



## NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2019

Welcome back to all our children and their families after the summer holidays! We hope that everyone is settling back into the routine of school life. In particular we welcome our 42 new Junior Infants and the 20 children who have joined us in older classes. We also welcome two new members of staff – Niamh (SNA in Junior Infants) and Kate (4<sup>th</sup> Class teacher) and offer congratulations to teacher Des and his wife Caoimhe on the birth over their baby girl Míoda during the summer.

**BOOK RENTAL SCHEME:** This year the book rental scheme was a massive success with a 100% uptake from parents. We are sure you will agree that it greatly reduces both the costs to parents and the stress of back to school shopping, especially for larger families. Please be mindful that in order to continue the success of this scheme, it is really important to look after the rental books (and also library books) and to keep them away from food and drink if possible. Unfortunately, we had to dispose of a large number of books this year as they were not in good enough condition to pass on, and of course this is not sustainable. Brian has spoken to all children about the importance of taking care of all books and it would be great if this message can be reinforced at home.

**TRAFFIC & SAFETY:** With such a large volume of traffic in the school in the mornings we would like to bring your attention to the following:

- We have both parents and children with disabilities who cannot arrive safely without access to the disabled parking bay so **please do not park in it**.
- The area outside the Coiscéim entrance is for set down only and priority must **always** be given to the buses that are dropping off children with special needs.
- Please respect directions from our caretaker Frank if given. His job is to monitor the traffic situation in the mornings to help ensure the safety of the children arriving to school.
- Do not make 3 point turns at the school gates – this is extremely dangerous with such a large volume of children entering, many of whom are very small and not always visible.

- We highly recommend that children who are walking or cycling to school wear Hi-Viz jackets so that they are visible, especially as the mornings are already becoming darker.
- Please respect the Dunlin Street residents. Do not use their driveways for turning your vehicle and never block an entrance.
- The Dunlin Street silver gate will be open for morning drop offs only. In the afternoons collections should be made via the main school gates with access to the yard through reception or along the side of the building past the Clever Clogs crèche entrance.
- Please wait in yard for your children to be brought to you and not in the corridors.

**We hope that you all appreciate that the safety of our children is paramount and that we can all work together to make the area as safe as possible during drop off and collection times.**

**NEW PARENTS:** We strongly encourage all new parents to keep up to date with school news through our website [www.astonvillageetns.com](http://www.astonvillageetns.com) and also our official Aston Village ETNS Facebook page, both of which are updated regularly. All newsletters are also posted on the website if you ever need to check any information that has been sent home. Important or urgent messages are communicated to parents via our **Aladdin Connect App**.

**\*\*If you have not already downloaded the Aladdin Connect app please do so. Links have been sent to all new parents to register and can be re-sent to existing parents if needed upon request. The app has several key features including reducing the cost of text messaging, allowing parents to update contact information eg new address or phone number, the ability to view annual report cards, attendance records, etc\*\***

Open communication between parents and teachers is welcome and encouraged but we would like to remind you that if you need to speak to your child's teacher ***they are not available during class time*** and an appointment can be made with them through the office for before or after school. Please do not approach teachers in the morning unless it is urgent. Instead you can always pass a message through the office. Parents can wait in line with children until the bell rings but should not enter the classrooms.

**CLEVER CLOGS:** We are delighted to host **Clever Clogs Montessori** upstairs in the school, who provide a before and after school service for children from 8am - 6pm each day with fully qualified and vetted childcare staff. The service is available on a daily or a weekly basis and includes a "link hour" option for Junior and Senior Infants who wish to remain in school to travel home with older siblings, or who take the school bus. If you are interested in the service please call Kerrie Rothwell on 086 038 3903 or 086 130 0502 as their spaces are filling up very quickly.

