

# First Year Newsletter

*Year 2021/ 2022*

## Welcome

Welcome to our First Year newsletter for parents. The students have settled into St. Caimin's and are embracing their new life in Secondary School. They have adapted to their new school environment with ease and are working really well in all their new subjects.

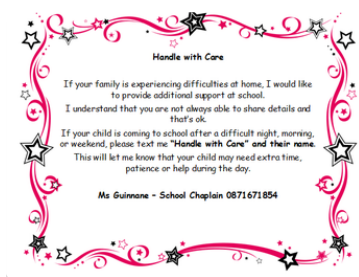
First Year is a busy year, settling in and embracing all the new subjects. Students have adjusted really well after a tough year or so with Covid.

Some key points for you to note -

1. First year students need to have their subjects filled in each week into their journals
2. Students should have written and learning homework written into their journal for every subject and then you can observe the homework being completed each night
3. Parents sign their child's journal each week
4. Absent notes need to be uploaded on Vsware online
5. 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

The first years enjoyed a wonderful day out bonding on their trip to Lahinch. They took on the challenge of learning to surf in the sunshine, played football on the beach where a friendly dog joined in and enjoyed each other's company in the beaming sunshine. Many thanks to Mr. Forde for organising this fabulous day out.


On return from the October Mid Term break, students need to get into a good routine of completing all homework and learning and studying their subjects each night in preparation for their upcoming exams at Christmas.



## A note from our School Chaplain

Just a brief note to say hello. If I can assist or support your son/daughter while in St. Caimin's please don't hesitate to contact me here in the school or on the Student Support Phone. 0871671854. Enjoy the mid term.

Cora

 087-1671854



## Our Young Scientists

Here are some photos of First year students doing experiments in Ms. Fallon's science class. They made a model of a plant cell, and Ms. Fallon had a competition to make a model using stuff from around the house of a plant cell, here are some of the entries



## First year entry

Our creative displays of plant cells!



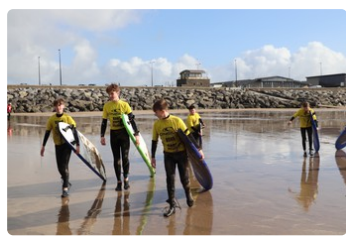
## Students busying with their experiments!

Mrs. Fallon's scientists hard at work!

## Surfing Trip

In the days leading up to the October break, our first-year students embarked on their very first school trip with their friends and classmates in St. Caimin's Community College. The location – Lahinch, Co. Clare. Lahinch ticks all the boxes - with a long sandy beach, waves ideal for surfing, and beautiful views across Liscannor Bay, it was the perfect day away from the classroom for our students. Our first years enjoyed various activities on the day, including surf lessons, a dip in the ocean, a trip to the local playground, a walk and kick around on the beach and a well-earned ice-cream at the end of the day. The surfing lessons were provided by qualified ISA surf coaches and beach lifeguards and the students picked up lots of new information on all things surf-related - waves, environment, tides, and surfing techniques, with plenty of entertainment and games from the instructors thrown in for good measure. The students were given great care and attention from the team of instructors, and they had a ball. For the majority of our students, it was their first experience on a surfboard, but the crew in Lahinch were very encouraging and supportive. Students were provided with all surfing equipment on the day, including foam boards and wet suits. Overall, the day was a great success and gave students an opportunity to enjoy some well-deserved sunshine, waves, and fresh air. Thanks to all teachers and staff who helped to make it such a memorable day!





**First Years catching waves**



**First Years catching waves**



**First Years catching waves**


## Meitheal by Saoirse Lagan

On the first day in first year, we were all very nervous and scared but we had some lovely Meitheal leaders helping us settle in and showing us around. All the leaders were beyond wonderful. They played fun games with us, some of these games were bingo, kahoot, pair games and physical games. They gave us a informative tour all around the school, showing us the meditation room, bathrooms, the office, the canteen and tons more, they gave us some helpful tips for starting in our new school and they helped us make new friends and get to know our new classmates.

All the Meitheal leaders were a great help to the new first year students on their new adventure in St Caimin's and we are especially thankful for their time and effort to help us all settle in.

