

1st May 2020

CIC Summerhill College Newsletter



PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

Welcome to the 2nd edition of our newsletter and I hope this publication finds you and your loved ones safe and well. Many thanks to those of you who responded to our online learning survey last week. It is still open for comments and suggestions [here](#). We have had a number of online year group assemblies this week. Thank you to all for the very positive attendance and feedback. Unfortunately not everyone could not be in attendance for the live assembly but a video was sent to the relevant year groups after its conclusion.

We will have assemblies again in the middle of May to provide more school updates and will be upgrading our capacity to ensure all members of each year group can attend live.

We continue to encourage students to keep in contact with their teachers via Google Classroom and email.

We will have end of year assessments/summer reports for all year groups (except Leaving Certificate students). Details of these as well as an end of year calendar will be published in the next week. A Term report has been created by teachers to give you an update on your sons' progress over the last number of weeks. This can be found via your VSWare account.

Members of our Alumni Association have been working over the last number of weeks to develop a Covid 19 response platform which can be accessed [here](#). They are asking past (and current) students to share their memories/photos of Summerhill to help bring some cheer to those cocooning as we will share them through our social media sites over the next few weeks.

They have also created a business directory for all those connected to the college to provide support during and after this crisis along with offering local assistance to those cocooning. Please help us spread the word about this wonderful campaign.

Stay safe and keep together by keeping apart.

Paul Keogh

Principal

WEBINARS

Summerhill College staff have lined up some excellent webinars which will complement the ongoing work being done via Google Classroom platform. The sessions will be offered to all students and will provide an opportunity for students to learn new areas of the curriculum or revise topics for the next few weeks. It is essential that students register for these as soon as possible via their student email account. A list of next week's topics and how to register for them have been sent to each students email account.

Contact:

Phone Enquiries (9am-12noon):
0860584733

Email Enquiries:
info@summerhillcollege.ie

Useful Links:

[Parent/Guardian Guide to using Google Classroom](#)

[List of Google Classroom Codes](#)

MIND YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

A Message from the Chaplain

Dear Students,

These are stressful and uncertain times. We are all still grappling to come to terms with how our world has changed around us so rapidly. I understand you will all be experiencing this new reality differently too. Some of you may be missing the familiar routine and structure of school; others may be enjoying being at home and the change of pace this brings. Some of you may be embracing online learning and enjoying new learning experiences; others may be struggling to adapt, having trouble with their wifi or devices or missing having the teacher there to support them. Some may be enjoying the time at home with family; others may be experiencing tension at home. I think most of us are missing our wider family network and friends and being able to do simple things like going for a coffee with friends or to the cinema.

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all the darkness”

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu

For those of you who are in examination years my heart goes out to you especially. Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers. Here is a good article from SpunOut on managing your stress at this difficult time:

<https://spunout.ie/news/article/how-to-handle-exam-stress-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

Stress can be a useful emotion in small doses, it can keep us focused and motivated towards our goals. However it is important that we do not remain in a state of stress constantly or it may have the opposite effect. Watch this video for a good explanation and remember: [put the glass down!](#)

Finally, I want to speak to you about hope. At this time hope is more important now than ever. Hope gives us energy and sustains us as we try to cope with these trying circumstances. Here is a video that explains the benefits of a hopeful disposition: [Hope Theory - Make Your Life Better](#)

Look after one another. Keep safe and keep well.

Wishing you all God's blessings,

Denise Mc Cann

School Chaplain

Chaplaincy Contact:

dmccann@summerhillcollege.ie



AEN UPDATE

NEPS advice & resources for keeping children and young people well during Covid-19 The Department of Education and Skills' NEPS psychologists have developed advice and some resources for young people, parents/guardians and teachers to help manage and stay well when schools are closed. Those resources are available [here](#). They have also created a resource on relaxation techniques which can be found [here](#).

GUIDANCE UPDATE

The Guidance team continues to be available for students. Please contact us if you have any queries regarding courses and planning next year.

Reminders:

- CAO change of mind facility opens on May 5th. Great opportunity to review your choices.
- ITSligo have virtual chats and Q&A sessions, link is below or alternatively check the ITSligo website. <https://www.itsligo.ie/cao/>
- NUIG Virtual Open day Thursday May 7th @ 12pm
- LYIT Open evening Thursday May 7th @ 3pm

Please check all college websites regularly for information.

