



22nd December, 2020

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Many thanks for all your support and your positive messages throughout our first term. It has been a daunting responsibility to reopen our school and try to protect our community in line with Covid protocols whilst prioritising education. Despite the many challenges, our community has risen to the task and, on reflection, it is really amazing how far we have come.

Students sit in classes for 58 minutes wearing masks, limited in their movements and still they remain positive and engaged. Teachers carry mini suitcases full of books as they transfer from one room to another along the one way system. The easiest things that we took for granted became logistical challenges.

In the midst of all of this, teaching and learning has been reimagined and school life continues with a new found resilience. Life in OLS is as rich if not richer than ever. There is a strong sense that education is no longer taken for granted and we really feel the appreciation of the students as they thank teachers for continually going that extra mile. They have learned to look beyond themselves much more as they see suffering and loneliness that exists because of this pandemic.

We thought that we would make slow progress this year with our vital fundraising for the replacement of the astroturf pitch, due to the economic downturn that has affected many. We are amazed and very grateful for the generous response to our request for prizes for the raffle and the purchase of tickets. Due to decreasing costs and the generosity of the community we are inching closer to the monies required. With a big fundraising push for the sponsored walk during Wellbeing Week in March 2021 we will be in a position to replace the pitch over the summer, hopefully ready for September 2021. This is down to your continued generosity. Please continue to assist us if possible.

We are currently developing our Active Flag walkway around the school to encourage the students to take exercise during the breaks in the school day.

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Principal:
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Deputy Principals:
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Inter House has gained a new lease of life with Covid regulations and competitions abound. Christmas tree decorating has even become a competitive sport in OLS!

As always charitable acts are the foundation of our values in OLS and the community has rallied together to give generously to St Vincent de Paul, Pieta House, Peter McVerry and Goal. The number of hats and scarves knitted for the Peter McVerry foundation has dramatically increased and we were delighted at the number of students who took up knitting for the first time.

The English Department led a letter writing campaign to nursing homes around the country which was taken on board so enthusiastically by our students. For many it was the first 'real' letter that they ever posted.

The APP continues to play a central role in school communications. You can now access your VSWare reports from the APP and it is the only place to send absences and lates.

We finished the term off with another Covid challenge, how to run our end of term festivities in line with Covid protocols. As always team OLS pulled it off starting the day with our beautiful religious celebration put together by P5 followed by House events and L5's whole school quiz.

Our thoughts and prayers go to all those who have had bereavements over the past year and also to those unable to spend the festive season with their loved ones.

I wish each and every member of the OLS family a healthy and happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Principal

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