**Important dates for your diary:**

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| Mon-Fri | May 7th-11th | School closed for midterm break |
| Saturday | May 19th | First Holy Communion at 11.00am |
| Thursday | May 24th | Sports Day in Herbert Park |
| Friday | May 25th | School closed |
| Tuesday | May 29th | Meeting for Parents of new Junior Infants, 6.45pm or 8pm |
| Sunday | June 3rd | Mini-Marathon (thanks to all those walking/running for new school fundraising campaign) |
| Monday | June 4th | Public holiday: school closed. |
| Friday | June 8th | 3rd & 4th Class School trip to Jumpzone and UCD Swimming |
| Tuesday | June 12th | Junior Infants trip to Airfield Farm, Dundrum |
| Tuesday | June 12th | Visit to school for new Junior Infants at 1.45pm. |
| Tuesday | June 12th | 5th & 6th Class trip to Baltinglass Outdoor Education Centre, Baltinglass |
| Wednesday | June 13th | Visit of new Junior Infants pupils (1.45pm) |
| Thursday | June 14th | Senior Infants trip to Airfield Farm, Dundrum |
| Tuesday | June 19th | Dogs Trust visit |
| Thursday | June 21st | 1st Class trip to The Chocolate Factory and St Anne's Park |
| Thursday | June 21st | Launch of 6th Class Poetry Book (7pm) |
| Monday | June 25th | 2nd Class trip to Airfield Farm and park afterwards |
| Thursday | June 28th | End of year party for Junior and Senior Infants<br>Silly Billy Magic Show |
| Friday | June 29th | Last day of term |
| Mon-Fri | July 2nd-6th | Week I of Summer Camp |
| Mon-Fri | July 9-13th | Week 2 of Summer Camp |
| Thursday | August 30th | First day of new school year |

# Assessment in school

Assessment and monitoring of children's progress is a very important part of our work here in St.Brigid's.  At this time of year we concentrate on Standardised Tests for children in $1^{st}$ -$6^{th}$ class and so I am repeating some information I sent last year explaining some more  about Standardised Tests. I've also included information about assessment in Infants Classes.
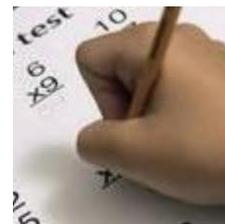
**What is a standardised test?**

We are all familiar with the idea of tests in school. No doubt you are well aware of the regular end of week tests such as the spelling or tables test prepared by the teacher. A standardised test is another kind of test. **It is used to measure a child's achievement in English reading and Maths compared to other children throughout the country at the same class level or age level.**

The English reading test gives information about how well your child can understand what she has read. This test does not gather information on your child's written or spoken English.  The Maths test finds out how well your child can use numbers for different purposes and solve maths problems. Schools can choose which standardised tests they use and we currently use the Sigma-T in Maths and the Drumcondra English tests. These tests are based on the curriculum and each class takes the test at a level designed for their class.

**What is a standardised test use for?**

Standardised tests are used to:

1.  report to you as a parent on your child's achievement in English reading and maths
2.  help your child's teacher plan for further learning across the curriculum because your child's achievement in English reading and maths is important for all her learning.

**Should I help my child prepare for standardised tests?**

No. The teacher gathers information about your child's learning all the time. Your child will take the standardised tests on a regular school day as part of the daily work in the classroom.

**How will I know how my child has done on the standardised tests?**

You will receive a letter containing your child's results and what they mean.  If we are concerned about a child's results, we may ask you to come in to discuss them.

**How will I know what the test scores mean?**

You will be familiar with hearing your child say she/he got 62% in a maths test or 9 out of 15 in a spelling test. Standardised tests generally use other types of scores. We use **STen** scores in our reporting letter to you. **STen scores** go from 1 to 10. If your child's STen score is 5 or 6, you will know that his/her performance on the test is average. About one third of children in Ireland have STen scores in this band. There are also STen scores above and below the average.

A STen score of 1, 2 or 3 may mean that your child has a difficulty in Maths and English. The teacher will look at all of the information about your child's work and progress to date. The teacher will meet with other teachers and with you to plan the supports your child needs.

If you child's score is Sten 9 or 10, it may mean your child is a high achiever in English or Maths. The teacher will put this information to good use in planning work across the curriculum.

Remember that your child's score on a test is an indication of her achievement but can be affected by how she was feeling on the day. It's very important that you support and encourage your child, regardless of what score she gets on the test. It is your decision whether or not to discuss her/his actual score with her/him; you know your child best. However, the score is just a snapshot in time and the test does not tell us anything about your child's strengths in all of the other areas of the curriculum, or her personal and social or emotional development.

You can read more about standardised tests on www.ncca.ie. The information is available in English, Irish, Polish, Arabic, Romanian, Russian, French, Chinese and Portuguese.



## Assessment in Senior Infants

We monitor each child's progress both formally and informally and plan our work accordingly. During the third term in Senior Infants, we test each child using the Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST). This set of tests check each child's progress in reading, writing and listening skills. It checks letter names and sounds, sound blending and free writing.



The MIST is a very useful tool which the teachers use to plan support for any child whose scores are low on this test. It is important information which is passed on to the teachers of 1st class in order to plan for any supports that may be needed.

## Assessment in Junior Infants

Assessment in Junior Infants takes place every day in the classroom and is often an informal activity. The teacher assesses the child in different ways including observation, questioning, using checklists and setting tasks for the child to complete.

Some of the observations the teacher makes relates to the child's behaviour, their interaction with other children, their ability to complete a task in a given time period and their general participation in class activities. Checklists are often used in Maths and English, to monitor the child's progress through the curriculum. Examples of checklists in Maths are number formation (1-5), counting (1-10) and ordering numbers (1-5). In English checklists are used to keep a record of the child's progress through the reading and phonics programmes. We complete a Jolly Phonics assessment at the end of Junior Infants.

The **end of year school reports** will contain information on the children's progress and some ideas for you to support your children's learning during the summer holidays. Reports are issued during the month of June.

## Internet Safety

We strongly advise that parents take a very active part in any of their children's online activity.  This can be on any device with internet connectivity, mobile phone, tablet, laptop etc.  You child can be online through games such as Minecraft, Fortnite Battle Royale and through many apps, including Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat etc.  Using these apps means that your child may be talking to people they do not know, and this makes them potentially unsafe.

If your child is using a webcam, or a phone camera, you will need to be especially careful, and check who your child is talking with, or sharing videos or photos.

My advice to you is that you should know your child's passwords for all devices he/she uses, online activity needs to be monitored and restricted and you should talk with your child about online activity and safety.

There are supports for parents to help you to understand and control what your child is doing online. I suggest www.webwise.ie, http://www.internetsafety.ie/en/is/pages/tipsforparents

http://www.internetsafety.ie/en/IS/Pages/ParentalFilteringSoftware

https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/