**PTA COFFEE MORNING AND AGM:** The Parent Teacher Association are arranging a **coffee morning** in the upstairs kitchen from **9am on Thursday 19th September**. All parents are automatically members of the PTA and we strongly encourage all new and existing parents

to come along for a cuppa and a chat and to learn about the role of the PTA in the school. The PTA are looking for several new members and volunteers this year who may have a few hours to spare each month but there is no obligation or pressure on anyone. You are welcome to just come along as a great opportunity to meet up with other mums and dads! If you have smaller children feel free to bring them along too.

The AGM (Annual General Meeting) will take place at the coffee morning. This includes a brief synopsis of all activities and achievements during the previous academic year and an opportunity to join the PTA and discuss plans for the coming year. This year, the roles of Chairperson and Secretary also need to be filled so if you think you may be interested in becoming involved you can put yourself forward at the meeting and will have the opportunity to ask any questions to the outgoing Chairperson, Nicole Kerber.

**CATHOLIC PARENTS** After school Catholic Classes are expected to recommence in October. When we have details confirmed from the Catholic Parents Group (CPG) we will let you know. If you are new to the school or have a 1<sup>st</sup> class child who will be starting Catholic classes this year you should follow the “Aston Village Ed Together CPG” page on Facebook as these classes are run by the CPG and not the school and this is where they post their updates and information.

**ISLAMIC CLASSES** The Nurul Huda Quranic school will also return in October and again we will confirm details as soon as we have them.

**AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS:** There are some places still left in the following clubs which commence week beginning Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September – Musical Theatre (Mondays), Irish Dancing (Tuesdays) and Dance Club (Thursdays). Please see website or Facebook for full information on the after school activities. If you would like a place in the clubs please leave the exact money in an envelope in the office clearly marked with your child’s name and your contact details and it will be passed on to the relevant instructor. Please note that clubs are run by teachers and instructors independently to the school so the office cannot handle money or issue receipts.

**SCHOOL CLOSURE REMINDER:** School will be closed on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September to facilitate teacher training in the Primary Language Curriculum.

**2019/20 FAMILY CONTRIBUTION:** School grant funding is extremely limited and we rely heavily on our annual family contribution to ensure that the school is adequately resourced. The requested contributions for 2019/20 are set as follows:

1 child = **€80** 2 children = **€150** 3 or more children = **€210**

These fees have not increased since 2011 and are kept as low as possible for parents. They include:

- Pupil personal insurance which covers your child for any accident or injury incurred **both in school and outside of school** 24 hours a day and 365 days of the year. This policy has been extremely beneficial to several parents saving them thousands of euros on medical and dental expenses, even if the accident did not happen at school.
- Annual Educate Together subscriptions (€15 per child) which help to support the national office in promoting the Educate Together model and starting up new schools throughout Ireland at both primary and second level.
- First aid supplies for prompt and immediate treatment of minor injuries that do occur in school.
- Additional classroom resource such as arts and crafts materials for projects and competitions.
- Subsidies towards in-school sports programmes (e.g swimming, cycling, GAA, etc), educational workshops and school visits (e.g storytellers, historians, scientists, special assemblies, etc) and transport to award ceremonies, external sporting events and educational class trips.
- Security monitoring and surveillance to ensure a safe and secure environment for parents, children and staff members.
- Photocopying, essential office supplies and testing materials.
- General running costs of the school such as utilities (heat and light), cleaning supplies, buildings insurance, public liability insurance, etc.

Funding is provided by the Department of Education towards some of these expenses but unfortunately it does not cover the full amounts needed so we greatly appreciate the support of our parents in helping to ensure that the school continues to run efficiently and provides the best possible educational environment for your children. Links to online payment will be sent out this week allowing you to pay either in full, or in installments that suit you via Aladdin e.g €10 a week. We are very conscious that some parents are experiencing financial difficulties and ask those affected let us know so that we can make arrangements for you in the strictest of confidence. We strongly encourage parents to use Aladdin to make any payments in order to limit the cash flow through the office. There are no additional fees to parents to use the Aladdin payment system.