



## Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe

### Newsletter

September 2016

### **Dear Parent,**

Please read the entire newsletter that follows as it contains a number of pieces of information vital to the running of the school for the year ahead.

### **Office Hours**

The office is open in St Marys on the second floor between 10am and 3pm daily from Monday to Friday. After those hours, sheer force of numbers has required that it is used as a teaching room. Please do not call to the office during these hours as the disruptions to lessons have caused some concerns amongst parents attending those lessons. Email any enquiries you may have and phone messages will be collected out of office hours and dealt with where possible.



### **Child Protection Legislation**

There is a raft of new legislation now in place for teachers and those that work with young people. St Mary's College has taken this new legislation very much to heart and is implementing a number of



new measures so that they acquiesce fully with this legislation and ensure the full safety of all those using the building. They have expressed significant concern about the open door policy that currently exists in the school and the risk assessment that we are obliged to carry out has resulted in a number of changes that require implementation so that the safety of children is placed at the forefront of everything we do.

In the coming weeks a security system on the doors and CCTV system will be installed. This installation will impact on access to the building. As yet we do not have all of those entry issues fully worked out; however, once we do we will write again to everyone with the full details. For now the primary impact is as follows:

From Monday to Friday while the main school is in operation we have been told that adults accompanying children to lessons have two choices:

1. Either attend the class by sitting in the room with the teacher and taking notes etc.
2. Return to their cars.

Parents may no longer loiter in the corridors or in the main foyer. The legislation is very clear on this and St Mary's College have made it a condition of our continued usage of the building that we comply with this. From casual observation this week, it is obvious that this is mostly what happens already we simply want to establish it as a rule for the year ahead.

School director Hugh Kelly is the appointed child protection officer. He has extensive training in protection policy areas and is available at all time to any parents who may have questions.

## Theory Classes



All theory classes start on the **second week of semester**. This is how we have operated for years. The first week back is replete with settling issues and so many new students simply have no idea how to select their appropriate group. In the last week there was some confusing messages regarding lessons and the office was not clear enough in its instruction. This meant that some students turned up for classes that were not yet happening. We had no way of telling just who was turning up because these classes are conducted on a voluntary uptake. As a result, we could not send messages out and the problem only became clear on Tuesday after we took phone calls on

the issue. We did post the update on Facebook, but this platform is not used by everyone. We would like to sincerely apologise to anyone who was inconvenienced as a result of this. We will strive to ensure it does not happen in the future.

## Administration Issues

St Mary's College has undergone radical changes in its admin structure. We now have a new Principal, vice Principal and are awaiting someone to replace Fr. Barry Hogg as school president. Because of this changeover and the absence of clear admin structures as the handover took place, we did not have our current three week lead in to the beginning of classes. We had three days, which was hopelessly inadequate, and as a result we are playing catch up as fast as we can. Please bear with us. Almost all classes got off to a good start and any small issues that did arise are being addressed. We will be fully up to date on most things like invoices and group classes by next week. But please be aware that if you have a question then call the office we are working very hard to ensure that everyone coming to our school will have the best experience possible. It has been quite distressing that we could not guarantee our customary level of service when we opened.





## Colourstrings Classes

We have not yet gotten all the group colourstrings lessons off the ground. We have 5 full classes starting this Saturday and once they are settled we will be looking at starting about two additional classes the following week to address the waiting list.

We also have a special offering this year with a Colourstrings class offered entirely through the medium of the **Irish language**. This is a huge opportunity for parents whose children want to develop music and language skills. That

class is due to start soon so please call the office if interested as we do have places.

## Jazz Workshops

On the weekend of October 8<sup>th</sup>, Maoin Cheoil na Gaillihme, in conjunction with the Galway Jazz Festival, will be running piano masterclasses featuring renowned jazz pianist and composer John Leighton. If you are interested in participating please speak to your teacher. Places are limited and allocated on a first-come first-served basis. More information about the event can be found [here](#).

## School Calendar



**School Opens** - Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September

**Mid-Term Break** - Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October - Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November

**Christmas Holidays Start** - Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

**School Re-Opens** - Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January

**Semester 2 Fees Due** - Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January

**Mid-Term Break** - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February - Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

**Easter Holidays** - Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April - Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

**Closed May Bank Holiday** - Monday May 1<sup>st</sup>

**End of Teaching Year** - Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May

## Exam Closing Dates

**RIAM Pre-Christmas** - Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>  
October

**RIAM Spring** - TBC but generally first  
week of Jan

**RIAM Summer** - TBC but generally last  
week of February/ first week of March

**ABRSM Pre-Christmas** - Monday 19<sup>th</sup>  
September

**ABRSM Spring** - Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January

**ABRSM Summer** - Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