Follow the Guidance team on Twitter [@SummerhillColl](#)
mtaylor@summerhillcollege.ie
dconneely@summerhillcollege.ie



THIS WILL PASS

A Message from our Head Prefect

In early March we were told to take our books and notes home with us. We had to leave Summerhill because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The decision to close schools may have been a necessary one, but its outcome has certainly been difficult. There is no doubt that every student enjoys a few days off here or there as a break from the routines of school, but it is certainly more difficult to keep positive and motivated as our time off keeps being extended. I know that many students, including myself, would love to be in school right now, especially as a Leaving Cert to experience those crucial final schools days together, which I consider the end of a journey and the beginning of a new one.

I will admit that it is very hard to keep working without the clear guidance and motivation we have readily available within Summerhill. It is essential to keep using the Google classrooms provided and to keep in contact with our teachers. It is difficult to keep positive without being able to see friends and family, go to places of worship or go to training, music or drama. You are not alone. Even though we may not be physically together, we are still in each other's hearts.

I urge you all to stay focused on the task at hand. The Leaving Cert exams are going ahead and we must utilize this time effectively to ensure we get on the path we wish to walk. I also urge you all to do some exercise at home because a healthy body means a healthy mind and a healthy mind is crucial in these tough times to maintain positivity.

We just need to remember that this will pass. There will come a day when we will all be reunited. We will be allowed to embrace each other and laugh together, play sports together, sing together and do what we do best as a nation -have the craic together, the way things should be.

Joseph Shannon

Head Prefect

“Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible”.
– Saint Francis of Assisi



Digital Tool of the Week



SweetSearch is a Search Engine for Students. It searches only the 35,000 Web sites that research experts and librarians and teachers have evaluated and approved. SweetSearch helps students find outstanding information, faster. It enables them to determine the most relevant results from a list of credible resources, and makes it much easier for them to find primary sources.

GROWTH MINDSET PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Take a photograph and insert a growth mindset quote over the image.

Submit your entry to:
info@summerhillcollege.ie
by the 8th of May

T&C's: The photograph must be your own. The quote must be related to a growth mindset.

Prizes for the best entry from each year group will be posted to the winners.



AN OBSCURE TIME

A Message from the Chairperson of our Student Council

We find ourselves in an unprecedented time. A once in a century occurrence unfortunately. It's hard to believe the vast changes the world has undertaken to fight an invisible war. Strangely enough life goes on behind closed doors. Our routines have been uprooted entirely removing any semblance of normality there once was.

Lockdown is an entirely new premise, staying indoors aside from the small breaks we have be it getting exercise, food or delivering essential goods to those in need. It's quite a bizarre scenario, like a movie that nobody thought they'd find themselves in. What works best though is definitely consistent routine, exercise and a proper sleep schedule. These three are core for surviving the lack of contact with the outside world.

However with the finish line in sight, it's important we recognise how close this is

and push for the final sprint. For non-exam years there's only 4 weeks left in school, it's quite an achievable final push. For Leaving Certs and Junior Certs I do understand it's a different story. While the Junior Certs have received clarity and will only be faced with some alternative assessments the Leaving Certs have been posed with a new challenge. One of the longest Leaving Certs to date nonetheless I really believe we can pull through this despite the odds. The extra 2 months while it can cast a sense of disillusionment but we need to stand back and realise that it's also an advantage that can be played to our strengths. 2 more months to revise and get even more ground covered than may have been possible prior. Ignoring the uncertainty and treating July 29th as the be all end all still holds its benefits for us as we progress forward in maintaining a work ethic.

If we just push for this final stretch we'll reap the rewards of it in the long run.

Tom Forde

Student Council Chairperson

A MESSAGE TO OUR ASD STUDENTS

To all our students in the ASD classes, The most important thing we want to say is that your teachers and SNA's miss you all. We miss all the fun activities we do every week like our music classes and social outings to town. We miss hearing all your news, stories and jokes and we miss all the fantastic work you do at school every day. But we know you are all working hard at home and we just want to say well done and keep up the good work and remember to get lots of fresh air and exercise.

To all our amazing parents; thank you. This is a time of upheaval and change for all students but especially so for those with autism for whom the structure and routine of school is so important. Thank you for working with us to find what will work best for your son at this time. The team and I are here to support you and your families in any way we can so please feel free to contact us at any time.

We look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Below are some links that you might find helpful.

<https://ncse.ie/parents-special-class-special-school>

<https://asiam.ie/asiam-and-covid19/>

<https://www.middletonautism.com/covid19>

Martina Heavey

ASD Class Coordinator.

