



Coláiste Achadh an Iúir Virginia, Co. Cavan

12th January 2023

Dear Parents,

January Update

Please see information below regarding this term. All information regarding assessment, behaviour and communication from school is available on vsware. If you have issues accessing vsware, please contact the office immediately.

We have recently been informed of an exceptional closure day led by the NCSE to support the running of our newly opened ASD class. School will be closed to students on Tuesday 7th February. There is also a change to Parent Teacher Meetings. Our TY parent teacher meeting will now take place on 21st February. Our 5th year (including LCA5) will take place on 28th March.

Key dates for this term:

- 17th Jan - 2nd year PTM Online
- 23rd Jan - JC/LC Mock Exams
- 6th Feb - New Bank Holiday
- **7th Feb – Exceptional Closure – school closed to students**
- 13th - 17th Feb - Midterm
- 20th Feb - Assessment Week 2 for 1st, 2nd, 5th year
- **21st Feb – TY PTM – online**
- 7th Mar – TY/LCA/LC Subject Option Talk
- 14th Mar – 1st Year PTM – in person
- 17th/20th Mar – School closed
- **28th March – 5th Year (including LCA5) PTM – online**
- 3rd Apr – Easter Holidays

Academic Tracking

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve upon the already high standards here in Virginia College we have been tracking our students test results using a system called Athena Tracker. The Athena Tracker is an academic tracking tool which creates a student's baseline potential in each subject in each exam. This baseline is based on a statistical model which has been designed using the exam results of all the previous results and CAT4 scores. Please check your vsmail for this document. Please open PDF attachment to see full information. 2nd and 3rd year information will follow next week.

Mobile Phone

We continue to implement a no mobile phone policy. A study published in the US research journal Pediatrics – Media Multitasking and Cognitive, Psychological, Neural, and Learning Differences –

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highlights the potential impact smartphone use can have on academic performance. The study indicates that smartphone use not only reduces accuracy and increases the length of time it takes to complete academic tasks, but “also has been reported to negatively impact the learner’s perceived ability to perform homework”. Research also indicates that on average children were unable to stay focused on a task for more than six minutes before checking their social media or messages. A recent talk by Richard Hogan organised by our Parents Association also supported our policy. Please continue to support us in this.

RSE

Please note that teachers of SPHE will begin teaching the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) module of the Junior cycle SPHE course after Christmas. Teachers of Religion will also begin this section with Senior Cycle students. It is important that you are aware that these sensitive issues are being discussed with your child and we would encourage you to develop the discussion further at home. Some of the topics covered in this course will include Positive Relationships and Values, Gender Identity, Communication, Consent, and Reproductive Systems as appropriate to the year group. Our Junior students use My Life, by Folens which can be accessed online on an ebook. If you do not wish for your son or daughter to partake in these lessons please make contact with the school so that alternative arrangements can be made.

JC/LC Mocks

Information regarding Junior Cycle and Leaving Cert mock examinations have been sent out to parents via vsmail.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Le meas,

Niall M. Lynch

Principal

Miriam Nugent

Deputy Principal

Kaye Duffy

Deputy Principal

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