

*Scoil Iosaif Naofa
Bothair an Chlochair
Cinn Mhara
Co. Na Gaillimhe*



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

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September 2016

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school everyone. We hope to enjoy a great school year. We are delighted to welcome our new Junior Infants and their families. We sincerely hope that your time here in Saint Joseph's Kinvara will be happy and fruitful. We welcome also some new students to our school who have joined different classes throughout the school. You will find a warm and genuine welcome in Kinvara.

September can be a daunting month for many. Lots of new things, new teachers, classrooms, books and subjects. However it is also a very exciting time and together we will enjoy a wonderful and successful year filled with opportunities to learn and grow. To all our new students and parents, we extend a warm welcome to the Kinvara community. Everyone will endeavour to support you and we hope you will be very happy in our school.

We welcome the Junior Infants Class of 2016-2017: This year we again have 2 Junior Infants classes:

Ms Meere's Class: Lucy Higgins, Roisín Murphy, Dáire Hawkins, Rubaí McManus-Radich, Ruby Lyons, Oscar Conneely, Conor Joyce, Leanne Cullinan, Daithí Kavanagh, Hazel Kelly, Oscar Smyth, Leon Kelly, Michael Huban, Diane Murrihy, Rónán O'Sullivan, Gavin Keane, Éabha Rose Crossan, Michael MacMahon, Cailean Byrne and Améline Danjou.

Ms Smith's Class: Gavin O'Grady, Eoin O'Shaughnessy, Emeline Green, Cathal Malone, Bobby O'Connor, Aisling O'Donnell. Luke Moynagh, Aisling O'Connor, Róisín Donovan, Brayden Morris, Daragh O'Boyle, Tadhg Ganly, Max Chapman, Karolina Conole, Vanessa Doherty, Sophia Meyler, Senan MacEoin, Siobhán Fallon, Conall Kilkelly, Ruby Gallagher and Jack Mara.

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We also welcome: Sean Sweeney, Benas Saakian (Senior Infants), Fern White, Olivia Giersz (Second Class), Rose White, Leah Shaughnessy (Fourth Class) and Ugbe Saakian (Sixth Class).

Teaching Staff: We welcome Ms Lisa Burns and Ms Katie Killilea who have joined the school for this school year.

School Improvements:

Our two Junior Infant rooms have been refurbished over the summer months. We now have two state of the art rooms for our infants to enjoy. I thank Ms Smith and Ms Meere for their help in the design of the layouts and magnificent floor plan. A lot of thought and creativity has brightened up the rooms for our pupils.

The Resource Room and entrance have also been upgraded.

After many years of planning and many financial applications I am delighted with the grant awarded by the Department of Education and Skills to provide our school with car parking facilities. Our first priority was to the pupils of Seoda to provide them with a safe crossing to the main building. A safe Pedestrian Crossing is now in place for all of our pupils using the facilities in our school. I respectfully request all motorists to drive with caution in and out of Car Park.

We always endeavour to provide our pupils with the best facilities possible and to make our school a better place of learning for all. We have now utilised almost every square metre available to us. The only remaining space left to us is the possible completion and refurbishment of the Seoda building to create another classroom. This will be the final piece of the 'Jig Saw'. If we are successful in gaining the grant for the refurbishment, it will bring the total capital investment spend to almost €2 million over the past ten years.

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Booklists:

Book lists for the current academic year have been uploaded to the website and can be viewed by visiting the 'School' tab. If you have any questions regarding same, please speak with your child's class teacher.

Website:

We hope you find our school website to be a useful resource where you will find information on important school events, samples of the work completed by our students and resources which will help parents, children and the wider school community. Click on the menu tab at the top of the screen to navigate to any of our pages.

The school website has become the main communicational tool in terms of making information available to parents quickly and effectively. This year we hope to continue using the website as a key form of communication, particularly for notes home, notices etc. Should you wish to receive any notices in hard copy form, please contact the school secretary and she will be delighted to provide them to you.

I would like to thanks Ms Murray and Hilary for all of the work done on updating and monitoring same.

Lost Property:

We encourage all pupils to appreciate, respect and care for the school environment. In addition I would be delighted to see pupils taking care of their possessions and making every effort to reduce the amount of lost property left in school. I urge parents /guardians to ensure that all clothing and property is named and that the children take responsibility for them. A weekly check in our lost property area would be great.

Breaktimes:

Morning break is 10 minutes long and lunch break is 30 minutes long. During breaktime the children have something to eat and some play time. Please remember our healthy eating policy when preparing lunches for children and note that crisps, fizzy drinks, chewing gum and lollipops are not allowed. Also it is important that children can manage lunchboxes, drink bottles (no glass please!) and food is pre-prepared if necessary. While children get hungry during school, please don't give children so much

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food that they have no time left for play. Remember the school day is not so long that children will starve!

School Calender:

These details are now available under the Calendar/Timetable tab on the school website. (www.kinvarans.ie)

TEXT-A-PARENT:

We have all the mobile contact numbers of pupils entered since last year but it is imperative that the school is informed of any change in mobile numbers or any additional contact names that need to be added to the system. Please feel free to contact the secretary should you wish to check or change any contact details/numbers we have on file for you.

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 as 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.

School Uniforms:

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.

How to help your child:

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

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- 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.

EXPENSES SETEMBER 2016:

Given current economic conditions, we are very conscious that the beginning of the school year can be an expensive time for parents. To ease the burden, we are giving parents ample time within which to manage the various routine costs incurred during the term. School fees due end of first term.

Insurance: We recommend that all parents avail of this insurance. At €8 for 24 hour cover, it is very good value for money.

OPENING/CLOSING TIMES:

The school day begins at 9.10am. Apart from the first 2 weeks where the Junior Infants finish at 12.15 daily, the Infant classes finish at 1.50pm and all other classes finish at 2.50pm. It is very important that children arrive on time for school and are picked up promptly. The Board of Management does not take responsibility for pupils not collected after 2.50pm.

Like all schools, pupils are occasionally brought to school to St. Joseph's N.S. ahead of the official class starting time. To facilitate parents in this regard we do our utmost to ensure that the yard is supervised from 8.50am onwards.

Late Book:

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Children who are late for school need to be signed in at the school office. Please try to get to school on time as it is disruptive for classes and discourteous to other pupils and teachers.

Some children are persistently late for school.

This is not the child's fault! Please make a greater effort to be in school on time - you know who you are!

In terms of the pupils' education, it is critical that class contact is free of interruptions. When pupils arrive late, please allow them to enter the classroom quietly and on their own.

With regard to forgotten/overlooked items, I would request that parents who wish to drop items off to the school should leave all such materials with the school secretary. She can work with staff to ensure that the pupils receive their gear, lunch etc in ample time.

National Education Welfare Board:

The National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) was established under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and is responsible for encouraging and supporting regular school attendance.

The NEWB has now been incorporated into Tusla, Child and Family Agency. Our school is obliged to make quarterly returns to Tusla based on pupil's absences.

Once your child is absent from school for 20 school days Tusla is informed, regardless of the reason for the absence.

It is therefore very important that if your child is not in school we are informed of the reason for the absence.

If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason please let us know either by phone or email on the morning of the first absence.

This is to ensure children's safety, especially those who walk or cycle to school alone.

If your child leaves home but doesn't make it to school, this needs to be discovered early for the child's safety.

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MEETING THE PRINCIPAL:

I am always happy to meet parents and to work with them in addressing any concerns they might have. However, in the best interests of everyone, I would appreciate it if parents would arrange a specific appointment through the school secretary to facilitate such a meeting. In this way all matters can be dealt with thoroughly and professionally.

Allergies/ Medication: Please inform the school of any allergies which your child may have and any prescribed medication which they may require during school time. It is essential that our records in relation to this are kept updated.

Traffic management plan: Traffic management at the school is becoming increasingly more difficult to manage due to the large number of pupils we have in the school. The essential priority is the safety of all our pupils coming to and going home from school. Remember that you can't put an old head on young shoulders. Motorists have to behave responsibly and obey the rules of the road. In some cases these rules are broken on a daily basis- parking on Double Yellow Lines, parking on or inside a Yellow Box, on Set Down Only, in Disabled Parking, in Clearway to name but a few.

Most of all we ask you to **Slow Down!** Speed of traffic in the morning time is sometimes reckless.

Do Not

1. Park on Hard Shoulder in front of school
2. Park in front of Yellow Box- we have 4 regular offenders. I will publish numbers of vehicles and report to an Garda Siochana. **This is the biggest problem as it blocks the clearway allowing cars to exit after pick up.**
3. Stay chatting in the mornings on set down area- causes back up
4. Park on Bus Stop after school hours

Do

Pick up your child and go at a slow speed.

Bus Set Down can now be used as a Pick up Spot- not long term parking. If you wish to visit school and stay longer please park elsewhere .

Please do not park in Parallel as this will slow down flow.

Car Park beside school is for Staff only! Buses will pick up pupils here also at home time.

Please allow buses right of way into and out of Car Park.

Pedestrians will be allowed cross in front of exit of car park by using a Pedestrian Crossing(Temporary).

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The only way this plan can be a success is with your cooperation. If this solution is successful, we will be able to apply for funding to make Management Plan permanent. This should also speed up the application to install a Pedestrian Crossing in Kinvara.

Contacting the school:

We ask parents to communicate with school by email as much as possible.

If your child is going to go home with another pupil's parents, it is not necessary to phone the school secretary. This can be very time consuming. A note to the class teacher will suffice. The same applies to an absence on an illness-do not phone office on these matters.

Reminder: Birthday invitations: Please note the school will not give out invitations –please do so outside of school.

Is mise,

Dominic Gallagher
(Principal)