

St. Joseph's N.S. - September 2016

Dear parents,

We are delighted that all our pupils have settled in well to their new classes and we wish everyone a happy and successful year in school. We extend a very warm St. Joseph's welcome to all our new pupils and their families and we look forward to working with you.

As always we have an open door policy here in the school. If you have any worries or concerns about your child please let us know and we'll all try and work it out together. Even if you have no worries do please drop in if you feel like it! We will be actively looking for people to join us for Music Week, Friendship Week and all the other weeks we are planning!

SCHOOL TIMES:

Classes will commence each day at 9.20a.m. However, there will be a teacher in the yard from 9.10a.m. as the children assemble in their lines.

Junior and Senior Infants go home at 2p.m. and First and Second classes go home at 3p.m.

The school cannot accept responsibility for children outside of school hours. Gates for St. Joseph's are the small gates at the front and side of the school. If you come to school through Scoil Eoin Phoil II Naofa, please use the path and don't enter through their staff car park. Junior Infants have adjusted to their new routines and it makes it a lot easier for them if they line up with their classmates. Thanks to all who are doing so already. We ask that all children line up with their classes in the yard every morning.

WET DAY ROUTINES:

Children are welcome to assemble inside on wet days. The P.E. hall doors will open at 9.00a.m. and children will be supervised. The children know where their classes line up and they have practised walking in line to their rooms. Due to the large number of children we ask that parents drop their children at the door. However, if your Junior Infant child is still a little anxious you are welcome to stand at the back of the line until teacher comes. We ask that parents exit the school via the P.E. hall doors as small children get confused and anxious if there are adults and buggies blocking their view of teacher as they go to their rooms. The front door will not be open in the interest of health/safety and to ensure that Junior Infants have a clear path. Children who arrive after the buzzer sounds can go straight to their room.

BREAKFAST CLUB:

The breakfast club will be on Monday – Friday from 8.45a.m. to 9.10a.m. in the Parents Room. All pupils are welcome.

PARKING:

With over 40 staff now in St. Joseph's parking in staff car park is at a premium. **Please do not use staff car park during school hours or to drop children to school or playschool.** Also, please do not park on the pedestrian crossings or zig zag lines outside the school. Please remind children not to go through car park at any time. The car park is a busy place and is dangerous for small children even when accompanied by an adult. There is a safe path to use to walk to the yard and this should be used at all times.

ATTENDANCE

There is a very strong tradition of good attendance and punctuality in St. Joseph's N.S. To date this year, attendance rates are really good and we are anxious that this continues throughout the year. Children are expected to attend school each day except in the case of illness. Please let the school know if your child is absent. We are obliged to notify our educational welfare officer if a child misses a lot of time in school. Every day in school counts and children who are in school on time every day get every possible chance to achieve their potential. Please let us know if you are having ongoing difficulties with getting children to school

LATE-COMERS

Most children are on time for school but there are a small number of consistent late-comers. It is difficult for children to be late and it also disturbs a whole class. If you are dropping a child to school between 9.20a.m. and 9.50a.m. please have a re-think on the routine. Late arrivals are recorded on the Aladdin School Database. We also have a registration book in the office for parents to sign if a child is late or needs to leave the school early. We ask that children only leave early in exceptional circumstances.

NOTES:

The school needs to be notified in writing if a child needs to leave school early. No child may leave the school without parent or guardian during school times. If someone other than a parent or guardian is collecting a child please notify the school in writing.

If there are protection orders or other legal reasons why someone may not collect a child from school please notify the school in writing with a copy of the relevant legal documents

SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Schools are not party to the School Transport System and the fact that the children are conveyed to or from school by bus does not impose any additional obligations on the school or teachers. As we have stated, it is important that parents are aware that no arrangements exist for the supervision of their children who arrive at the school, whether by school bus or otherwise, before the official opening time. A similar situation arises in respect of children who remain after school hours awaiting collection by the school bus.

Children may not leave the school each day at 10 or 5 to two and 10 or 5 to three for their bus.

Apart from missing up to 50mins. a week it is also a disruption for the rest of the class. Children are not insured to leave school before official closing time.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

St. Joseph's wishes to promote a healthy lifestyle for the children in the school. Accordingly, the following points are to be noted.

- Children who are ill should not be asked to go to school. It is not good for the child or the other pupils. Parents are asked that teachers be made aware of any physical disability, allergy, etc., that their child may have.
- Teachers are not insured to administer medication to children. If vital medication is needed, throughout the school day, this must be brought to the attention of the Principal so that administration arrangements can be discussed.
- Children with medical needs and allergies have care plans drawn up in consultation with G.P's. Please discuss the care plan with your child's teacher.

