



Dear All,

Welcome back. The Summer went quickly and I know this time of year brings a mixture of excitement, anticipation and a little bit of worry too. The early weeks of school should alleviate these worries and bring all our existing students back to normality and give our new students a gentle introduction to the school community that is Sutton Park.

New Multi-Purpose Hall

The old Gym Hall is gone and work has commenced on our new Multi-Purpose Hall which will be an ongoing project until around September 2024. The process began in March 2019 and we are extremely lucky to have had so much generous involvement from so many members of the school community in the development. It will be a testament to everyone when it is completed and will, I feel, begin a new phase in our development as a school as we seek to continue to improve the school infrastructure over the next decade. This is phase one with more phases in the plans. Many of you have met me through our fundraising drive and will be aware of the ambition we have for our school. I am delighted to announce that Eoin Scott, who has had a long association with Sutton Park going back over many years, has been appointed as our new Development Manager. He will be in touch over the coming weeks as well as developing a better connection with our expanding alumni and past parents.

Strategic Review

A full strategic review of the school has been completed and areas for development have been identified. There are many components to the review and the Boards of Governors and Management as well as the Finance Committee, Senior Management Team and Staff are involved on an ongoing basis on this. Curriculum and excellence of standards in teaching and learning are at the core of everything we stand for as a school. We are always striving towards this in the vital context of student wellbeing. Our aim as a school is to include all our students as individuals, Global Citizens and Learners. Inclusivity and understanding are at the core of this. Our Strategic Review has highlighted the need for us to set targets and take stock. We have also considered the replies so many of you so kindly made to our CIS surveys and I will happily share the outcomes of this survey with you later this term. My door is always open as you know and consultation and communication is something we pride ourselves on. Student Voice is also integral to this.

Staffing

Our Staff as you know are the bedrock of the school. Our students tell you all about the staff in a way that they are often reluctant to tell you much else. Perhaps this applies to a certain age cohort of student only! We are very lucky that we continue to have excellent teachers who are committed to the standards of excellence in all they do to bring happiness and achievement to all. We have had similar issues to many other schools with the current financial climate making retaining staff in the Dublin area difficult. I am pleased to say that we are fully staffed for the new year and planning is in full flow as I write. The parent information sessions across all divisions of the school are ready for the first 2 weeks and notifications have been already sent. Senior School timetables with details of



teachers will be available in the first week of school. Junior and Intermediate School information is often more straightforward as the class teacher will have the knowledge. Remember if you have any worries on the basics contact us at info@sps.ie and we will do our best to solve any problems. The first two weeks will as ever need a little navigation but all will settle down as the month of September progresses.

Co-Curricular Programme

There will be no let-up in our extra-curricular programme at all levels. The school pillars of Music, STEM, Humanities and Sport remain at the core of our offerings. We are a busy school, after and during school, bringing opportunities to all the students to flex themselves in areas outside of the classroom. We do this safe in the knowledge that it is this that improves what goes on within the classroom as well as creating lifelong friendships and improving the wellbeing of all involved. All students should be participating and I know that most do. The past pupils I am in contact with all attest that the moments they remember and the enjoyment they had were more when tackling a student from another school on the playing fields, Science Competitions or Musical performance than they were when tackling Pythagoras in a Maths class! The programme will be available at the start of the year so please embrace it.

International Accreditation

Our visitors from CIS and NEASC are arriving in April. I will be in contact with you further on this. We are a proud international school. We welcome the perspectives that our colleagues from other international schools bring. I am aware that the school is heavily oversubscribed. This does not mean that we have any less regard for the international aspects of our school ethos. We welcome students from all nationalities and include them in our Admissions Policy which is available in the Admissions section on the website. I would encourage anyone reading this who is seeking to apply to read the policy carefully.

Our inclusivity and duty of care to all students is key to us and we have made great strides through our inclusivity targets and awards over the last number of years. These awards, whilst hard won, are not meaningful unless we embed them in the ethos and identity of the school. We will continue to strive to do this and recognise that it is not something you ever finish - rather it is something you push all the time.

I wish you all a happy and safe start to the school year. I ask you to be patient with us, as we will be with you, in trying to get everything right. There will be bumps and hollows but there will be great highs and mini triumphs to embrace at different times throughout the year. Keep in touch.

Ronan Walsh
Head of School