

# 1ST YEAR NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 25TH 2024



## Year Head Welcome

Welcome to our First Year Newsletter for parents and students. The transition to life in St. Caimin's has gone really well for our first years who have embraced second level education with enthusiasm and commitment. Our teachers and mentors who were involved in the Meitheal induction program all helped getting our new students off to a super start. We captured some images of the student's first day at school and all images are available at the following link <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBEPmY>

The students have adapted to their new school environment with ease and are working really well in all their new subjects. Now that the option rotation period is over, student timetables have been finalized. First Year is a busy year, settling in and embracing all the new subjects. A reminder to parents that:

1. **Absent notes** need to be uploaded on **VS Ware** so that they can be authorised by us.
2. If a student is leaving for an appointment or returning to school from an appointment, they need to **sign-out and sign-in at reception**. This should also be recorded by the parent on VS Ware.
3. All **behaviour issues** are now recorded on VS Ware -parents/guardians should check this feature regularly to keep track of how their child is doing.
4. VS Ware is a parent app and students **should not** be given access to the sign in details.
5. First year students are expected to complete **one and a half hours homework per night** and complete at least **thirty minutes reading** for their AR Challenge. All homework should be written into their homework journals which you are asked to sign at least once a week.

Finally, thank you to all our parents and guardians for your support and help in getting our students off on the right foot. My email address remains [siobhan.mcsweeney@stcaimins.ie](mailto:siobhan.mcsweeney@stcaimins.ie)

Wishing you all a wonderful midterm break.

Siobhan  
Year Head

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Dates for your Diary !!

**6th of December:** School Closed; Discretionary Day.

**20th of December to the 6th of January**—Christmas Holidays. (Return to school 6th of January.)

**Tuesday, 7th January 2025, 4:15 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. First Year Parent Teacher Meeting.**

**3rd of February:** School Closed (St. Bridget's Day).

**14th-24th of February:** Mid-Term Break. (Return to school on the 24th of February.)

**17th of March:** School Closed for St. Patrick's Day.

**31st of March:** School Closed for Teacher Training Day.

**11th-28th of April:** Easter Holidays. (Return to school the 28th of April.)

**5th of May:** School Closed May Bank Holiday.

**Monday 26th to Wednesday 28th May, 2025-First Year Summer Exams.**

### Homework

In terms of homework, we expect that there is a genuine attempt made by the student to complete the homework to the best of his/her ability and to submit the work at an agreed time.

Homework is a very important part of learning. It helps us to build on what we have learned in class, to practice skills, to ensure we understand new topics/concepts and to prepare for the next class/exam.

The Homework Journal is the place where all homework is recorded. Homework is recorded at the end of each class and students have been reminded that there are many different types of homework; writing, learning, reading, researching and drawing. Parents and guardians should ensure that the student completes all homework to the best of his/her ability and should sign the homework journal each week (Thursday night is best).

First year students are expected to complete **1.5 hours of homework a night.**

If your son/daughter is struggling with their homework please contact me and we can arrange support for him/her.

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### Accelerated Reading

All classes are up and running with their Accelerated Reader books and are really enjoying getting stuck into some great stories! Increased reading will bring you huge rewards! The Accelerated Reading Challenge motivates, monitors and manages students' independent reading.

Your sons/daughters are all encouraged to read books at their own reading levels. They test on completion of the book and accumulate points which will help monitor their progress.

**Each student is expected to read for at least 30 minutes per day. Students can now test at home using the AR link which Ms O'Brien uploaded on to our First Year Team.**

[Renaissance Learning Login](#)



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## Information Technology

Here in St. Caimin's we use a 'digital learning platform' to assist with teaching, learning and assessment. Working on the Microsoft 365 platform, students have access to Microsoft Teams where they can communicate and collaborate on classwork as well as receive updates on what is happening in general school life. Students also have free access to apps like Word, Excel, PowerPoint where the school pays a subscription on the student's behalf. These can be accessed via the main Office 365 Portal at [www.office.com](http://www.office.com). At the beginning of the year all first year students attended an ICT induction session where computer account details were provided (see sticker added inside journal) and students got up and running with computers for the first time. Many students are now also actively using Microsoft teams on their mobile phones. We encourage parents/guardians to be aware of their children's use of this platform and engage with them on this. Where technical issues are encountered, and support is required, the school operates an ICT Helpdesk which is available to students, but parents can now also feel free to use this support. Our **Acceptable Use Policy** should be reviewed and school accounts may only be used for educational purposes.

