



Memo No 2 to Parents and Guardians 31st August 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Well, Day 1 is over, maybe the most difficult step for some, but we had a very positive and smooth start to the year today. Well done to the pupils who came bouncing in smiling despite possible little anxieties about a new year and a new teacher etc., it was a joy to see their smiling faces!

There were quite a number of children late this morning but I assume that is just difficulty in getting back into the swing of things for the first day!! Do try to leave a little earlier in the mornings when the weather is wet as this always exacerbates the traffic situation and can be very stressful for people, so get ahead of it if possible. Children are allowed into the building from 8.45 a.m. onwards which is a help.

Below are a few notifications, updates and reminders to take note of:

1. **Parent/Teacher Communication and School App 'Eolas'**

- **School App:** Last year, the school introduced a school app, *Eolas*, for teachers to give quick convenient notifications to parents. Most parents have downloaded the app at this stage. It can also be used by parents to make payments to the school, view school reports, have Parent/Teacher meetings scheduled and give notification of your child's absence and the reasons for same. We encourage all parents to download the app.
- **Parent/Teacher Communication:** We will now no longer have class email addresses, which were introduced for the purpose of remote teaching during Covid. Parents and teachers will revert back to the use of the class journal (First to Sixth Class) to communicate short messages to each other as was always custom and practice. Infant teachers and parents will use the Homework (HW) Folder to pass messages, so please check your child's homework folder daily for any notes send by the teacher. Parents of Infants also meet the teacher at the end of the day and can communicate short functional messages to each other as always at this time.
- **Appointment to speak to a teacher:** If you need to speak to a teacher about an issue or concern, please make an appointment to have a phonecall or a face to face meeting through Lorinda in the office or through the class journal.
- **Parent/Teacher meetings:** will take place as always in November for Senior Infants to Sixth Cass and in February for Junior Infants.
- **Notification of absence:** should be made through the school app, *Eolas*, or through the journal. There is section allocated in the journal for recording absences and reasons. Please remember to note the reasons for the absence as this is required on our databiz system and is relevant when a child has a lot of absenteeism and TUSLA will query the reasons etc.
- **Late School Arrival Notification:** Please notify the teacher through the class journal or Infant HW folder when your child is late for school as a matter of courtesy and of safety.

2. **Collection of Pupils:**

- There will be a slight change from tomorrow of the collection point for 2nd Class as there was a little bit of a gridlock today!
 - Infant pupils to be collected at 1.40 p.m. from the Infant yard as usual

- 1st Class will be collected from the yard directly in front of the office. Parents collect from the yard but please stand back!! Today, parents came right up to the wall of the school and there wasn't room for teachers to see who was taking each child etc., the teachers and pupils need space.
 - **2nd Class, from tomorrow, will be collected from the Infant yard.** Again, please stand back to leave space for the teachers to see who is taking the child.
 - 3rd and 4th Classes leave through the small gate directly opposite my office and across from the Innishmore Family Centre
 - 5th and 6th Classes will exit through the Infant yard and the gate from that yard.
- Hopefully, this will decongest and work better tomorrow!
 - Also, for younger pupils, please remember to notify the school if there is any change to your designated collection person e.g if After School Club Personnel are collecting someone who has not been listed.

3. New Book & Copy Scheme & Covering of same:

- Your child will have received their new books and copies today or tomorrow and will bring them home for covering. Please cover all books and copies that are sent home and return them to school on Monday.
- It is vital that good care is taken of all books and copies but especially those owned by the school and to be passed onto children from year to year. Please ensure your child does not write or doodle on any book that is not a workbook and is to be passed on to others.

4. Walking home Unattended Policy Reminder:

- Please remember that parents of all children from Fourth to Sixth Class are required to put in writing if they want their children to walk home unattended by an adult. Please give this to the Class Teacher or Lorinda in the office.
- Likewise, if you want your child from First to Third Class to be accompanied by an older sibling in 5th and 6th Class, please send notification re same to the school as above.
- A record and list will be compiled of all children whose parents have given consent for them to walk home unattended or with an older sibling in 5th and 6th Class.

5. Pupil Phone Policy:

- Please note that **pupils are not allowed to have a phone in school.**
- If there is an exceptional circumstance for a particular situation or occasion on a particular day whereby a phone will be needed, please put this in writing, including the reason, and give to the Class Teacher. **This will only allow the pupil to have a phone for that day.**
- If a child is found to have a phone in school, the phone will be taken and only given back to a parent.

6. Uniform, Attire, Toilet Bags & Lunch:

Tracksuit only: The school uniform is now our school tracksuit with the school logo polo shirt. Last year was a transition year between uniform and tracksuit but from this year on, it is tracksuit only.

- School Shorts may be worn for the months of September, May and June.

Toilet Bags: Each pupil from First to Sixth should have a little plastic bag with a face cloth as a towel in it for drying hands after using the bathroom. Toilet roll and soap will be provided in school.

- The bag can be kept in the pupil's school bag and should be washed and refreshed each weekend for the following week

- Junior and Senior Infants will use paper towels for drying their hands

School Attire and Hair:

*****Stud earrings permitted only for health & safety reasons.**

- Hair to be kept off children's face and eyes
- Hair dye, other than natural colours, not permitted
- False nails not permitted
- Make up/false tan not permitted

Lunch:

- As a Healthy School, we encourage all healthy food for lunch from Monday to Thursday with a 'goodie' as a treat on Fridays only
- Avoid fizzy or over-sweetened drinks. Water is always the healthiest!

7. Drop Off and Collection Traffic/ Etiquette

- **Please do not park in the parking spaces designated for Wheelchair Use**
- **Please do not park your car in the Set Down Area and leave your car.** This holds up traffic and prevents flow.
- **Set Down Area is for drop off only**
- If you need to get out of your car, please park anywhere in the Church Car Park other than the Set Down Area so you are not holding up the flow of traffic.

8. Unpaid monies form last year:

- Please pay any outstanding monies or fees from last year such as Swimming/ Tour monies / this year's Charges etc.

9. School Improvements and Development:

Sensory Room: Finally, we have a State of the Art Sensory Room. We have waited a long time for this! Footage of this wonderful facility will be posted on our website shortly. All pupils will get an opportunity to avail of the room which also has a Ball Pool and a small Trampet. The room is very calming with soothing water and light features, foam surfaces and tactile sections for sensory relief and therapy.

- Well done to the teachers who researched for this facility and made it a reality with their hard work and commitment over the summer.
- Some funding for the Sensory Room came from the Irish American Partnership in Boston and sponsorship through Samantha Barry , our famous past pupil and friend in New York. Thank you Sam!

New Chairs: All old and original chairs in the school have now, this summer, been replaced with new modern bright plastic chairs, they look amazing.

New Support Rooms: We have divided a classroom into two new rooms for Support Teachers and one new room for our Speech & Language Therapist who works with pupils in our Speech & Language Class. We managed to contract all local carpenters and painters to do this work and we are proud to have them, they did a great job.

New Chrome books: This summer we invested in another set of 30 Chrome Books which can be used in situ in classrooms. This is stage 2 of our plan to have a set on all 4 corridors eventually and our old Computer Room will become a new State of the Art Library very shortly.

****Very exciting times in Scoil Barra this year!**

Finally, I would like to wish you all a healthy and happy school year 2023-24. I hope it will be a good year for all members of the Scoil Barra Community in both your school and personal lives. Hopefully, we can all support and help each other to this end.

Kind regards, Karen O'Sullivan (Principal) and all the Staff in Scoil Barra

