

Starting School



Scoil Chiarain Naofa,
Dubhras, Cinn Mhara, Co. na Gaillimhe

Monday, 20 June 2011

Dear Parents,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all parents and guardians to a new and exciting stage in your child's life.

During this year, your child will make new friends, enjoy new experiences and learn the vital skill of reading. We now have the chance to work as partners to ensure that your child will have a positive experience with their education.

I am looking forward to meeting you and your young scholar in September.

I hope that you and your child will have a happy time with us in Scoil Chiaráin.

I have enclosed a Starting School booklet, which I hope will be of some help to you

Please do not hesitate to speak to me if you have any questions or if you feel anxious about something.

We look forward to meeting all of you in September.

Slán libh agus go dté sibh slán.

Helen O 'Riordan (Class Teacher).



School books

The school will buy all the required books during the summer and have them ready for September.

A detailed book bill, with the cost of the books will be forwarded to each family on returning to school.

All moneys can be made payable to the school by Sept 15th.

Please label and cover your child's books in the first or second week of return.

Preparing for school

Children should be able to put on and take off coats and hang them up, use the toilet and flush it properly, wash their hands and tidy up their crayons and colouring books.

Play 'pretend school' with your child.

Help to practice putting things in and out of the school bag and to open and close their lunchbox. Teach them to use a handkerchief or tissue, share toys and take turns.

This would also be a wonderful opportunity to share your 1st day at school experiences with your son/daughter.



Home Time

For the first week and a half (September 1st – September 9th) all juniors will go home at 12.30.

Normal home time is ten past 2.

The children will be brought to the front lobby for collection each day.

If there is any special collection arrangements please let us know.

There is an After School Service available for any parents/guardians who wish to avail of it. This service runs till 5 p.m. Each day.

Clothes:

The children wear the standard uniform. Indoor footwear will be needed during the winter months. Please ensure that all clothes likely to be removed i.e. coats, hats, scarves, gloves, jumpers etc. are clearly labeled with your child's name as many children possess similar items.

All uniforms can be purchased at National Schoolwear Centre in Liosban Estate (the Tuam Road).



Stationery:

Please ensure that your child has, clearly labeled:

- * 2 pencils, preferably thick to suit a beginner,
- * 1 sharpener to suit the pencils,
- * Colours. We recommend coloured pencils as they last longer and are sturdy,
 - A sturdy rubber.

Items to be sent Into School:

- A small, Ziploc bag clearly labeled with your child's name For learning words and letters.
- A big old T-shirt, clearly labeled for use as an art apron. This will be kept in school.

Assessment;

Informal assessment will be continually made by your child's teacher. At the end of Senior Infants, our Learning Support teacher will oversee a specific standardised reading test after, which Learning Support teaching will be available if necessary. Every year near the end of the Christmas term one day is taken over with parent- teacher meetings. Formal written reports are sent out at the end of the summer term.



Reading:

We use the Jolly Phonics Approach in the teaching of reading. The Jolly Phonics Parent Guide will be sent out in September. In the meantime, feel free to check out the Jolly Learning website.

Writing:

Your child will be learning to write lower case letters initially so it would be very helpful if you could stick up your child's name written in this way perhaps on your child's bedroom door so that he/she can be familiar with it.



Health and Safety:

As part of our school health programme, we encourage regular washing of hands, particularly around eating time and after toilet use. We are not however always able to oversee this, so please remind your child of its importance.

If your child develops any contagious illness such as chickenpox please keep him away from school until the period of contagion is over and inform his/her teacher immediately.

We recommend that you check your child regularly for lice, which are highly contagious, treat immediately if they occur and inform the teacher so that notification of possible risk may be sent out to other parents.

All information regarding your child's health is treated in the strictest confidence.

Occasionally your permission will be required for dental, eye or other health examinations.

Breaks:

There are two breaks during the school day 11.00 to 11.10 and from 12.30 to 1.00.



Food:

We have a healthy eating policy in our school.

Lunch suggestions from **Food & Nutrition Guidelines for Primary Schools**

From www.healthinfo.ie

Please send a piece of fruit that can be easily eaten from the hand for Fruit Break at 10.20 each day.

Please ensure that your child's lunch box is clearly labeled with your child's name.



Preparing Your Child for Schoolwork:

Good writing is all about muscle and motor control so it will help your child greatly if your child is practiced at colouring, drawing, tearing paper, manipulating materials such as plasticene, making jigsaws etc.,

Reading aloud to your child will cultivate an interest in, and love of reading.

The First Day:

Please arrive to the class on time on the day. Give a hug, say goodbye and give an assurance that you will collect your child at the proper time. **Then Leave.** (Even though your heart may be breaking....)

Almost all children are busy and happy within minutes of their parents leaving.

For the week and a half (September 1st – September 9th), your child will have a short day (9.20 – 12.30) so give a small healthy lunch. Children are usually very tired when they start school first so please help them by making sure they go to bed early. After September 9th, the children will be in school for the full Infant day (9.20 – 2.10). Be sure to collect your child on time as children can become very upset and anxious if you are late.

Toys:

There is no need for children to bring in toys into school and we do not encourage this practice because of breakages, competition and peer pressure.

Party Invitations.

To avoid upset to the children party invitations are not given out at school.

Information Bulletins:

Please keep an eye on your child's homework folder as they may contain notes for parents/guardians.

WE'LL SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!

I wish you all a safe, happy and enjoyable Summer.