

# St. Patrick's Comprehensive School



# NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2014

## 2014/15 Calendar



### Term 1

Autumn Break: Monday 27th Oct.— Friday 31st Oct.

Christmas Holidays: Monday 22nd Dec.— Friday 2nd Jan.

### Term 2

School re-opening: Monday 5th Jan.

Spring Break: Monday 16th Feb.— Friday 20th Feb.

St. Patrick's Day: Closed Tuesday 17th March

Easter Holidays: Monday 30th March—Friday 10th April

### Term 3

Public Holiday: Monday 4th May

Summer Holidays: Friday 29th May

State Exams: Wednesday 3rd June

## Year Heads

1<sup>st</sup> Year: Ms. Shannon  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Year: Ms. Brooks  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Year: Mr. Chesser  
 4<sup>th</sup> Year: Ms. Howard \*  
 5<sup>th</sup> Year: Mr. Heaphy  
 LCA : Ms. Davoren  
 TY Ms. Dineen



You may contact any of the above by telephoning the school in the first instance. Alternatively you can contact the Principal, Deputy Principal, the Guidance Counsellor, Ms. Schous or the school Chaplain, Ms. Murray.

\* Assistant Year Head

## House Exams

### *Christmas*

3rd and 5th Years; Week beginning Monday 3rd November.

1st, 2nd and 4th Years; Week beginning Monday 1st December

### *Mocks:*

Monday 9th to Friday 27th February (Weeks before and after mid- term break).

### *Summer:*

Week beginning Monday 25th May.

## Breakfast Club

Our breakfast club is open every morning from 8.30 am to 8.55 am. Students can avail of tea and toast free of charge compliments of the Parents Association.

## Important Dates for 5th Years:

**UCAS Applications Deadline:** 15th Oct., 15th Jan., & 24th March depending on courses. Check UCAS website for full details.

### **CAO Applications Closing Dates:**

Early Online Application: **20th Jan. 2014** (€25)

Normal Application: (online or paper): **1st Feb. 2014** (€40)

Late Online Application: **1st May 2014** (€50)

Late Paper Application: **1st May 2014** (€80)

Change of Mind: **1st July 2014** (€0)

### **Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)**

Apply online as part of CAO application process by 1<sup>st</sup> March. 2012.

## Examination Fees

**State Examinations** (Based on last year)

Leaving Certificate: € 116

Leaving Certificate Applied; € 116

Repeat Leaving Certificate: € 301

Junior Certificate: € 109



### **Exemptions**

Candidates who hold a current medical card or who are dependent on a parent /guardian who holds a current medical card are exempt from paying state examination fees.

**Mock Examinations** (Full payment before Friday 6th Feb.)

Leaving Certificate: €60

Junior Certificate: €60

Please note that the medical card exemption does not apply to the mock examinations. Mock examination fees may be paid by instalments.

## PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS

Year	Date	Time
1	Thursday 15th Jan.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
2	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
3	Thursday 4th Dec.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
4 + TY + LCA1	Wednesday 28th Jan.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
5 + LCA2	Wednesday 19th Nov.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm

Please note that you should arrive no later than 5.45 pm to ensure that you meet all subject teachers

### **Benefits of Transition Year**

It can be a big decision for parents and teenagers alike, trying to decide whether or not to do Transition Year or whether to go straight into fourth year and begin preparing straight away to sit the Leaving Cert.

In Transition Year, there is a focus on teaching students practical subjects and skills for life, such as learning a language to help 'get you by' in a foreign country or learning how a business works by setting one up and running it.

The Transition Year programme also focuses on the personal development of students and teaches students to relate to and communicate with others in a more effective way.

There is also a strong focus on the importance of living a healthy life through educating students on the importance of diet and exercise, mental health, sex education and substance abuse.

