**The Rock National School,**

**The Rock,**

**Mountmellick,**

**Co. Laois. R32AP98**

Éirigh don dúshlán!



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Embrace the challenge!

Principal: Mr. Liam Ahern Dep. Principal: Mrs. Michelle Kirwan

10th May 2023.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Just a few brief notices:

* I know it’s a while ago now but our Cake sale/coffee morning was a terrific success…we sent €1600 to Trócaire. This included the money from the dress up days. Many thanks to all the families who supported 6th class in their efforts!
* If you have changed address since September**, could you inform the school in writing in order that the end of year reports go to your correct address!** The reports will be posted during June. There is no need to send in a stamp or envelope. Results of standardised tests (MICRA/ SIGMA/ Drumcondra etc) will be included.
* **If your child is transferring to another primary school next August/September and leaving The Rock NS, please inform the school in writing as soon as possible**.
* Best wishes go out to 2nd class families in preparation for the children’s First Holy Communion which takes place next **Saturday 20th May at 2.00pm** in St. Joseph’s Church, Mountmellick.
* We have had a number of visits to local Geographical/historical attractions such as Emo Court and Abbeyleix bog walk. There was no cost to the children for these trips. Good reports from the children about these trips!
* Hurling & camogie are ongoing with mixed results! We’ll be in contact if there are semi finals or finals to look forward to!! Coaching in Gaelic football & hurling continues for 1st-4th classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Rounders is the next sport on the horizon for the 5th & 6th class children!
* I’ve attached a table regarding school tours. **Please forward the amount due to the relevant class teacher as per notes sent out to the children. Thanks!** Children who are not taking part in school tours should still attend school and work will be provided for them. All tours have been subsidized by the Board of Management.
* Our Junior Infants for August/September 2023 will visit the school for our ‘Open day’ on **Thursday 1st June 1.15-2.15 p.m.**
* The first ever meeting of our Student Council took place last Friday. The children are full of ideas to help improve the school. Many of these are under consideration or being implemented. The swimming pool may have to wait a little longer!
* In a welcome change for next year, the school has received a grant from the Dept. of Education & Skills which will pay for school books, workbooks and copies. This will save €50-€55 per child per year as long as this arrangement continues. We will still have a contribution from parents/guardians for art/craft, textaparent, postage, testing etc (usually about €30-€35 per child). There will be a charge for swimming, computers as per previous years.
* **6th June Teacher inservice day. The children will not attend school on that day.**
* Midland Escape: 5th & 6th classes are attending a series of health, wellbeing & activity days with Willie Hyland & his crew. Co-operative games, mindfulness & fun are the order of the day! The final day for each class will involve canoeing at Vicarstown canal….great excitement in anticipation of those days!!
* Our 6th class pupils will represent us at the Cumann na mBunscol Table Quiz on Wednesday 17th May at Holy Family School Portlaoise…best of luck!!
* We began a ‘social club’ for some of the children at the school recently. This involves some children coming to the staffroom for ‘breakfast and a chat’…..lots of items on the menu! The children are encouraged to practice chatting with their schoolmates, use their manners, set the table, to load the dishwasher etc. We intend that all classes will get a chance to taste this different experience next year.
* The new swings are up & flying…thanks to the Parents’ Council for their contribution towards the swings and the basketball post also.
* A word about lunches. Recently, a number of local media outlets have reported that hot lunches will be starting in September 2023 for all DEIS rural schools. Whilst not against the idea in principle, there are a number of considerations that have to be considered – location of ovens, logistics re delivery/cooking/menus, food on carpets, adjusting the building for ventilation, personnel required and so on. It is unlikely that we will be ready in time for this Sep 2023 but we should be organized for September 2024. You should expect that we will have the existing lunch arrangements for August/September. If that changes during the next school year, I will contact you again about this.
* End of Year Mass will take place on **Thursday 22nd June**, time to be confirmed. The parents/guardians of 6th class will be informed in due course.
* Sports days will be organised during June – we are weather dependent!
* End of year school reports should reach you on/before Friday 16th June.
* The school closes on **Friday 23rd June at 12.00. All children to be collected at 12.00.**
* The first school day for all returning children will be **Thursday 31st August**.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

L. Ahern

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| **Classes** | **Date** | **Tour** | **Leaving time** | **Approx./**  **Expected return time** | **Cost** |
| **Jun & Sen Infants** | **Thursday**  **1st June** | **Playtown Tullamore** | **9.00am** | **1.40pm** | **€20** |
| **1st** | **Thursday**  **15th June** | **Fun Academy Roscrea** | **9.00am** | **2.30pm** | **€25** |
| **2nd** | **Wednesday**  **7th June** | **Lullymore** | **9.00am** | **2.40pm** | **€25** |
| **3rd** | **Tuesday**  **13th June** | **National Stud & Jump zone** | **9.00am** | **3.45pm** | **€30** |
| **4th** | **Monday**  **12th June** | **Castlecomer Discovery Park** | **9.00am** | **3.45pm** | **€35** |
| **5th** | **Wednesday**  **21st June** | **Baysports Athlone** | **8.45am** | **5.30pm** | **€50** |
| **6th** | **Wednesday**  **14th June** | **Emerald Park** | **8.30am** | **5.00pm** | **€30** |