medical certificates.

**Parents Council**

The Parent’s Council A.G.M. was held on Wednesday September 20th. The following people were elected as officers;

*Chairperson - Mary Howes Vice Chairperson – Breda Cahill Treasurer - Isabell O'Brien Assistant Treasurer - Denise Rainey Secretary - Fran Murphy*

Our biggest annual fundraiser is the Christmas Raffle. Once again, the Parents’ Council have secured dates in Pettitt’s Athy and Supervalue Stradbally to sell tickets for the raffle. These were major sources of income in previous years and we are grateful to both for allowing us dates again this year. A timetable has been drawn up for parents to help out with ticket sales. If agreeable, please call or text Mary Howes (0867915000) with your name and date that suits. The dates are as follows;

Pettitt’s Athy: Nov 17th & 18th

Stradbally: Nov 24th & 25th

The next Parents’ Council meeting is fixed for Wednesday October 18th at 8pm. On behalf of the board of management, I’d like to thank the Parents’ Council and the wider parent body for your continued support.

**Halloween Walk**

Our annual Halloween Walk will take place on Friday October 27th at 1pm. The children (and teachers!) are encouraged to dress up on the day, so all types of witches, ghosts, fancy dress etc. are welcome. Parents are reminded that there **will not** be prizes for best dressed. The emphasis is on fun rather than competition and we discourage parents from buying expensive costumes for the day. Homemade costumes are usually the best! The Parents Council will once again provide a little treat for the children after they complete the sponsored walk. Sponsorship cards will be distributed in the coming days.

**Cumann na mBunscoil Football**

Our football teams have been very busy in recent weeks. Our two boys’ teams and one girls’ team have acquitted themselves well in their respective competitions and we wish them well in their remaining games. The girls’ lunchtime league is ongoing and we thank Ms Walsh and Ms Rowan for organising it.

**Active Schools**

Congratulations to all those who’ve recently been selected to join our Active Schools Committee. They were straight into action last week organising a super ‘Active Treasure Hunt’ to celebrate National Active Day. Well done to Ms Walsh, Ms Rowan and all our committee members for making it such a wonderful success. Photographs of the day are on the school website. We continue our daily yard exercises, weekly runs and our monthly 10@10 as we go in search of the Active Schools Flag. Finally, a massive *Go raibh mile maith aguibh* to all our outgoing Active Schools Committee members. They did a tremendous job establishing our very first Active Schools Committee and we’re extremely grateful to them.

**Chess**

Chess teacher, Paud O’Reilly, will begin chess lessons with Ms Kirwan’s 4th and 5th Class on Monday October 16th. We are really looking forward to this new initiative in our school. Thank you to the Parents’ Council for sponsoring the lessons and purchasing our new chess boards.

**Swimming**

Pupils from Ms Kirwan’s class and Mr Fitzgerald’s class will commence swimming lessons in Portlaoise Leisure Centre on Thursday November 9th and these will run each Thursday until December 14th. The cost of swimming lessons and buses to and from Portlaoise is quite significant and the €5 per week charge per pupil does not cover the full cost. Each year the Parents’ Council help subsidise the cost. Children are charged €5 per week or €30 for the six weeks. Payment can be made through the office or through our e-payment facility. Those signed up to e-payments will receive notification shortly and those wishing to sign-up/inquire should contact Pam in the office for further details.

Swimming lessons for Ms Rowan’s and Mr Mullooly’s classes will commence on March 8th.

**Aistear**

On behalf of Ms Walsh and all the school staff, we’d like to thank all those who’ve kindly donated old toys to our bank of Aistear resources. Your generosity and thoughtfulness are greatly appreciated.

**GOAL Jersey Day**

Once again, the school will take part in GOAL’s annual Jersey Day on Friday, October 13th. Each child is asked to bring in €2 or whatever you deem appropriate. The children are invited to don their favourite jersey/tracksuit/hoodie for the fun event.

**Sacraments 2018 – First Holy Communion and Confirmation**

The 2nd Class pupils in Mr. Mullooly’s room have begun preparations for their First Holy Communion. Listed below are some important dates for the parents of 2nd Class pupils to keep in mind;

- Enrolment Mass: Sunday, November 26thin Ballyadams Church

- Candle Ceremony: Sunday, January 28th in Ballyadams Church

- First Confessions: Wednesday, April 18th at 2pm in Ballyadams Church

- First Holy Communion: Saturday, May 12th at 11am in Ballyadams Church

39 pupils from 5th and 6th Class are preparing to be confirmed in 2018. Listed below are some important dates to keep in mind;

- Enrolment Mass: Sunday, February 4th in Ballyadams Church

- Confirmation Retreat: Monday, March 5th in Castletown

- Service of Light: Thursday, March 8th at 7:30pm in St. Mary’s Church, Wolfhill

- Confirmation: Friday, March 16th in St. Mary’s Church, Wolfhill

**Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Parent/teacher meetings will take place on Wednesday November 29th and Thursday November 30th. Times for both days will be sent home two weeks in advance.

Mr. T. Fitzgerald

Principal