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**NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2017**

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. We now have 411 children (and counting) on our roll as we enter our 10th year, and almost 60 staff members. Our new Junior Infants are settling in extremely well, as are the children we have enrolled in older classes throughout the school from countries as far afield as Cyprus, Lithuania, Croatia and India.

We welcome our new staff – Eliza, Sarah and James (class teachers) and Donal, Lynda, Eileen, Rachel and Emily (support teachers) and we offer huge congratulations to teachers Síle who gave birth to baby girl, Ida and Liz who gave birth to baby boy, Brendan in July. It was a very busy summer with teacher Áine getting married to Ciarán in July, and both Sinead and Sandra Wogan getting engaged. We wish them all the very best!

**TRAFFIC:** With such a large volume of traffic in the school in the mornings we would like to 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 Dunlin Street entrance or the school gate – 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 becoming darker.
* If you want to escort your child to the yard please park in the school car park and walk across. Please respect the Dunlin Street residents. Do not use their driveways for turning your vehicle and never block an entrance.

**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 textaparent service which is free to parents.

***If you have not received any communication from the school via text since the beginning of term then please check with Antonia that we have the correct mobile number on file for you.*** ***If you have changed address or telephone number it is your responsibility to inform the school office so that we can keep your records updated.***

A copy of the **2017-18 school calendar** has been distributed to all parents. Please make note of any school closures and half days in the coming school year. Please also remember to back up your children’s absences with a note to the teacher if they are unable to attend school for any reason.

Open communication between parents and teachers is 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*. Office hours are 8.30am-3.00pm daily. Please do not approach teachers in the morning unless it is urgent. Instead you can pass a message through the office. Parents can wait in line with children until the bell rings but should not enter the classrooms.

**CATHOLIC CLASSES:**  After school Catholic religion classes will commence on **Wednesday 27th September** with registration taking place this ***on Monday 11th September*  in the main reception from 2pm-2.30pm**. The contact for religion queries is Antoinette Dorgan from the Catholic Parents Group (not the office please). She has a Facebook page you can join – Aston Village CPG ED – where all updates are posted. If you do not have Facebook her number is available from the office upon request.

Classes take place after school from 2.30-3.30pm on Wednesday afternoons and the cost is €4 per child per week to cover the cost of teachers and resources (*please note this charge is subject to numbers and may increase or decrease slightly*).

**IMPORTANT:** *Children who wish to make their* ***Communion*** *and* ***Confirmation*** *sacraments must be baptised into the Roman Catholic church and must attend the after school religion classes from 1st class through to 6th class in order to meet Diocesan requirements.*

**Only parents of 1st class children and new parents to the school need to register. Anyone who was attending classes last year will resume as normal on the 27th September.**

 **ISLAMIC CLASSES**: Classes in Islamic Instruction for Muslim children will commence in Aston Village on September 22nd. For more details or to enrol your child please contact coordinator Nour Gawwad at the Nurul Huda Quranic School, Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, telephone 087 210 6748 or email n.gawwad@islamireland.ie.

**AFTER SCHOOL SERVICE:** We are delighted to host Clever Clogs Montessori upstairs in the school, who provide an after school service for children from 1.30pm – 4.30pm 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 0860383903.

**2017/18 FAMILY CONTRIBUTION:** School funding is extremely limited and we rely heavily on our annual family contribution to ensure that the school is adequately resourced. The fees for 2017/18 are set as follows (no change from previous 5 years):

1 child **= €80** 2 children **= €150** 3 children **= €210** 4 children **= €270**

These fees include:

* Educate Together subscriptions (€15 per child)
* 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
* First aid supplies
* Classroom resource such as arts and crafts materials
* Photocopying and testing materials
* General running of the school

Links to online payment will be sent out this week allowing you to pay in full, or in installments that suit you via Aladdin. Please pay your contribution in full by the end of the school year and as always, if you are experiencing financial difficulties 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 due to limit the cashflow through the office. There are no additional fees to parents to use the Aladdin payment system.

**PTA COFFEE MORNING AND AGM:** The Parent Teacher Association are arranging a **coffee morning** in the upstairs kitchen room from **9am on Friday 15th 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 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.

A vacancy has arisen on the Board of Management for a **parent nominee (male)** - a by-election will be held soon following consultation with the Parents' Association. If any Dad is interested in this voluntary role and would like more information please contact Dermot through the school office.

**MUSIC CLASSES**: Pure Tone Music School reopens next week for another school year at Aston Village ETNS. If you're interested in your child learning to play the piano or keyboard, some places are still available in classes from Tuesday to Thursday, 3:30 to 8pm. For more details or to enrol your child please contact Peter on 087 638 1348.

We will be offering an after school activities programme later this month and will send home details as soon as the schedule is confirmed.

**SCHOOL TRANSPORT:** We are urgently trying to sort a private bus arrangement for children who need school transport but do not meet the criteria for the Bus Eireann service. If any of our parent community have any contacts with minibus drivers in the area that may be able to help establish a morning and afternoon transport run for approximately 10-15 children please contact Antonia or Dermot.

**MEDICAL CONDITIONS:** If your child has any medical conditions it is very important that you inform us and if there any changes to their conditions or medications you should let us know immediately so that you can complete the appropriate paperwork. This will enable us to ensure that your child’s medical information is 100% up to date. Our deputy Pauline is in charge of the administration of medicines policy so please contact her via the office if you need to discuss any medical concerns or issues.

***Advance notice: Parent – Teacher meetings are scheduled for Monday 27th November to Friday 2nd December 2017. Appointment times will be sent home two weeks prior.***