

GRIFFITH BARRACKS NEWSLETTER

8th May 2020

A Chairde (Friends),

Friday update

It has been lovely to catch up with lots of families this week. I want to thank you all for all the kind words you have asked me to pass on to the staff for all the hard work they are doing supporting learning at home. This week, we wrote to all our incoming Junior Infants. We will be having our Junior Infant information evening on Flipgrid on Tuesday 19th of May. We will have contributions from the Student Dáil, Junior Infant teachers, Board of Management, Patron, PA and Principal, as well as our childcare provider, Sherpa Kids. While it will not be the same as being together on our usual night, it will still be a valuable resource for parents to access.

We are currently seeking the opinion of 6th class students about how we will celebrate their graduation from Griffith Barracks. From all the children I spoke to yesterday, there is a feeling that they would like to wait until they can all celebrate their graduation together in the same room. We will continue to gather feedback in the next few days and come up with a good plan. We are also in the middle of preparing the sixth class Yearbook.

If there is any family who will not be returning to the school in September, could you please let us know. It is very important, as this affects the number of teachers we have in the school.

In-School Childcare

This week, we met with the in-school childcare service, Sherpa Kids. They have their own dedicated email address for Griffith Barracks, which GBMDS@sherpakids.ie. They've had eight questions so far and responded to all of them. Some of the questions that came in through our own survey were:

- **Will breakfast be provided as part of the Breakfast Club?**
A healthy breakfast will be provided as part of the Breakfast Club, for example porridge or cereal.
- **Will it be an option for children to play inside and outside?**
Yes, there will be plenty of time for both indoor and outdoor play

The childcare service is now registering with Tusla and will be ready to open in September. We will do our best to support the service if extra space is needed in order for social distancing to take place. If you have any questions in terms of the government subsidy for childcare and how it works, as well as cost for multiple children etc, email Sherpa Kids directly and they'll be able to give you a detailed answer. Sherpa Kids will give a presentation at the Junior Infants Parents evening and there will be an online registration service set up by the end of May. We will compile an FAQ document in June.

School Books

Many thanks to all the families who came to collect books from 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th Class. Every family came separately at their allotted time and it was just me present at the outside of the building. It was great to catch up with the over 100 families who turned up and to get feedback on how they are getting on. The building will be closed until May 18th but if there are any families who couldn't make it, just get in touch with me at eddie.fox@griffithbarracks.ie and I will do my best to get the books out to you. One thing that struck me is the vast array of situations and contexts that everyone in the school is dealing with. It is so

important to tell yourself that you are doing your best and doing what works best for you. We are always available if you need any advice in terms of learning in your context.

Admissions Policy

I am attaching our new Admissions Policy which we discussed at the Board of Management last week. I am meeting the Patron and the Parents Association next week to walk them through the policy. Our Admissions Policy reflects the School Admissions Act and every school in the country is adapting their enrolment policies to ensure that it is easier for parents to apply to all primary schools funded by the state. We changed our enrolment policy three years ago which ended the "first come first served" admissions procedure. Other Educate Together schools are now following to have sibling preference and a lottery for allocating remaining places. We have also formatted the policy so that all schools have the same format which will make them easier to follow. Please get in touch with me if you have any questions. To fully comply with the Act, we have put the following changes in places:

- The enrolment window for Junior Infants and older classes will now be for the month of October and not from September to December. All the local Educate Together schools will use this window to make it easier and more transparent across the system.
- We will now do a lottery for places in the older classes.
- Applications can now be taken right up to the start of the school year and the enrolment year runs from October every year in a 12month process.
- Schools will now be able to share information with each other to ensure that people are not accepting places in multiple schools, which can have implications for staffing levels in schools when students do not turn up on the first day in September. It also speeds up the process for parents.

Please get in touch if you have any questions on the policy. You can contact me at eddie.fox@griffithbarracks.ie and I can talk through any queries.

Flipgrid

There have been so many highlights on Flipgrid this week including:

- Brilliant obstacle courses designed by the children.
- Deirdre and Ger made their Flipgrid debuts with messages to their classes
- 3rd and 4th Classes have been learning about Amelia Earhart
- 6th class had lessons on cyber safety and LGBT issues uploaded as well as lessons on English and Maths
- Teachers are uploading answers and feedback to work set, so that students can self-correct work, especially in the older classes. This usually happens at the end of the week.
- Movie Scriptwriting
- Sustainable housing
- Art and PE Activities and other mini lessons across the grids from Emma and Ben
- A guest appearance from friend of the school and music teacher Dave singing "*There are Places*"
- Learning all about Swifts and revising time
- Tables practice
- Nesy work in Second Class
- 5 ways to Wellbeing
- Subtraction with concrete materials and Khan Academy support
- Humanism
- What makes you unique and special
- Poetry
- English workpack explained in 6th Class

This is all this week and what is great about Flipgrid is that all the previous content from adults and children can also be accessed in what is becoming a great library of work. Many thanks to all the teachers and our student contributors for contributing to all our learning.

Start the weekend with Paul

Every Friday, musician and 4th and 2nd class parent, Paul Noonan, has “Music time with Paul” at 3pm on Facebook live and it’s a great way to get into that weekend mood. The whole family will enjoy it.

<https://www.facebook.com/paulisanoonan/>

Infant Update

Lovely work again from our Infant department this week. I loved watching and reading all the work from Cathal, Cian, Claire and Ruth and the children – what a community of learning! It is a tonic to see all the children and families embracing learning opportunities across an array of contexts.

And Finally

Over the coming months we will have some guest appearances on Flipgrid. This week, former parent and music teacher Dave Murphy sings “*There are places*”. The videographer is past pupil Sophie.

<https://vimeo.com/416130636/c0a5d251c7>

Please check out my own Assembly video at <https://vimeo.com/416329848/176ddf3d94>. Usually, we have two Assemblies, and every six weeks we have a whole school assembly. This video is intended for the whole school. We are looking at “Extraordinary People”. Please also check out my video on Amelia Earhart <https://vimeo.com/416321138>.

Have a great weekend everyone,

Beir bua,

Eddie

Priomhóide