

Scoil Inse Rátha

Déan do Dhícheall

Newsletter September 2023

Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of our first month back already. The important routines have been set up in each class and staff and students are working hard. There is so much work being done it is hard to quantify. In Irish there is a saying “Tús maith, leath na hoibre” (a good start is half the work). After having a good start, we look forward to the rest of the year! We are planning events and initiatives for the year ahead so we hope that there will be something for everyone to enjoy.

Parking:

I would ask you to be conscious of our neighbours when you are parking outside the school. There are double yellow lines on the road so that traffic can flow safely – please do not park on the double yellow lines or in front of our neighbours. The Set Down area outside the school is for parents who are dropping their children and leaving so should be kept clear and not parked on.

New Junior Infants:

Our new Junior Infants have been great, and we are delighted to see them settle in so well. They are our future, so we hope that they have a very happy time in school.

Making an appointment to speak to a teacher:

Our teachers are always happy to speak to you about your child’s progress, or to address your concerns. Please ring Jacinta in the office to arrange an appointment at a mutually convenient time as this allows the teacher to be prepared for the meeting and to be able to give you their full attention.

Date for Parent Teacher Meetings:

Our Parent Teacher meetings this year will take place on Wednesday 22nd and Thursday 23rd November. Meetings will take place after school on the 22nd and we will close at 1pm on the 23rd with meetings starting at 1.30pm. If these dates don’t suit you, please contact your child’s teacher to make a different arrangement. We will organise the meeting times after midterm break.

Sciath na Scol:

Our school football teams have been taking part in the Sciath na Scol championship this month. They are representing our school really well and we are very proud of them. They are demonstrating a great attitude and lots of skill. Well done to all involved.

Official School Opening and Closing times:

Children are supervised from 8.40am each morning. They go into their classes at 8.50am when teaching starts. Infants go home at 1.30pm and 1st-6th classes go home at 2.30pm. Outside of these times we are not responsible for your child(ren) unless they are on a school related activity. We cannot take responsibility for children who are dropped to school before 8.40am. Sherpa Kids offer a childcare service before and after school. You can contact them at lins@sherpakids.ie.

Allianz Insurance:

Every child in our school is covered by the pupil personal accident 24hr insurance policy. The policy is valid from 1/9/2023-31/8/2024. Please visit www.allianz.ie for full details. There is a claim form on the website that has to be filled in and signed by me to confirm your child is part of the scheme.

Post Primary Enrolment:

In recent years there has been a growing demand for secondary school places in East Cork. Please be aware of the relevant closing dates for your preferred schools. They will all probably have waiting lists and if you miss the closing date you will be bottom of the list regardless of any other criteria. It is important to have a back-up plan, in case you don't get your first preference.

Credit Union:

The Credit Union is back. They will visit every week on Wednesdays. If you can at all, encourage your child to save as it is a great life skill.

Maths Week:

Maths Week will take place at the end of October. We have a workshop booked from The Lifetime Lab for 3rd-6th Classes. Each class will do different activities to mark the week. You can help too by involving your child in shopping (estimating the cost of items, paying for them, checking the change etc) or identifying shapes, looking at the different sizes of items by weight or volume etc.

Covid-19:

While the future looks brighter this year, we still must be cautious. Schools, by their nature, are spreading grounds for viruses. The government has continued to provide funding for extra cleaning and sanitising. We will continue to encourage our children to wash their hands and to have good coughing etiquette as well as taking ventilation breaks. We will follow any Public Health advice as the situation evolves during the winter. The latest HSE advice is available here:
<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/if-you-have-covid-19/children/>

Basketball:

Mark Scannell has started basketball again this year. 5th and 6th classes will play for the first seven weeks and then we will move onto the next classes. Each class will have at least six weeks with Mark during the year. We are very lucky to have such a talented and successful coach coaching our children.

Instagram:

Instagram is up and running and there are daily messages and updates posted from various classes and from the school in general. Keep up to date by following us!

Italian:

Ms. Ginevra has started Italian with 6th class. This is a great opportunity for our students to learn a different language and about a different culture. We had European Languages Day this week where we celebrated and acknowledged many of the different languages in our school.

Ready, Set , Fun:

Ms. Morgan and Ms. Lynch have brought back the after-school activity class after nearly four years. There was huge demand for places and great excitement on the first day. Another set of classes will start after midterm.

Chess:

Chess will start after school after midterm for 3rd-6th. I will send out more details once the football season is over.

Mobile Library:

The Mobile Library is back providing a fresh selection of books every two weeks for the all of our avid readers.

Bike Week:

Congratulations to Eli on winning the Bike Week competition recently. Her winning artwork was printed on a t-shirt as part of her prize from Cobh Library. Well done, Eli!

Board of Management:

Our Board of Management's term will end on 30th November. They have overseen quite a tumultuous four years and I am very grateful for their steady and reasoned leadership, especially during 2020 and 2021. A new Board will take over on December 1st. You will receive letters this week asking for you to self-nominate if you are interested in sitting on the next Board. It is an onerous job but it also a necessary role for the school to keep improving.

Sherpa Hallowe'en Camp:

Sherpa Kids will be running a camp at Hallowe'en when we are closed. You can get more information by emailing Ellen at lins@sherpakids.ie. Places are available even if your child doesn't usually attend Sherpa.

Mobile Phones:

There has been a lot of talk about young children having mobile phones in school recently. We have never allowed our students have mobile phones in our school. If you or your child need to make contact, you can ring the office or email me. If your child has to have a phone for before or after school, they have to turn it off and hand it to their teacher at the start of the day. They will get it back when they are going home. If a child has a phone during the day, it will be confiscated, and you will have to come in to get it back.

Child Protection Guidelines 2023:

There are new Child Protection Guidelines in place since the 1st September. Our revised policy is on our website. Our Board of Management conducted our annual review at our recent meeting as well. If you have any questions or concerns in relation to Child Protection please contact me to discuss them.

School Improvement Plan:

Every year we set out our priorities for improvement in the school. You will have seen the picture I posted on Instagram of the work we have done over the last twelve years. We focus on particular areas each year while maintaining the other areas as well. This year we are concentrating on The New Primary Maths Curriculum, our Acceptable Usage Policy and Wellbeing.

That's all for now.

All the best,

Micheál Rea

Up Coming Events:

4th-10th October: Space Week: www.spaceweek.ie for more information.

5th October: World Teacher Day

17th-24th October: Book Fair

30th October to 3rd November: October midterm break.