

*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 Newsletter 2017**

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 2017-2018:**

**Ms Meere's Class:** Fintan Madden, Amelia Glynn, Doireann Daly, Eli Collins, Connla Byrne, Oscar Giersz, Emily Shaughnessy, Sophia O'Donovan, Helen Nkikita, Luke Kilkelly, Conor Holland, Joseph Martyn, Nathaniel Collins, Síofra Ward, Cathal Kenny, Rhea Carolan, Grace Farragher, Éabha Victory, Cormac Madden, Charlie Nolan, Grace O'Grady, Sena Carolan, Adam Cullinane, Mollie Smith, Honor O'Brien and Iarla Kavanagh.

**Ms Shaloo's Class:** Jane Byrne, Tommy McInerney, Gráinne Sweeney, Grace Linnane, Caitlin Heffernan, Kate Linnane, Kayla Murphy, Ben Conneely, Lucas Burke, Enda McInerney, Livia Morud, Alex Waters, Rory Burke and Maiya Hogan.

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**We also welcome:** Lilly Suman, Saoirse Riley, Luke Tully, Daragh Cooper, Aoife Riley, Keelin Morud, Amy Patterson, Jasmine Haan, Jack Lyons, Adam Patterson, Lilly Tully, Cronan Cooper, Ava Kilkelly, John Kavanagh, Lara Kilkelly, Beckett Fisher and Hugo Lloyd who have joined the school.

### **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 thank Ms Murray and Hilary for all of the work done on updating and monitoring same.

**Twitter :** follow us on twitter @kinvarans to get an inside look at what goes on during the day in school. You will see artwork, science experiments, sports, mystery skype calls and lots of other interesting happenings from around the school. Our ASD unit Seoda also tweets on @seodakinvara. For those who wish to read more about twitter please [click](#)

[here](#) and go to our Online Safety Information section.

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**Facebook Page:** [St. Joseph's NS](#)



**Like our page!**

### **New Special Education Needs Policy**

The new allocation model, which has been devised by a working group established by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) chaired by Eamon Stack, Chairperson of the Council, and further developed by the Department of Education and Skills in close collaboration with parents, teachers, disability representatives and other stakeholders, is aimed at providing better outcomes for children with special educational needs, and at addressing potential unfairness's of the current model. It is based on the profiled special educational need of each school.

The new special education teacher allocation model will allocate teachers to schools on the basis of the profiled educational needs of each school. This will end the unfairness which exists in the current system, whereby many parents are unable to access the assessments needed to qualify for educational resources.

The new Resource Allocation Model will be a fairer and a better way to allocate resources. The main benefits of the new model are that:

- Barriers to accessing resources will be removed and children who need support can have that support provided immediately rather than having to wait for a diagnosis.
- Resources will be linked with genuine need, and children will not be unnecessarily, or inappropriately, labelled in order to access resources
- Resources will be linked closely with the learning needs of children

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- It will ensure that children with special educational needs are properly integrated into the school
- Schools will be able to allocate resources to pupils taking into account their individual learning needs as opposed to requiring a particular diagnosis of disability.
- It will support inclusion and early intervention

The new model has been positively received by teachers and parents

We welcome the move away from the unnecessary labelling of children in order to secure resources

We also welcome that they no longer need to wait for diagnosis and that this facilitates intervention at an earlier stage based on the schools identification of need

In addition, we now believe that we are well supported in meeting the needs of children with Special Educational Needs.

### **School Meals Programme**

We have been most fortunate to be chosen by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in being granted funding of the School Meals Scheme.

The school meals programme currently benefits around 200,000 children in more than 1,400 schools nationwide by providing breakfast, lunch, or a combination of the two. There is clear evidence that it raises nutrition levels in children which in turn is linked to the ability to learn and benefit from education.

These Nutrition Standards will be a valuable resource to support the on-going work to enable and promote healthy eating and healthy lifestyles in schools and will help more children to derive the maximum benefit from their education so that they can achieve their full potential.

Every pupil in the school will receive a breakfast/snack and water for the full year ahead. The grant awarded is in the region of €37,500. Water fountains have been installed in all classrooms where pupils are encouraged to drink water.

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### **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

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](http://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.

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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](mailto: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
- 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.

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**EXPENSES SETEMBER 2017:** All school fees are due for payment on 27<sup>th</sup> of October and we have issued all parents with an email link for the school fees which are to be paid on line. No cash or cheques to the school please.

**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:**

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.

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### **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.

### **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. **Contacting the school:**

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

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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.

**Information for class teachers:** There is confusion some days with pupils who go to afterschool and take the bus some days after school. Every child from 1<sup>st</sup> class to 6<sup>th</sup> class has a school journal, the school suggests that you put a note in the school journal indication where the pupils is to go. Some pupils go between the bus and afterschool and they sometimes forget on a daily basis as to where they are going.

Also if your child is going home with someone else please write this in the school journal, this also saves confusion at home time.

For pupils in junior/senior infants you can send in a note to class teacher if there is a change to your child's arrangement at home time.

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

**Is mise,**

**Dominic Gallagher**

**(Principal)**