## My first days of First Year by Zak Phelan

On my first day of secondary school I was feeling both nervous and excited. When I walked in the school door I was brought up to my classroom by the mentors. These mentors were senior students at the school, and they were very welcoming to everyone. There were a lot of people in my class that I know as I felt more at ease. As the day went on, I began to make new friends. We played icebreaker



games such as Kahoot and also other games which allowed us to get to know one another. We were then brought on a tour of the school and got to see all of the different classrooms. After a few days we got our timetables and began going to our different classes. It was hard at first with the timetable and having a different teacher after 40 minutes, but I got used to it after a few days. Once we got settled into the school, we are allowed to attend our option classes that we had chosen. This was very exciting because I had never got to try subjects like these before. After the first week of school was finished, sport started up. This was great because we had missed out in school sport due to the pandemic. I could not wait to get back playing sport with my school and to also start playing with friends from different clubs. We have played two matches already and I have really enjoyed the days out and look forward to more. My first few weeks of first year have been really enjoyable and I look forward to the rest of the year.

## Welcome to the Hub

### **First 8 weeks in the hub!**

Hello and welcome to the Hub!

In August of 2021, St. Caimin's Community School established its first Special Education Class for students with Autism.

We have the capacity for 6 students and in class we strive to maximise each student's potential in the areas of academics, social experiences, and wellbeing.

Our aim is to ensure that each student will benefit from an integrated and inclusive education.

The class provides the structure and support necessary to ensure each student maximises his or her participation in mainstream. It offers an individualised support structure for each student to achieve their personal best.

In addition to maximising each student's participation in mainstream some students have the opportunity to engage in small practical classes such as Home Economics, Woodwork and Art. All students benefit from an Education Programme that is tailored to their individual needs.

### **Individual workstations**

In the Hub, we have six workstations, which can be tailored to suit the individual needs, learning styles and special interests of our students.

Workstations can help students achieve independent learning, they can facilitate 1:1 sessions between students and their teachers and they provide a solo and private space, where students can work independently on their laptop to complete literacy and numeracy tasks.


### **Sensory Room**

The sensory room is a place for our students to go when they are feeling overwhelmed or anxious during the school day. This room offers a calm, quiet space where students can regain control of their emotions and be alone. We have designed our sensory room specifically, in consultation with our students. Our sensory room combines a range of stimuli to help our students develop and engage their senses. These include bean bags, dimmer lights, bubble tubes with colour changing LED lights, a fibre optic colour changing lamp and a Twirly Whirly Rainmaker. Other sensory equipment available to students include a deep pressure sensory vest, gym balls and a variety of fidget toys and bubble toys. The floor of the sensory room is covered with foam puzzle mats which are soft and comfortable for our students.

### **Outdoor area**

This outdoor area is a fun, recreational space where students can enjoy games, space, and some fresh air in between classes.

We have a bench area where students can relax, have a conversation with friends, or enjoy a class outdoors when the sun is shining.





## First Year Scientists

Ms. Cooney's First Years with the cell models that they made in Science class. They were thrilled to get their photo taken and display all their hard work



## Surfing Trip by Maria Gordeeva and Caeden Maguire

Yesterday we had our Lahinch trip, first off we started off our day by getting our bus from the school and off onto the road. The bus was full of eager kids ready to hit the water and have a great day. Once we got to Lahinch we got all our stuff and everyone gathered at the playground and played around there for about an hour, climbing and going on the swings - reliving our youth !!! Everyone was bugging poor Ms. Ryan Quinn to see when we would get to go and get ready for the surfing :-)

Before we got ready, we went down to the beach for a walk before we found a nice place to leave our stuff and kick around the ball. As we were passing the ball someone's dog ran out of nowhere and took the ball. The teachers were in stitches watching everyone trying to get the ball back. But the dog was faster and definitely had better soccer skills than us. After all of the fun and chaos we eventually ate our lunch.

Finally, we made our way over to the surfing clinic to get wetsuits and boots on. We were also given coloured tops and they determined which groups we would go to on the beach. When we got down to the sand we were all given a surfboard and were taught all the basics about surfing. We learned how to catch waves on our stomach, and then how to stand up. After lots of tumbles and shaky moments, many of us managed to stand on our surf boards.

We all had an amazing day and enjoyed out time in Lahinch





## Visit from An Garda Síochána

On Thursday the 21st of October, the Gardai spoke to first year students about keeping safe during the Halloween holidays. They warned them of the dangers of bonfires and fireworks. Fireworks in particular cause great damage and the age group that are most likely to be harmed by them are 12 to 15 year olds. He also reminded them that pets can be very distressed around fireworks and to look after their pets during the holidays.

They also spoke to them about the teenage disco's and to mind each other