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## Surfing in Lahinch

Every year Mr. Forde and a trusted group of teachers take our first year students on a trip to Lahinch surfing. The students are always eager and enthusiastic to head off and this year was no different. On Thursday and Friday, October 3rd and 4th bus loads of excited first years left the school and embarked on a fun filled, if exhausting, day out. Thanks to Mr. Forde, the accompanying teachers and the Meitheal leaders who made this day possible. Additional pictures available on this link. <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBLKAS>



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## Extracurricular Activities

Without doubt one of the best things about being a first year is the ability to engage in a vast array of extracurricular activities available in the school. This term our first years have been very busy playing camogie, soccer, rugby and hurling. Others have joined the school swim team or athletics team while others still have got involved in our SVP Conference or the lunchtime games club. The trad group have been particularly busy performing for our Culture Night Video and for our Open Night. Congratulations to all students and teachers involved in these activities and oops/sorry to those I forgot to include. I think the pictures below help communicate the rich experiences available to our students outside of the classroom. If your son/daughter has not yet found their club/team, let me know and we will point them in the right direction.

First Year Camogie Pictures <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBL5RJ>

First Year Soccer Pictures <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBMyRc>

First Year Hurlers <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBJGs3>

First Year Rugby <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBif4K>



**First Year Camogie Girls in action.**



**First Year Hurlers in action.**



**First Year Soccer in action.**



**Learning to Learn and Study Skills Resources St. Caimin's Shannon**

Study Skills Supports for Parents and Students

[padlet.com](https://padlet.com)

**Liam McCarthy's Visit To St. Caimin's.**

On Friday, the 27th of September, the students of St. Caimin's were delighted with the visit of the Liam McCarthy Cup to the school. Three past pupils were members of the All-Ireland Senior Hurling winning panel this year, and the school was honoured to be visited by them. Darragh Lohan, Aaron Shanagher, and Rory Hayes all received a well-deserved welcome from the students and the

teachers alike. Over 700 students and staff packed into our PE Hall to welcome back our sporting heroes. The lads spoke of hard work and commitment being the secret to success on the sports field and in life. They thanked the hurling coaches in St. Caimin's over the years for the encouragement and skills they learned while attending our school. These three young men are role models for all our younger students.



## Pumpkin Carving 🎃

On Friday, October 18th Ms. Masterson ran a very enjoyable pumpkin carving workshop for some first year students. The craic was mighty as the students got stuck in and cleaned out their pumpkins before deciding on their individual designs. Great care was taken while carving the pumpkins and the pictures below demonstrate the success of the activity. Thanks to Ms. Masterson and all our staff who helped on the day.



## Trick or Treat for Temple Steet ( Children's Health Foundation)

During the summer of 2023, Temple Street Children's Hospital played a huge part in helping our Principal, Ms. Sheehan's daughter to recover from a brain tumour. In an effort to repay some of the kindness shown to Ms. Sheehan's family, the school dedicated Wednesday Oct 23rd 2024 as a dress up day for Halloween. This was our second annual event and a super day of fun was had by all in the school. Much needed funds are being raised for the Children's Health Foundation and you can donate by clicking on our Instagram page.

More pictures available here <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBPbjY>



## Student Supports.

If your son or daughter is struggling to settle in to second level school now is an ideal time to highlight the supports that are available to students, which include:

- Access to the guidance counsellor.
- One-on-one meetings with the year head.
- Access to the school chaplain
- One-to-one tuition with the Learning to Learn programme.
- Extra tuition support with your class teachers.
- Plus a wide range of well-being supports and activities.

If any student is not feeling their very best, then they can contact any member of the pastoral support team at any time.



**WISHING YOU ALL A SPOOKTAGULAR HALLOWEEN.**



### Smore Templates

Smore is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters