

*Scoil Iosaif Naofa
Bothair an Chlochair
Cinn Mhara
Co. na Gailimhe*



*St. Joseph's N.S
Convent Road
Kinvara
Co. Galway*

Newsletter September 2013

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the staff at Saint Joseph's National School, I am happy to welcome you to the 2013-14 school year!

We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our pupils can achieve their highest potential. We recognise that in order to be successful in school, our children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education.

We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring that your child:

- 1) Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready for the day's learning experience
- 2) Completes all homework assignments given by teachers
- 3) Reads daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills
- 4) Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life
- 5) Informs you if he/she needs additional support in any area or subject

Our commitment to you continues to be to work with the staff to provide a well rounded education that allows each pupil to reach his/her fullest potential. I have high expectations for myself, staff and our pupils. Please help your child(ren) reach his/her fullest potential by ensuring they arrive to school on time and attend daily. While we do not want pupils to arrive if they are ill, I do discourage parents/guardians from taking holidays during the school year as this causes disruption to pupil's learning.

Please speak positively about school and staff members in front of your children. If you have a concern please begin by consulting with your child's teacher. We will work collaboratively to make this year a positive learning experience for your child.

Kinvara National School is delighted to announce that we have a special unit for children with autism. The unit is a class which caters for up to six children.

The unit aims to offer an Autism specific learning environment within a mainstream school. This type of educational setting facilitates optimum inclusion as part of the school community with access to mainstream activities as appropriate.

The following are items of information which require your attention at this time.

Uniform:

It is very important that all pupils wear their complete school tracksuit or school uniform when attending school. The school authorities will monitor the dress code strictly as it represents the standards set by our school.

Children should have their names on their uniforms, tracksuits, coats and other personal belongings.

NEWB:

I wish to inform you that the principal is required to notify the National Educational Welfare Board when a pupil reaches 20 days absences. There are five mandatory reporting periods in the school year.

Parents are required by law under the Welfare act 2000, to send a note into school explaining every absence by their child. These notes must be signed and dated and are retained on file. According to the NEWB Guidelines the **actual** reason for the pupils absence must be identified in the note e.g. illness, dental appointment, family bereavement, family holiday etc. Please do not report absence by telephone. A written note to the class teacher will suffice.

Healthy Eating Policy:

Please refer to our school website to view our healthy eating policy and guidelines. You will be aware of the concerns regarding obesity and unhealthy eating habits among children leading to life-long problems. Sandwiches (various bread types and fillings) fruit/vegetables, salad items etc are recommended.

NB Chewing gum, crisps and fizzy drinks are forbidden. Nuts are also forbidden due to unknown allergies.

Text Service:

Currently we are in the process of updating our 'text a parent' service for the parents/guardians of all children attending the school. This will not completely eliminate school letters but may act as a reminder of upcoming events or in case of an emergency closures etc. If any family has changed their phone details over the summer please inform the school secretary immediately.

School Mobile: The school mobile number is 086 6067500. For all new families who have joined the school, this is a "text service "for parents.

Please text your eldest family members name to 086 6067500 if you have not already done so.

E.g. Smith John, then your mobile number will be entered into school's database.

Also please send us an email address to info@kinvarans.ie we send out newsletters etc via email. If you don't have email please let the secretary know and your child will receive the notes. If any families have changed their **phone details** or **email details** over the summer please also notify the school secretary.

Web site: Our school website can also be viewed on www.kinvarans.ie

Children's photographs add colour, life and interest to articles promoting school activities and initiatives. All photographs of pupils will be used in a responsible way. Pupils and parents rights of privacy will be respected and we are aware of child protection issues.

Every effort will be made to minimise risk by following Dept. of Education & Skills guidelines – no pupil will be labelled and pupils will not be shown in groups of less than three.

