



## Presentation College

Headford

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Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

We hope that this letter continues to find you all safe and well. Who could have imagined what this academic year would bring when we arrived back to school on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2019 with hope and anticipation in our hearts. We are truly bearing living witness to the message of Nano Nagle, foundress of the Presentation Sisters whose motto was to *Go One Step Beyond!* Since March 12<sup>th</sup>, I am proud to say that PCH staff have endeavoured to do just this, maintaining contact and continuing online learning with all students, offering ongoing support and encouragement. We appreciate the work you have done as parents, to facilitate on-line learning from home. (We know it hasn't been all plain sailing and easy!) but your encouragement and assistance with that engagement has been invaluable. We are thankful for your support.

We are proud too of our wonderful students and delighted to say that the vast majority of you have been able to continue learning from home, while also being aware of circumstances where student engagement faced significant challenges. Where this was the case, it was gratifying to know that students felt they could reach out to us and trust that we would try our very best to help them in whatever we could.

### **Returning to School & Calendar 2020-21**

We have posted a provisional calendar for the academic year 2020-21 to the website. Planning for the coming academic year continues also. You may be aware that the Department of Education published its report to the Government on planning for the re-opening of schools in line with the roadmap for re-opening business and society on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2020.(Please see <https://www.education.ie/en/covid-19/planning-for-reopening-schools.pdf>). Despite much speculation in the media on what August or September may look like, this is the most up to date and current advice. Even though so much of the detail is still unclear, rest assured that the Board of Management of PCH, senior management team and wider staff are proceeding to formalise arrangements for the coming academic year. As soon as we are in the know, we will communicate with you via the usual channels. We encourage you to keep an eye on our website [www.presheadford.ie](http://www.presheadford.ie) throughout the summer break.

### **Finances**

You are already aware that we, as a voluntary secondary school do not receive the same capitation from the Department of Education and Skills as other second level schools. Indeed, the funding given does not cover the cost of the day to day running of the school, full maintenance of the building and grounds, nor does it provide for the provision of all of the services that we as a school community endeavour to provide for your child.

In order to address this on-going challenge, plans were well afoot at the time of enforced school closure in March to host a major fundraiser over the May Bank Holiday weekend, but unfortunately, this is something we will have to postpone indefinitely.

The Student Services Fee for the academic year 2020-21 is €150 (per student) or a maximum of €200 (per family). We would rather not to have to ask for this fee, but ***please be assured that your contributions will be used efficiently, to benefit all the students of the school, including your child and, in no instance will it be used for a capital purpose.*** Please see a breakdown of this fee below:

<b>Student Services Fee 2019/2020</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Student Journal</b>	€10
<b>Contribution towards materials for practical subjects</b>	€20
<b>Rental of school locker (to include replacement keys)</b>	€50
<b>School Accident Insurance (24-hour cover, 365 days a year)</b>	€10
<b>Licence for home/family use of Microsoft Office to include <i>Word, Excel, PowerPoint</i> etc.</b>	€15
<b>Contribution towards sanitation &amp; hygiene products</b>	€20
<b>VSWARE communications portal (web text/on-line reporting system etc.)</b>	€25
<b>Total</b>	<b>€150</b>

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those parents who have been very supportive of our school in this respect. The Student Services Fee helps us deliver the best educational experience possible for your child, and we look forward to, and are grateful for your continuing goodwill and support.

Equally, we are keenly aware and conscious of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our families. In this spirit, the Board of Management has taken the decision to postpone the introduction of a Transition Year fee, which was decided in consultation with educational partners. Furthermore, and as promised, the Board of Management are actively exploring an on-line payment facility for school payments and we are hopeful that such a system will be available to parents and accessible through our website in late August/early September.

### **School Reports**

We wish to advise that School Reports will be published to VSWARE over the coming days once we conclude the busy work of the Calculated Grades process for Leaving Certificate students. We will send a text message informing you when reports are live.

### **Booklists and Book Grant Scheme**

Booklists will also be available on [www.presheadford.ie](http://www.presheadford.ie) for all year groups. Similarly, details and application form for the PCH Book Grant scheme for the coming academic year 2020-21 is outlined there. Furthermore, we are excited to announce that the Board of Management is committed to exploring the possibility of a Book Rental Scheme into the future, and plan to initiate a meaningful year-long consultation process with all educational partners, including parents and students early in September.

### **School Uniform:**

Delays in provision to our suppliers is an inevitable consequence of recent restrictions, and we encourage parents/guardians to contact/access the websites of our uniform suppliers for up-dates. Please note a revision to the Uniform as outlined in our Code of Behaviour. From September 2020 ***the navy crested school jacket or an unbranded navy jacket are the only jackets permissible.*** We are pleased to announce that a staff working group has commenced the work of a uniform review and this will extend to the involvement of students and parents in September 2020. Our goal being, the introduction of a new PCH uniform for incoming 1<sup>st</sup> Year students in September 2021.

### **A Greener and Safer School Environment:**

Looking forward to the return of students to the school environment we are inevitably undertaking a review of community practices and behaviours to ensure the optimum adherence to best practice regarding public health and safety for all. We will be in further communication with you all about this when we receive guidance from the DES on school re-opening.

For now, we are delighted to announce that we were recently awarded our first Green Flag for environmental awareness. Huge congratulations to the very committed student committee under the stewardship of Ms. Susanne Smith and Ms. Annette Hopkins.

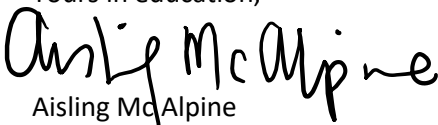
### **And Finally...**

On a personal note, I would like to thank parents and students who have contacted me in the past few weeks since my permanent appointment to the role of Principal. It is much appreciated. Thank you also to all educational partners- Board of Management members, parents, students and the wider community for their ongoing support. Special mention to my wonderful colleagues for their encouragement and good humour and, particularly to Ciarán Ryan and Orla Jackson for walking the walk alongside me on a daily basis. I am privileged and humbled to assume the mantle of Principal, and I promise to work hard for you, and with you in honouring and continuing the mighty tradition of Presentation education in Headford.

All that remains is to take this opportunity to thank our community of students, parents and guardians for their support, commitment and adaptability over the recent weeks.

Have a safe and happy summer. We have missed you and we look forward to meeting with you all again in the hopefully, not too distant future! Until then, stay safe and stay well.

Yours in education,

  
Aisling McAlpine  
(Principal)