- If your child has an infection please notify the school immediately.
- Please check your child's hair regularly for outbreaks of head lice. If there is an outbreak of head lice in a class, all parents of pupils in that class are informed by note, and asked to take immediate action to treat infestation.
- Written notification to the class teacher must be given if a child is to remain inside at break times (only when necessary)
- Accidents occur despite supervision. Minor accidents are treated at school. Slight cuts and grazes are normally treated by cleaning with cold water and applying a plaster to the wound. When a dressing has been put on a wound parents are requested to inspect the wound when the child comes home from school. In the event of a more serious accident/child becoming ill, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents or the persons delegated to take responsibility for the pupil.
- Please ensure that your child's teacher has an up-to-date address and phone number. **It is parents' responsibility to inform the school in writing of changes in name, address or phone number.** We also need a 2nd contact number for emergencies. We will then be able to contact you immediately if your child is sick. It would be good to have one land line number for someone as mobiles change.

CHILD PROTECTION AND WELFARE

The Department of Education and Science have produced Guidelines and Procedures for all schools in relation to Child Protection and Welfare. These guidelines promote the welfare of all children and are to be welcomed.

The Board of Management has adopted these guidelines as school policy. Consequently if there is a matter of concern in relation to abuse of children in any way we are obliged to report this to Tusla. They will assess the case and provide the necessary support for the child and family concerned.

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Every child in the school is offered a free and healthy lunch funded by Department of Family and Social Affairs. Bradbury's are the lunch suppliers this year. Every child will get their little lunch and big lunch delivered to the school each morning. The scheme fits with our Healthy Eating policy which has been very successful in the school for the past number of years. Lunch menus are available in the office if you wish to change lunch choices. If your child is not availing of the school lunch we ask that you provide a lunch from home in line with our Healthy Eating Policy. A HSE Healthy Lunchbox information booklet is available in the office. A nutritionist will visit the school in the coming weeks to talk to the children about healthy eating.

GREEN SCHOOL PROJECT

We now have five green flags thanks to the commitment and dedication of pupils, parents and teachers to the whole idea of recycling. We were delighted to receive our Biodiversity Flag in June and are thrilled that our potatoes are now ready to be harvested. Once again under a committee chaired by Ms. Mary Lambe we hope to continue the good work in the coming year. This year we are concentrating on Global citizenship. Lots of information to follow!

All children need a lunch box to bring home lunch wrappings and uneaten lunch.

DISCIPLINE

The school has a discipline policy which promotes and rewards good behaviour and does not tolerate bad behaviour or bullying in any form. We encourage parents to talk to their children about good and inappropriate behaviour. Many children engage in very rough play – kicking, spitting and hitting each other as a form of game. Please monitor what your children are watching on T.V. and play station games. Much of the rough play is a perfect imitation of what they see on television and some children seem to think it is perfectly normal. If possible, please try to restrict the amount of time children are watching computer and television screens.

LOST PROPERTY

Please put your child's name on jumpers, cardigans, coats, hats, scarves and shoes. Lost property will be kept for one term and then recycled. It is just not possible to trace clothes without names.

BOOK BILLS

Thank you to all who have bought books and paid book rental. We appreciate that this is a very expensive time for all parents. We have made every effort to reduce the cost of book bills. This year we have reduced the number of workbooks and textbooks to an absolute minimum. Over the last number of years we have invested a lot of money in literacy resources and have a large selection of readers. We have built up a bank of resources for English within the school which suit our needs so we no longer use commercial workbooks to develop literacy skills. This year we will provide the children with the resources they need for the religious education programme so there is no need to purchase workbooks or textbooks. Although the cost of books has increased over the past number of years we have not increased the book bills.

SETANTA BOOK CLUBS:

Setanta book club notices will go home each term. There is no obligation on anyone to buy books (despite what small people may tell you!) The school benefits in that we get one free book for every ten books sold.

PARENT-TEACHER CONTACT

It is very important for parents to keep in regular contact with their child's teacher and with the life of the school. Please make an appointment if you wish to meet the teacher or the principal.

HOME SCHOOL LIAISON

Mrs. Leonie O'Brien will be our home/school/liaison teacher for the coming year. She will be visiting homes and also organising courses and talks during the year. Our parents' room is in the pre-fab to the left of the school building. We hope it will be a place where parents can meet during the year.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION / BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Parents' Association Chairperson, Penny Rowe will contact you shortly regarding the AGM. We encourage all parents to join. Our Board of Management meet regularly to plan and implement school management issues.

WEBSITE

You can check our school website at www.stjosephstullamore.ie for all sorts of news about the school.

Once again welcome back and we look forward to meeting you during the year.

Linda Dowling & Staff.

