



Memo No 8 to Parents 17th November 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you are all keeping well as we enter into the last few weeks of the term and all the busyness it brings!

Parent/Teacher Meetings:

In relation to the Parent/Teacher meetings next week, a few reminders:

- Please do not bring pupils or younger children along to the meetings (adults only).
- Please contact the school by phone, or send a note to your child's class teacher if you cannot make the Parent/Teacher meeting.
- If English is not your first language, you are very welcome to bring someone with you to support any language/translation needs.
- Teachers will try to operate to their timetable as much as possible. However, at times, delays can occur. We appreciate your patience with this.

Attendance:

School Attendance Returns are submitted to Tusla (The Child and Family Agency) twice throughout the year. The first return (September to December) is due shortly. We will be required to list any pupils over the age of 6 who have missed 20 school days for any reason. You will be informed if your child is included in the report. When this is followed up by our Education Welfare Officer, they will ask if the absences are explained.

Explained absences, due to illness etc. are not a cause for concern and shouldn't cause any worry at all. We understand that when pupils are ill they should not be in school as outlined by the HSE <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/colds-coughs-children/>. This is why we would strongly encourage all parents and guardians to ensure a written explanation regarding absences is provided to their child's class teacher (note in their journal or note to Infant teachers). We also encourage parents/guardians to provide a written explanation (note in journal or note to Infant teachers) if a pupil is late for school in the morning (after 9.00 a.m.). Staff record attendance and punctuality information (late arrival, early leaving) every day. The following issues are examples that may lead to further involvement from the Education Welfare Officer:

- A large number of unexplained absences
- A concerning pattern of absences
- Significant ongoing issues with punctuality leading to lost learning

Please find attached a guidance document from TESS (Tusla Education Support Service) on how to 'Make Every School Day Count'.

Laptop Donation:

Scoil Barra has recently received a generous donation of 10 laptops from Solar Winds, Cork. The donation was made possible through the thoughtful initiative of one of our own parents who works at Solar Winds. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to them for spearheading this initiative and for facilitating such a meaningful contribution to our school community.

We are immensely grateful for the support we continue to receive from our dedicated parent community and Cork businesses like Solar Winds. We look forward to seeing the positive impact these laptops will have on our students' learning journey.

Thank You

We wanted to take a moment to express our sincere gratitude to all members of our school community for your incredible generosity and support during our recent school initiatives – the PFA clothing collection, the PFA Christmas card initiative, and our charity Christmas shoebox collection. Many thanks to the Parents and Friends Association for undertaking the clothing collection and the Christmas card initiative. The ongoing support of the PFA is much appreciated. Congratulations to the Green School Committee for their expert steering of our Christmas shoebox appeal also. The success of these initiatives wouldn't have been possible without your enthusiastic participation. Your support embodies the values we hold dear at our school, and we are truly fortunate to have such wonderful community support in Scoil Barra.

Kind regards,

Karen O'Sullivan, Principal

Joanne Doherty, Deputy Principal