



3rd February

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We hope that this communication finds you well. We are writing to you with regard to various aspects relating to our school.

Permanent Accommodation

You may recall that the Department of Education and Educate Together informed us that our tender as part of *Lot 6 Tender* was due to go out on Monday 12th December with construction expected to commence later this calendar year. We were informed this week that this has not in fact happened and that Lot 6 is being reviewed. Our understanding is that both our school and HXETNS were ready to go to tender in September 2022 and that this pack would include 8 schools in total. I am sure that you share our deep frustrations around this news and the lack of clarity from the Department of Education. Our Board of Management are in the process of writing to the Department of Education, and we have arranged for a meeting with Educate Together to ascertain whether this delay will have any impact on the scheduled construction start time of Quarter 4 2023. We have also contacted local representatives to make representations of our behalf to the Minister's office. Please be assured that we will keep you updated as soon as we get new information.

Digital Learning

During wet or cold breaks/lunchtimes, students have permission to remain in their base classrooms. This term, we have asked all students if they are indoors for break/lunchtime, that they do not use their iPads. While the iPad is an amazing educational tool which enhances the learning experience for all of our students, we are conscious of screen-time and we want our students to engage with each other, connect and build lasting friendships at break and lunchtimes.

We would encourage similar use of your child's iPad at home so that it is used to support their learning to complete project assignments, research or homework from Schoolwise. Please note that Wriggle's management of your child's device means that they cannot download any apps which are not pre-approved by the school. In terms of their browsing, our firewall at school ensures that no inappropriate content can be accessed using our school wifi and as per our Acceptable Usage Policy, no students are permitted to use their mobile phones in school as a hotspot. In terms of your child using their iPad at home to browse the internet, please check your wifi/broadband settings to ensure similar settings are in place.

Irish Water

Thank you for your patience and understanding regarding the recent Irish Water maintenance works. Fortunately, this time, there was no impact on our supply. We will continue to engage with them and monitor their works programme to ensure that there is no future impact on our supply, particularly around the time of Junior Cycle practical assessments later this academic year and State Examinations in June

Sports Updates

Basketball

- On Wednesday 18th January, First and Second Year Girls' basketball teams won their first games against Mount Anville in the first games of their leagues.
- Second Year Girls played in a blitz in The King's Hospital School in December.
- First and Second Year Boys' basketball teams have upcoming games against Greenhills Community School in the first games of their leagues.
- On Wednesday 11th January, our U16 Boys' basketball team won the East D plate final against Cabinteely Community School
- They won 23-13 to a very strong Cabinteely side.
- Lucas Attard captained the team which was made up of 11 Third Year boys.
- The team has worked so hard over the number of years since forming in 2020 and their victory was well-deserved.
- It was a great day for our entire school community and the 170 HCETSS student spectators present were thrilled to support the team and witness our first ever school sporting win!

GAA

- The Junior Boys GAA team have been training every Friday afternoon and we are hoping to organise friendly matches over the coming weeks.
- Training commenced last term for the Junior Girls GAA team. We are currently recruiting more female GAA players and are hoping to get enough players to attend a blitz in February.

Table Tennis

- Our lunch-time table tennis tournament is underway

Ultimate Frisbee

- Students have been practising during PE lessons.
- We will enter a Junior Ultimate Frisbee competition on the 9th of February in the National Sports Campus.

Climbing

- A number of our students will enter the Irish Schools Climbing Competition towards the end of the school year. This takes place at Awesome Walls, Finglas, Dublin.

Athletics

- In May, we are looking forward to sending a large teams of boys and girls to compete in the Educate Together Olympics in Santry. We hope to compete in a range of track and field events.

We are very grateful to Deirdre, Rowie, Dan, John and Ger for their commitment to sports in our school.

Debating Update

Our students have engaged in a number of inter-school debates over the course of Term 1 and start of Term 2.

Debate 1

- Versus Bremore ETSS

- Technology is making people lazy
- We opposed the motion
- Debaters - Darragh Dwyer (2A), Molly Dowling (2B), Jake Denham (2C) and Isabela McCrory (1A)
- We won.

Debate 2

- Versus Belmayne ETSS
- Weekends should be extended to three days
- We were proposing the motion
- Debaters - Darragh Dwyer (2A), Paul Caccamo Duggan (2C), Jake Denham (2C) and Grace Malone (1C)
- We lost. It was a very tight debate.
- Judges noted that we had some of the best rebuttals they had seen from the competition so far.
- Darragh Dwyer (2A) Leinster, won best speaker.

Debate 3

- Versus Limerick ETSS
- Reality shows should be part of the Junior Cycle Curriculum
- We will be opposing this motion.

We have an incredible First and Second Year debating team who are ably assisted by our Third Year Debate Coaches. These Debate Coaches have also acted as Debate Judges for Round 1 of the debate competition. Huge thanks to Rowie and all of the students involved. Debating is fast becoming one of our largest co-curricular clubs.

Co-Curricular and Extra-curricular Programme

Please see below link to our programme for Term 2.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f7361e0f18aec79a147bcd3/t/63bbfc29733e724e8372cdeb/1673264170151/Co-Curricular+Timetable+2022.23+term+2.pdf>

The breadth and balance of this programme is testament to the commitment of our staff. With a small staff, we manage to offer 23 different clubs every single school week. If your child is not already involved in one of these clubs, we recommend that they try out one new club between now and May. All of these clubs and activities are a great way to engage in other learning in our school, build friendships and enhance your child's sense of belonging in our school.

School Trips

We are in the process of organising one day trips for each year group. Once details have been finalised, we will inform all students and notify all parents and guardians. Please note that due to the current staffing crisis in second level teaching, it will unfortunately, not be possible for us to organise an overseas trip this academic year. Such a trip requires a teacher to student ratio of 1:10. As we have only 18 full time teachers and with no substitute teachers available in Dublin, at this point, an overseas trip would impact negatively on class delivery for the year groups/classes not travelling on

the trip. We hope that the Department of Education work to resolve this issue so that such educational trips are viable for us for 2023-2024.

Campus Safety

We have been working closely with HXETNS over the past number of months to ensure that our school avenue is safe for all national school and second school students, parents and staff. We need your continued support and cooperation with this.

Please see below updated guidelines for all members of our school communities:

Guidelines for the Avenue:

- All pedestrians should stay on the path where possible and wheels should use the road.
- Treat the avenue the same way you would treat a national road - keep left where possible.
- Slow down when cycling and scooting.
- Encourage pupils to stay in view while cycling/scooting up the avenue.
- Please remember that some vehicles need access to the school - slow down and cycle on the left.

In the coming weeks, you will notice:

- New 'slow down' and speed limit signs and mirrors on the avenue.
- One pedestrian gate at Harold's Cross Road will be closed in order to streamline pedestrian access
- Staff will continue to monitor the avenue where possible in the mornings

There will be times when cars are moving on the avenue. We will do our best to continue liaising with our staff, taxi drivers and delivery drivers to try to avoid drop off and collection times.

A reminder to all, there is no parking inside the entrance gates unless previously discussed and agreed with either school.

Thank you all for doing your best to make the avenue a safer place for the students in both schools.

Finally, thank you again for your continued support.
It is always appreciated and never taken for granted.

Wishing you all a lovely long weekend.

Kind regards,

Pádraig Conaty

Principal

Mick Heffernan

Deputy Principal