

24/01/2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to you to update you on a number of developments which have occurred that will impact on the schools agreed calendar this coming term.

Firstly, the Department of Education and Skills issued a circular to all schools regarding Junior Cycle Professional Time which will be afforded to all schools to assist in the embedding and implementation of the New Junior Cycle within our curriculum. The Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) school support service will assist schools in implementing their junior cycle programme through the provision of high quality CPD and relevant learning and teaching resources. CPD training opportunities will be provided to subject teachers, both off-site and on a whole-school basis, as well as to school leaders.

Please note that the teaching staff in Cashel Community School will continue engagement with these CPD programs on Thursday the 1st of February. Therefore students will finish classes on Wednesday the 31st of January and will return to school on Friday the 2nd of February. Please be aware that school management have no influence on the scheduling of these JCT dates and understand parents' concerns regarding fragmentise school weeks.

The second development centres around Child Protection practices and regulations. Following consultations between the Department of Education and Skills, organisations representing school management, parents and teachers, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, new "Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017" have been developed and published.

These procedures apply to all recognised post-primary schools. As and from 11 December 2017 all teachers registered with the Teaching Council are Mandated Persons. Mandated persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015. These are:

- a. To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla
- b. To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

In order to ensure teachers are aware of their responsibilities under this new legislation schools will be permitted two separate half-day school closures during the 2017/18 school year to allow time, as a school community, to engage with the revised procedures.

These days should take the following format:

Day 1 Schools engage with the 90-minute Universal e-Learning programme developed by Tusla which is available to schools by clicking the link below. This programme was written to support all personnel, regardless of profession, in recognising concerns about children and reporting such concerns, as required.

Day 2 Schools engage with the dedicated PDST on-line resource to guide them through the revised DES procedures.

The board of management has instructed the Principal to engage with the first day's training on **Friday the 9th of February**. Therefore please be advised that classes will be suspended at **12.35p.m** on this day. It is proposed that training will commence from **1.15 p.m. - 3.35 p.m.** Further details will be forwarded to you closer to the scheduled date.

Finally, as a school community it is imperative that we explore every avenue to effectively communicate with all the stakeholders in the school. It is envisaged that a new development of e mailing parents/guardians will assist in the whole school communication systems.

We would appreciate that you check your submitted e mail to ascertain if you have received the correspondence from the school. To date we have forwarded a number of school correspondence to your e mail address. If however you have not received the e mail correspondence or are unable to open the attached file please bring it to our attention.

Regards,

John Gallagher

Principal