We will also ensure that images are stored securely and used only by those authorised to do so. We will also ensure that electronic images are stored on a secure network to which members of the public have no access. ***If you have any objection to your child's inclusion in such photos please inform the principal in writing.***

We welcome the Junior Infants Class of 2013-2014: This year we again have 2 Junior Infants classes:

Ms Lahart class: Kara Murphy, Kayla Warde, Emma Gawley Fahy, Hannah Kelly, Clodagh Murphy, Meave Green, Orlaith Ganly, Charlie Star Duffy McHugh, Aaron O'Donnell, Jake MacMahon, Conor Conole, Shane O'Shaughnessy, James Melia, Adam Kelly, Lorcan Ward, Joshua Burke, Dean Pomp, Evan Canning and Connor McGarry.

Ms Smith Class: Robyn Corcoran, Lily Darabi, Lile Connolly, Niamh O'Sullivan, Ciara Holland, Leah O'Connor, Chloe Chapman, Kate Tannian, Larry Tannian, Aaron Flatley, Shane Talty, Roan Guilfoyle, Cillian Coady, John Connolly-Glynn, Julian Harnett, Alexander Danjou, Luca Magnetti, Seán Crosse, Adam Patterson and Louis Cocollos.

We also welcome: Oliver Green (Senior Infants), Hannah Riordan (2nd Class), Áine Keogh O'Connell (6th Class) and a welcome return to Rebecca Patterson (3rd Class).

We welcome to our staff: Ms Tina Shalloo & Eva Lahart who have joined the staff at the school.

Parking in front of School: We would kindly ask parents to refrain from parking at the front of the school as there are four buses now coming to the school and to keep the front gate clear at all times.

Traffic Management Plan: We ask parents to adhere to the following:

- Do not park in Bus Stop or in front of school gates
- Do not park on main road opposite school (unsafe for pupils to cross main road)
- Do not enter set down area from village side i.e. only enter set down area from Ballyvaughan side
- Buses will leave at 2.45pm
- Pupils walking or pupils collected will leave school grounds at 2.50pm i.e. if you are collecting your child please wait until buses have moved away from Bus Stop

Morning Drop off: N.B. Please do not pull up in front of school gates when dropping your child off. We ask that you move away from the main gate of the school as this causes a hazard to pupils-teachers cars enter at the same times.

Afternoon Pick up: Infant classes pick up time is 1.50pm. All other pupils should be collected at 2.50pm. We ask all parents/guardians to be on time picking up their children. We notice of late that some pupils have to wait considerable amounts of time before collection. The school cannot be responsible for the welfare of your child (ren) after 2.50pm.

If you are going to be late please make provision that your child will not have to wait around - in some cases can cause upset to pupils.

Building Fund: As you are aware the school has undertaken a number of significant building projects over the last few years including the PE Hall and Classrooms at the rear of the school and the all weather pitch and playground. These developments were part funded by either the Department of Education and Science or Galway County Council but with all of these developments we were left with a shortfall. Fortunately, for a number of years the school has been operating a voluntary weekly contribution called the "Building Fund" (the notebook collection). Thanks to the availability of monies from this Fund we were able to meet some of the shortfalls and proceed with the developments. At the beginning of this school year we were pleased to be able to reduce the amount contributed to €2 per week (€75 per year) per family. We also stress that this a voluntary fund.

The majority of families in the school community contribute to the Building Fund and we are grateful for the generosity of parents in the current times.

We can assure you that the Building Fund will continue to be prudently managed and that we will endeavor, as always, to provide the best possible facilities for all of our pupils. We thank parents for their continuing generosity.

We thank you for your continued support and hopefully in the near future we will be in a position that we will not have to ask families for voluntary contributions.

Collection of money for School Year: On each pupil's booklist there was an amount of money to be returned to the school for Art/crafts/ Micra T Testing etc, we would kindly ask that this money be returned to the school by **Thursday 3rd of October**. Also the school insurance money to be returned to the school which is €8 per pupil.

School Visits: As stated in school's Code of Behaviour, an appointment must be made with the school secretary. We also request that each visitor report to the office

School Closure: The school will be closed on **Friday 4th of October** due to the referendum on abolition of Seanad and establishment of court of appeal-school is a Polling Station. Also on **Friday 27th of September** the school will close at **1.50pm** for a staff meeting.

Is mise,

Dominic Gallagher (Principal)