

## **Scoil Ursula Newsletter**

- **NEW CONNECT APP FOR PARENTS:** We are delighted to announce that Scoil Ursula through its administration system Aladdin is introducing a new way for parents to keep in contact with the school. From Halloween on, we will be moving from our text based system of contacting parents to a new App called 'Aladdin Schools Connect'. This system will not only make it easier and cheaper for us to contact you but will also include features which will enable parents to access information about your children as well as enter reasons for absences instead of having to ring the school. You will receive a letter this week explaining everything and we are asking you to download the App on to your phone before or during Mid-Term so that we are up and running after the Halloween Break.
- **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION:**
  - Thank you to all the new parents that came to our AGM. It was great to see such a turn out. If it wasn't for the continued support of parents, the Parents Association would not be able to continue to fundraise in helping the school in providing continuing resources such as the music generation or literacy programmes.
  - We would also like to thank Stephan Daly, outgoing Chairman, for all his hard work over the past year and Siobhan O'Connor, outgoing joint Secretary, for all of her dedication to that role.
  - The PA is holding a Halloween disco on the 25th October. It is €3 per/€5 per family. It will be held during school hours 11.30 – 12.30 for the junior classes and 1-2 for the senior classes, it promises to be great fun.
  - Our next meeting is the 15th November and all parents are welcome. It is a great way to get involved in school life and meet other parents.

**PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS:** This year's P-T Meetings will take place over the three days from Tuesday, November the 20<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, November the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Schedules will be sent out to parents in advance.

- **ROAD SAFETY:** As you know, it is very busy in the morning time and in the afternoon with a lot of traffic congestion at the school gates and nearby. Our Garda Liaison Officer has noticed that many parents abandon their cars and walk their children up to and down from the school building. She also noted that some of these children can be as old as 7 or 8 years and would probably be able to make their way up and down on their own. Scoil Ursula, while being very conscious of children with special needs requiring the help of an adult, promotes independence among its pupils and we would recommend that in most cases children from 1<sup>st</sup> class up could walk up and down on their own. This will serve as good training for them and alleviate some of the congestion at peak times.

- **INTERNET SAFETY:** A reminder to parents to monitor your children's online activity. We have had some recent incidences of inappropriate use by a small number of our pupils reported to us. While these occurrences are outside of school, they do have implications for in-school relationships. When we receive reports like this, we will contact the parents of pupils allegedly involved to tip them off to talk to their children. If we receive concrete evidence of cyber-bullying, we will pass it on to the Gardaí via our Garda Liaison Officer.
- **GREENSCHOOLS & HEALTHY EATING:**
  - Congratulations: Comhghairdeas mór to our Greenschools & Gardening Committee who were honoured last week with a 1<sup>st</sup> Prize in the school's section of the Sligo Tidy Towns Awards. Well done to all and míle buíochas to our coordinators, Ms Ryan & Ms Kernan.
  - Healthy Eating: Over the past few years, we have established some very healthy practices in regard to what our pupils bring to school in their lunchboxes. We have noticed, however, that unhealthy items such as bars and sugary dairy items are beginning to reappear. We are therefore appealing to parents to re-establish the good habits and only send healthy lunches to school with your children. It will benefit everyone in the long run!!
- **NUT FREE ZONE:** Due to the increasing number of pupils presenting with nut allergies and the fact that nuts are not an essential part of anyone's diet, it was decided to declare Scoil Ursula a 'Nut-Free Zone'. Please ensure that you do not include any foods that have a nut content in your children's lunch boxes.
- **LEGO APPEAL:** As you know, Lego is widely regarded as one of the best toys to encourage creativity and innovation among all age groups of children. Scoil Ursula has decided to develop a bank of Lego resources to have in the school as a teaching and learning resource especially for children with additional needs. Before we set about purchasing items, which can be very expensive, we decided to put a call-out to our parents to donate old Lego sets that your children may have out grown at this stage. We are looking for any type of Lego from Duplo to the more advanced sets. They don't have to be in their original sets as we will be encouraging our pupil users to mix and match and be creative in what they build with them. If you do have any Lego hanging around the house that you no longer use, please bag it and send it in to us before Halloween. Thank you once again for supporting our school initiatives.
- **SÚGRADH LE CHÉILE:** The Súgradh le Chéile programme took place this week for pupils and parents of some of our Junior classes. Sligo Sports & Recreational Partnership facilitated two days of structured play between parents and their children. Thank you to all the parents, pupils and teachers who participated in the workshops and to Mrs Kernan for co-ordinating this very successful and enjoyable event.

- **NATURE WALKS:** We had a very successful nature walk week with Shailagh Healy this week taking a number of our junior classes to explore the autumnal flora and fauna. Thanks again to Mrs Kernan for organising this most worthwhile initiative.
  
- **STAY SAFE & RELATIONSHIPS & SEXUALITY PROGRAMMES:**  
A reminder that both of these programmes are now mandatory to be taught in all Irish Primary Schools and will be taught to all of our pupils unless we receive a specific written request from parents to withdraw their children from these lessons.
  
- **HALLOWEEN RECYCLING FANCY DRESS DAY:** Once again the Greenschools Committee is organising a fancy dress day on Thursday next. There will be a class prize for the most original costumes made from recycled material. Good luck everyone!!
  
- **SPORT:**
  - Athletics: Congratulations to all our participants in the two recent Athletics Events, the SuperValu Athletics Fest in the IT and the Cross Country event in Sligo IT. Well done to Liadán, who won a bronze in the Sligo event and Caoimhe & Daire who also represented Scoil Ursula with distinction in the Connacht Cross Country Finals in Loughrea on Saturday. Well done to all!!
  - Daily Mile: Our teachers are piloting various versions of the Daily Mile initiative over these weeks. We hope to design a whole school strategy around the event after Mid-Term.
  - Futsal: Well done to our Girls Futsal Team who won all four of their games at this year's event in the Knocknarea Arena last week. Míle buíochas to John Mc Ateer for volunteering his expertise again this year.
  - Hurling: Our hurling team played their Cumann na mBunscol Round Robin Blitz on Friday last against Strandhill, Rathcormac and Gaelscoil. The boys and girls performed well in all their matches but didn't manage to qualify this year.
  - Rugby: 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Classes are participating in Rugby Coaching Sessions with Ross Mannion.
  - GAA Mini-7s: Well done to our Mini 7s teams who performed so well in the first round of the competition on Tuesday. Congratulations to the Girls' team who qualified for the next round winning all their games and Rebecca who won the place-kicking competition!! Míle buíochas to Mr Phelan for all the coaching sessions!!
  
- **SYMPATHY:** We extend our sympathy to the family of Board of Management member, Sharon Carleton, on the death of her sister Niamh R.I.P. We also offer our condolences to part-time SEN Teacher, Donna Morgan, on the death of her mother. Ar dheis Dé go rabh a n-anamnacha!

- **SCHOOL WEBSITE:** Don't forget to keep up with school news, events and policy formation on our school website [www.scoilursula.com](http://www.scoilursula.com). You can also follow us on Facebook & Twitter.
  
- **DATES FOR YOU DIARY:**
  - Mid-Term Break- School closes at normal times (1:30pm & 2:30pm) on Thursday, October, 25<sup>th</sup> and reopens on Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Confession 2018: Thursday March 21, 7pm, Cathedral
  - Confirmation 2018: Sunday May 19, 12:00, Cathedral
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Communion 2018: Sunday June 9, 12:00, Cathedral

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Tony Gallagher, Principal.