Transition Year also aims to prepare students for their adult lives and future careers by helping them to:

- Prepare a good CV and cover letter
- Prepare for job interviews
- Develop teamwork and communication skills
- Organise time management

Work placements are also a part of Transition Year and give students the opportunity to try working in an environment they think they might be interested in and see what exactly is involved.

It also gives them a great opportunity to learn what is expected of them in a working environment.

Students will also get the opportunities to attend college, university and Institutes of Technology open days so again they can get a better idea of what college they might like to attend and what courses are of interest to them.

### **1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR HOMEWORK CLUB**

A Homework Club for first years takes place, Monday and Tuesday 4:10 – 5:10 and Thursday 3:40 – 4:40.

We believe that this is an excellent opportunity for your child to get some homework completed before leaving school as well as to receive support or clarification with any aspect of homework with which he/she may be having difficulty. There will be a teacher available during the Homework Club to assist your child if they are having difficulty with any particular topic.

We strongly encourage your support in having your son/daughter attend on a regular basis if he/she is having a difficult time getting homework completed. Price is €30 for the term. Contact Ms. McDonnell for details.

### **Retirements**

Ms. Feely, Ms. Murphy and Ms. Ruane retired from the teaching staff at the end of last year. We thank them for their outstanding contribution to our school and wish them many happy and healthy years of retirement.

### **Texting Service**

We now operate a mobile texting service to parents/guardians to convey important messages or reminders.

If it is the case that you are not receiving such messages then please contact the school and we will rectify the problem.

### **First Year Maths Club**

A maths club for First Years takes place for 1 hour every Wednesday evening after school. Students who are having difficulty with Maths should benefit greatly from this service.

Contact Mr. Davoren for more details.

## **OPEN NIGHT**

Our Open Night for prospective students and their parents will be held on  
**Thursday 13th November,**  
**from 7pm to 9pm**

### **PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

Chairperson: Ingrid McLaughlin

Secretary: Patrick Mehan

Treasurer: Sharon Murray

New committee members always welcome.

The PA can be contacted on **086 2615851**

### **After School and Saturday Morning Study**

Students can avail of supervised study sessions for 2 hours after school each evening and between 10am and 1pm every Saturday. For more details contact Ms. Dineen, Ms Magee or Ms. Murphy.

### **October Mid-Term Study:**

Tuesday 28th to Friday 31st— 10am to 3pm  
Contact Ms. Magee for further details.

## The Importance of Reading

Educational researchers have found that there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success.\* In other words, a student who is a good reader is more likely to do well in school and pass exams than a student who is a weak reader.

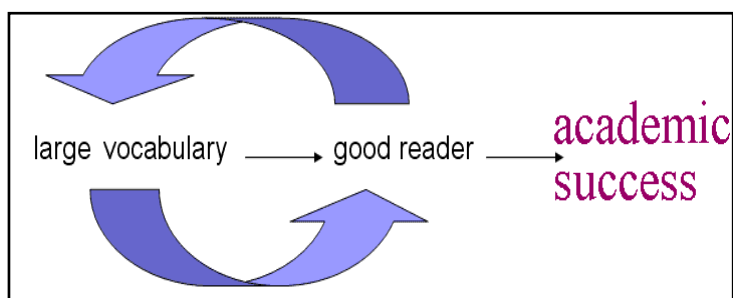
Good readers can understand the individual sentences and the organizational structure of a piece of writing. They can comprehend ideas, follow arguments, and detect implications. They know most of the words in the text already, but they can also determine the meaning of many of the unfamiliar words from the context - failing this, they can use their dictionary effectively to do so. In summary, good readers can extract from the writing what is important for the particular task they are employed in. And they can do it quickly!

Educational researchers have also found a strong correlation between reading and vocabulary knowledge. In other words, students who have a large vocabulary are usually good readers.

This is not very surprising, since the best way to acquire a large vocabulary is to read extensively, and if you read extensively you are likely to be or become a good reader!

So if you want your child to be successful at school encourage him or her to read. Reading non-fiction in English is probably the most important, but English fiction and any reading in the mother tongue - if done extensively - will help your child develop the reading competence that is essential for academic achievement.

The graphic below illustrates the interdependence of vocabulary, reading ability and academic success.



\* "Research findings in applied linguistics and reading research consistently show a strong correlation between reading proficiency and academic success at all ages, from the primary school right through to university level: students who read a lot and who understand what they read usually attain good grades." Pretorius, E.

### Lost and Found

Please note that items of clothing found around the school are stored for a limited period after which they are given to charity.

Students who have lost clothes or other property are asked to contact Mrs. Davoren.

### SCHOOL WEB SITE

Log on to our web site for up to date information, news, links and photographs. The address is: [www.stpatrickscomprehensive.ie](http://www.stpatrickscomprehensive.ie)

### Student Journal

Parents are requested to sign the journal once a week to monitor their child's progress.

## Mobile Phone/Personal Media Player Policy

While St. Patrick's Comprehensive School accepts that it is a student's right to have a mobile phone/personal media player, the following policy aims to maintain a safe, nurturing environment where the personal dignity and rights of all the members of the school community are preserved. In order to assist the school in implementing this policy, parents/guardians are asked not to arrange to contact students by mobile phone at any time during the school day. Contact with the school may be made through the office at 061 361428 and students are directed to use the office phone in emergencies.

Where a student brings a mobile phone/personal media player to school, the device must be switched off and kept in a locker during the school day (08.55-15.20/16.00) and may not be used for any purpose on school premises or grounds.

Students found in contravention of the above rule will have the device confiscated for 1 week. A second offence will result in the device being confiscated for 1 month.

No photographs can be taken or recordings, video or audio, made with mobile phones. Using phones in such a way can seriously infringe on people's rights and appropriate sanctions may be imposed.

Incidents where students use mobile phones to bully other students or send offensive messages or calls will be investigated under the Anti-Bullying policy. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the Gardai in such incidents.

The school does not accept responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones/personal media players. The safety and security of mobile phones/personal media players is wholly a matter for students / parents.

It is strongly advised that students mark their mobile phones/personal media players with their names and use passwords to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones.

## Advice to Young People on Using Social Networking Websites

**Do** know who can access your personal information - many sites allow you to decide which parts of your profile can be accessed by others. Assume that everything is public unless you are sure that it isn't. Opting for private doesn't always mean that only your friends can see your profile. In some cases it means that everything you put on your profile can be seen by everyone but only your friends can post comments or IM you.

**Do** trust your instincts - If it doesn't look or "feel right", it probably isn't. If you find something online that you don't like or makes you feel uncomfortable, turn off the computer and tell an adult.

**Do** be careful with your personal information - The problem with posting personal information to the internet is that as soon as it goes online, you have lost control over who will see it and how it will be used. Pictures can easily be copied and shared with 100,000 others at the press of a button. Because of the digital nature of the photos, they can even be altered or distorted. Don't post any pictures that you wouldn't want everyone you know to see, that includes your parents and your teachers.

**Don't** assume everyone you meet online is who they appear to be - The fact that certain websites claim to connect students from the same school means nothing. The information provided by users when they are registering is not checked. Anyone can create a user profile pretending to be anyone else. Moreover, anyone regardless of their real or pretend age can join as many school communities as they want.

**Don't** post information that could be used to find you offline - without meaning to, you can give away information that could help someone to find you. Be careful of posting photos with things like car registration plates or identifiable landmarks in them. Avoid posting messages to blogs along the lines of "I usually walk home down the lane by the railway tracks". There are some people out there who will piece together little snippets of information about you over a long period of time.

**Don't** reply to messages that harass you or make you feel uncomfortable! - Even though you may really want to, this is exactly what cyber-bullies want. They want to know that they've got you worried and upset. They are trying to mess with your head. They want to think that they are important by being able to get a reaction from you. Don't give them the pleasure.