



RATOATH COLLEGE

17th January 2017

RE: Second Year – Beginning of Second Term

Dear Parent(s)/Guardians,

We hope this letter finds you well and that your son/daughter has settled back in after the Christmas break. The 2nd year team would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy and healthy New Year. We would also like to commend the students on what has been a very successful first term. Second year can often be a turbulent period in post-primary education; students are no longer the newbie's in the school nor are they seniors yet. However I am pleased to report that they have been a great group of students to work with, a huge part of this is contributed to by your support in all matters.

Academically, 2nd year is an extremely important year in that it is the year where most of the academic curriculum is covered for the Junior Cycle, we would advise that you take time with your son/daughter to review where they are at academically and ascertain how best to utilise their time between homework and revision of past material. The vast majority of students performed very well in their November assessments and are on track to repeat these performances in their summer exams. As you are aware all reports are available on e-portal, please ensure you have reviewed these reports and completed the parents section of the Dialann (Page 188).

We would like to bring the following to your attention for the remainder of the year:

Homework

It is recommended that 2nd Year students spend two hours on homework and revision each evening. It has come to our attention that some students are not writing in homework which is to be completed on Schoology. Please remind your son/daughter that there is no such thing as 'No Homework' they have adequate material to revise. Can we ask you to check your son/daughters homework regularly and sign the homework section of the Dialann at the end of each week.

Attendance

I would first like to congratulate the majority of the students who have excellent attendance records to date; this is commendable to them and yourselves. It is imperative that every effort is made and that students attend on a regular basis. Please keep us informed of any planned absences and may we remind you that a written explanation in the Dialann is required when your child returns to school following an absence (Blue Absence notes at back of Dialann). Where possible, holidays and medical/dental appointments should be made for outside school hours (please complete Yellow Early Excuse Notes at back of Dialann for all appointments). A reminder that students should be arriving at school around 8.20 to give themselves time to prepare for the day and be in assembly for 8.35.

General Behaviour

It is very important that as a school community we continue to strive for excellence and we would encourage all students to maintain their good behaviour and to note the following;

- **Uniform**

All students must present themselves in full school uniform every day and follow the dress code as outlined in the Dialann. PE uniform (including the hoodie, is only to be worn during PE class. Students are not permitted

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to wear the hoodie during the rest of the school day). Wearing make-up is **not allowed** for junior cycle students. School footwear is black/navy leather shoes (***not black/navy leather runners or canvas shoes***).

- **Dialann**

It is imperative that all students have their Dialann with them at all times whilst in school. This is the primary source of two-way communication between the school and yourselves. Can you please check, sign and comment in the Dialann each evening (Comment section & Homework section). Please remind your son/daughter to have their Dialann on them at all times in school, and to place it on the top right hand corner of their desk during every class. If a student does not have their Dialann they will be asked to ring home for the Dialann to be dropped up so that they can attend class.

- **Mobile Phones**

Students may bring mobile phones to school, but they must be switched off. Where a phone is confiscated for misuse, parent(s) will be contacted via the Dialann. Please remind your son/daughter that if they need to go home during the day they can only make contact with you via their Moltoir or School Office.

Extra-Curricular

There is a vast array of extra-curricular activities being offered within the College. Can you please encourage your son/daughter to get involved in at least one activity. These activities benefit the students socially and academically.

iPad

We are delighted with how well the 2nd years continue to embrace the use of their iPads, they are extremely confident and have become fully ensconced in our 1:1 mobile learning programme. Teachers and students continue to work together to integrate the use of the iPads into their everyday practice to create a more vibrant, engaging and challenging learning environment for our 21st Century learners.

As you are aware each 2nd Year is enrolled on the *Schoology* app (www.schoology.com); a learning management system that allows fluid communication, sharing of resources, assessment, teacher feedback and essentially an extension of the learning experience far beyond the confines of the classroom. Notes, presentations, resources and links to further learning opportunities are made available to students for each of their classes. This will make Schoology the central resource bank for all of their learning content and revision needs. Our whole-school approach to this will ensure that students have a consistent and transparent system of managing their learning at their fingertips. As a parent you have access to your son/daughters schoology account and can monitor its content.

Can you please remind your son/daughter that: Students iPads are not to be used during the break times (this time should be used for socialising & chatting with each other), Students are not to play games on their iPads at any stage during the school day, can you please ensure that all games are deleted from their iPads (should you require instructions on how to restrict their iPads do not hesitate to email me at dball.rth@lmetb.ie), as with the Dialann's iPads should be placed on the right hand corner of the desks and not used until instructed to do so by their teachers.

If at any stage you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at the above number.

Yours,

***Derek Ball,
Kevin Farrell,
Charlotte Grogan,
Second Year Team***

***Kelly Jackson,
Andrew Mooney,
Bernie O'Dwyer,***

***Bronagh Delaney,
Rachel Tracey.***