

## FAMILY NOTE NO. 1 (1<sup>st</sup> Sept. 2014).

*Dear Parents/Guardians,*

*Fáilte romhaibh ar ais!*

Welcome back to the start of another school year. I hope you and yours really enjoyed the lovely summer weather again this year: a summer to remember once again for its sunshine at least. A special welcome to our eighty five 'new' Junior Infants and to the ten other 'transfer' pupils who are new to the school. Hopefully, their time in Scoil Barra will be both enjoyable and truly educational.

**1. Staffing:** Congratulations to Ms. Máiréad Ní Dhonnabháin on her marriage to Comann Duke during the summer, to Ms. Catherine Keohane (and her husband Matt) on the birth of her baby Mark, to Ms. Gemma Kingston (and her husband Mark) on the birth of her baby Olivia, and to Mr. Vincent Collins on his engagement to Siobhán: we wish them all well and every joy and happiness in the years ahead.

During the summer, we bade a fond farewell to Mr. Pat Naughton (retirement), to Ms. Karen O' Sullivan (resignation to take up the post of Principal in St. Columba's GNS with Facility for Deaf Children, Douglas), to Ms. Terry McCarthy (to take up a permanent teaching post in St. Mark's NS, The Glen), to Ms. Gemma Kingston (on Maternity Leave) and to Ms. Ann O' Malley who worked as Staffroom/Office Assistant in Scoil Barra since 2001. We thank them all for their very valuable contribution to life in Scoil Barra and wish them well and every success for the future.

Congratulations also to Mr. Vincent Collins and to Ms. Kara Woods on their appointments as permanent teachers in Scoil Barra.

We welcome back Ms. Orla MacNamara (Teacher of Senior Infants) as she rejoins our teaching staff following her maternity leave and Career Break. We also welcome to Scoil Barra Ms. Maria Healy (substitute Resource Teacher for Ms. Kingston) and Ms. Maria Lenihan (Teacher of Senior Infants) as part of a Teacher Exchange Scheme with Ms. Lucy O' Connell who has taken up a teaching post in Cnocanes NS in Kerry. We also welcome Ms. Deirdre O' Connor as the new Staffroom/Office Assistant following an appointment process completed during the summer holidays. We also wish them well and every success for the year ahead.

**2. Summer Works:** Once again, a significant amount of work was completed at the school during the Summer Holidays, including the replacement of carpets in Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4. The planned replacement of all table tops throughout the school was commenced during the summer, starting with those in Fifth and Sixth Classes. Additional painting and other maintenance works were also completed as part of on-going efforts by the Board of Management to ensure that our classrooms and facilities are equal to the best available in any school throughout the country. New basketball posts and seating benches were purchased and placed on the Senior Yard to the back of the school. ***Once again our cleaners/caretakers (Denis, Maura and Podge) did a marvellous job of cleaning and tidying the school buildings and grounds during the months of July and August: the school is indeed blessed to have people of their calibre and commitment to take such good care of the school.***

**3. Uniform:** Please ensure that your child has a full school uniform. Only official school jumpers and ties are acceptable. Please note again that dark shoes only are also part of the school uniform. Runners/sneakers are to be worn only on P.E. days. A reminder also that all pupils must wear full School Tracksuit and Polo Shirt on P.E. days. Girls to wear grey socks or grey tights. *Thanks to the donations of parents, we do have some uniform/tracksuit items which parents may wish to avail of free of charge. Please check with Eileen (School Secretary) re same. If any other parents wish to donate items of uniform/tracksuits/polo shirts etc please do so at your earliest convenience and these will also be made available to other parents. Please note that Polo Shirts and School Shorts may be worn instead of the shirt and tie and skirt/trousers for the month of September.*

**p.t.o.**

**4. Milk:** Cost of milk for 100 days supply remains at €20 (20 cent per carton per day). If you wish your child to avail of same, please put the money in an envelope with your child's name and class, and send it to the class teacher on/before Friday next, 5<sup>th</sup> September. Delivery of milk will commence on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> September.

**5. Charges:** As we have large bills for copier paper, copier services, Visual Arts materials, Pupils' Personal Accident Insurance Cover, etc., it is important that anybody who didn't pay the Charges Section of the booklist before the holidays would do so as soon as possible.

**6. Copies/Stationery:** If you need to buy any of these, they will be on sale in the school shop each morning from 8.45 to 9.00 a.m.

**7. Rented Books:** As we continue to develop our stock of Rented Books, it is essential that pupils take proper care of all Rented Books. The Rental Period is for the 2014-2015 School Year. Parents are asked to check their child's new set of Rented Books as soon as possible and be satisfied that they are in good repair at the start of this school year. If not, please alert the class teacher within the next week re same.

Books will be inspected during the year by class teachers to ensure that they are kept in good condition. ***Under no circumstances should these books be written on, marked or defaced in any way. Books which are deemed to be in sub-standard condition when returned by pupils at the end of June 2015 must be replaced. If a book is lost/misplaced during the year it must be replaced.***

**8. Insurance Matters:** *We have been advised by our insurance company to again remind parents that the school accepts responsibility for pupils from official opening time (9.00 a.m.) to official closing time (1.40 p.m. Infants; 2.40 p.m. 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> classes).* Parents who drop their children at school early in the morning or who are late collecting them in the evening should be aware that the school *does not accept responsibility* for the children's safety before/after the official opening/closing times. ***Pupils in Infants' Classes are not allowed to leave the school unaccompanied at 'going home' time. Teachers of Infant pupils should be informed of the name of the person collecting the child. Infant pupils should be collected promptly by the responsible adult at 'going home time'.***

#### **9. Assembly/Collection of Infant Pupils:**

**Junior Infants:** This year we have enrolled three classes of Junior Infants. They are located in Rooms 1, 3 and 4.

**Senior Infants:** The three Senior Infants classes are located in Rooms 10, 11 and 12 on the 'Library Corridor'. Senior Infants pupils should gather and 'line up' with their parents/guardians on the First/Second Class Yard (Lines 2, 3 & 4).

*Parents are reminded to remain with their child(ren) until the teacher brings them to their classroom. The supervision of the Infants' pupils when they arrive at school in the morning is the responsibility of their parents i.e. Infants' pupils should not be left unsupervised in the yard in the morning.*

In the interest of pupil safety, and to avoid anxiety on the pupil's part, parents are asked to collect pupils promptly at 'going home time' i.e. 1.40 p.m. for Senior Infants; 12 noon for Junior Infants from today until Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> September. Please ensure that the teacher is informed if there are any changes regarding arrangements for your child's collection e.g. being collected by a neighbour, relative, or other person. Please advise your child to remain with the teacher until the designated person arrives to collect him/her. It is very important to advise your child never to walk home from school on his/her own.

*The task of educating pupils is a shared responsibility involving staff, parents and the pupils themselves. We encourage and value positive and respectful communication between home and school, and look forward to parents working with us in a partnership that is characterized by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and a willingness to listen and learn in the best interests of pupils' development and progress.*

***Best wishes for the new school year to all pupils, parents, teachers, SNAs and other members of staff. Hopefully, 2014-2015 will again be an enjoyable and productive year for all in Scoil Barra.***

**Donal O' Sullivan, Principal.**