



# SCOIL BARRA NAOFA

## Newsletter #1

4<sup>th</sup> September 2018

A Chairde,

Céad míle fáilte ar ais ar scoil chuig gach uile duine!! A warm welcome back to you all after the summer – it's great to see everyone smiling and enjoying being back in school. We would particularly like to welcome our new Junior Infant pupils and their parents to the school community. We look forward to many wonderful years working together.

September is an extremely busy time in a school's calendar and I would encourage you all to note the contents of this newsletter in order to ensure as smooth a start as possible to the new school year. If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the office on 021-4842159. The office is open from **8:40am-2:40pm.**

Looking forward to another great year here in Scoil Barra Naofa. We are off to a flying start already. Is fíor an seanfhocal – “Tús maith leath na hoibre”

*Mise le meas,*

*Ciara Ní Bhuaigh agus Foireann na Scoile*

### **CIARÁN BOLAND - RIP**

It was with deep and heartfelt sadness that we learned of the passing of our former principal Mr. Ciarán Boland during the summer.



Mr. Boland was very much loved and respected by both the staff and students of Scoil Barra Naofa, Monkstown and will be greatly missed. Mr. Boland joined Scoil Barra Naofa as Principal in 1988, having previously taught in Carrigaline Boys' N.S. He was school principal for more than a quarter of a century, until his retirement in 2005.

We wish to extend our deepest sympathies to his wife, Breda, his children Christian, Bláithín (McDonnell), Rachel (O'Donovan), Nollaig, Oisín, Fionn and Aonghus, his grandchildren, brothers Tommy and Martin, and his entire family and friends.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar can be accessed on [www.scoilbarranaofa.ie](http://www.scoilbarranaofa.ie) . Here you will find dates for closures, as well as upcoming activities. For smartphone users – a handy feature is that events can be saved directly to your smart phone calendar!

The following are some important dates for the 2018/2019 School calendar:

Tues	18 <sup>th</sup> Sept	<b><u>Parents' Association AGM – All welcome</u></b>
Fri	26 <sup>th</sup> October	Presidential Election (Expected Closure)
Mon-Fri	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	October Midterm Break
Friday	7 <sup>th</sup> December	School Closure
Friday	21 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2018	School closes for Christmas at 12 midday
Monday	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	School Re-opens after Christmas
Thurs & Fri	21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb 2019	School Closed – Midterm Break
Fri & Mon	15 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Extended St. Patrick's Weekend
Friday	12 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	School closes for Easter at 12midday
Monday	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	School re-opens after Easter
Monday	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	Bank Holiday (School Closed)
Fri & Mon	31 <sup>st</sup> May & 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	Extended June Bank Holiday Weekend
Friday	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	School closes at 12midday for Summer

We do not yet have a date for First Communion (2<sup>nd</sup> Class) or Confirmation (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Class). There will also be one additional closure for Staff Training.

## STAFF

There are a lot of new faces in the staffroom this year! We welcome **Mrs Vikki Donnelly** as Senior Infants teacher and **Mr. Jack Walsh** as 5<sup>th</sup> Class Teacher for the 2018/19 school year. We also welcome **Claudia McNamee** as a SNA. Finally we extend a warm welcome to **Jen O' Sullivan** as our new school secretary. Jen will be in the office from **8:40am – 2:40pm** and is contactable via email on [oifig@scoilbarranaofa.ie](mailto:oifig@scoilbarranaofa.ie) .



## SCIATH NA SCOL

After school training tomorrow, Wed 5<sup>th</sup> Sept, in Passage GAA from **2.40pm 3.30pm** for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Class (Boys & Girls). Pupils & parents to make own transport arrangements.

## **BOOK RENTAL**

Our thanks to the parents on the Book Rental Committee Sandra Moynihan, Carla James, Gail Sheil and Emma White who volunteered their time and worked so diligently across the summer organising the pupils' schoolbooks! Míle Buíochas ó chroí.

## **WOW - WALK ON WEDNESDAY**

An official school organised Walk on Wednesday **WILL NOT** take place until the new Green School Committee elections have been held and the committee has held their first meeting.

Until then, pupils and parents are of course welcome to, and encouraged, to park and stride to school EVERY day, but staff will not be present to assist with the 'official' WOW until after the green school committee is formed.

## **CAMOGIE RED JERSEY DAY!**

Cork and Kilkenny will once again face each other in the All- Ireland camogie final this Sunday. We would love for the ladies of Cork to bring the O' Duffy Cup back to Cork! Best of luck to the Cork Rebels!

**Pupils may wear a red (Cork) jersey or other red t-shirt with their school tracksuit / shorts on Friday in support of the team.**



## **SWIMMING**



First Class and Third Class will begin their 5 week swimming module next Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September. We hope they enjoy and benefit from these. You should receive a letter this week outlining the details of the module.

## **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION – THANK YOU**

Our thanks to our Parents' Association for organising a fabulous tea and coffee morning last Friday in the Gill room for Junior Infant parents. It was a wonderful opportunity for parents, especially those new to the school community to meet each other! Míle Buíochas.

On Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Sept, the PA has arranged a play session for Junior Infants in Kool Kidz, after school (this is the final day of the 12midday finishing time). There will be a reduced rate of €5 per child, will drinks provided for children. It will be another great opportunity for children and parents to socialise outside of school! Enjoy!

## **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION - AGM**

The Parents' Association AGM will take place on **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 7:30pm** in the school hall. I would encourage all parents to attend this meeting, as all parents in the school community are considered members of the PA. It is important for all parents to hear about and acknowledge the great work carried out by the PA Committee last year. There will also be an opportunity to hear from myself and the Chairperson of the Board of Management, Don McAleese. So please do attend.



I would also encourage you all to consider joining the Parents' Association Committee. The committee engages in the fantastic organisation of the wonderful social and fundraising occasions across the school year. The committee meet approximately once a month and it is an excellent way to meet other parents, to get to know the workings of the school, school policies and other aspects of school life.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORM**

Please ensure that your child is wearing the full school uniform or tracksuit as appropriate, every day. Children from First to Sixth will have their P.E. days written in their homework journals. Please note that the school hoodie is the only one that can be worn in school. If your child is cold, another jumper can be worn under his / her school uniform. Do label all your child's jumpers and t-shirts.

Summer uniform can be worn, if the weather is appropriate, for the first two weeks of September, when we shall review.

## **CONTACT DETAILS & TEXTS**

It is very important that the school is able to contact you in case of emergency. Please ensure that the office has the most up to date contact details, and supply another contact person (childminder / grandparent etc.) if you are unable to take calls.

A text was sent out last week reminding all families of the re-opening date. If you did not receive this text, please contact the office to let us know. It is important that you receive the school texts, as in the event of an emergency school closure (Snow etc.) the school will contact families via text

## **WORK OVER THE SUMMER**

We are delighted with the work that has taken place over the summer here in the school - some of which I'm sure you will have noticed!!!

**Gardens:** Thanks to the trojan work of volunteers Shirley and Lorna, along with Vivian our caretaker, the grounds have had a complete make-over. Beds were cleared, weeded, new plant boxes installed, a veggie patch started, walls & steps and railings painted etc. The yard surfaces were repainted also.

**Labrynth:** Tony Christie of Labrynth Ireland, kindly volunteered his time to install the blue labrynth located in the courtyard near the lower entrance. Thank you to parents Niamh Gunn & Aoife Fleurry for arranging this wonderful new feature, which has wonderful

Thanks to Vivian's creativit and skill, an **external blackboard** was installed by the outside benches (with a weatherproof cover) and this area can be used as an outside classroom. Vivian also designed and made 'lions' who are keeping watch over our veggie patch (which is not quite finished yet!)

Thanks to the hard work of the Garden Committee and in particular parent Aoife O' Mahony (Aoife & Rohan Fleury's mom), the school was successful in receiving some grants to help with the re-design of the gardens. Huge thanks to Aoife and Holly Warren for giving so much of their time and energies to the school garden.

Thanks to a grant from the Environmental Partnership Fund, the lower section of the garden near the bottom yard, was cleared completely and that area is in the process of being transformed into a '**Pollinator Friendly Garden**'!

A Creative Ireland Cork Heritage grant was also secured to help transform the area behind 5<sup>th</sup> Class into a space that reflects local history – particularly the Railway history in the area. Watch this space!!!

Internally, new furniture was acquired for the school library – with more to arrive any day now!!

It is our vision in the school, to create a bright, colourful, environment that inspires our pupil and stimulates quality learning. With this in mind, we will hopefully look forward to more works in the future, funding allowing!!



## **PUNCTUALITY & SCHOOL ARRIVAL TIME**

Being on time is a very important life skill and it is important that your child gets off to the best start each day – by being on time. If your child is late they miss out on crucial settling in / playtime / social time. Though your child may not say it to you they may be very conscious of being late and having missed part of the morning. If your child is regularly late, the school may contact you to make you aware and to discuss how we can improve this.



**School begins at 8:50am, when the bell goes. Ideally, your child/ren should be in the hall in their line by 8:45am.**

Equally some pupils arrive VERY early and in many cases, there is no need for such an early arrival. Supervision is in place from 8:30am onwards, but not before. The Board of Management does not take responsibility for any child before 8:30am, and therefore pupils should not be on the grounds before then. We would ask all parents to please bear this in mind. While appreciating the time constraints & pressures that many families face in the mornings, your co-operation with this is hugely appreciated.

## **SCHOOL RULES**



The beginning of the school year is a great time for pupils and teachers to discuss the classroom and school rules. It is also a good time to parents to discuss them also with your child. The rules are found in the school journal and a full copy of our Code of Behaviour is available online. It is our aim for pupils, parents and staff to be happy and safe while teaching and learning here in Scoil Barra Naofa, and the School Rules help us achieve this aim.

## **MEETING WITH TEACHERS**

As our partners in your child's education, the school is always willing to meet with any parent with concerns or questions. Should have a concern or issue that you would like to discuss, remember your **first step** should be to contact the class teacher (as per the school policy). The ideal way to do this is to make an appointment, by ringing our secretary, Jen, in the office (8.40a.m.-2.40p.m). Making an appointment and planning a meeting, rather than hoping for an unscheduled/impromptu, is an excellent way of ensuring great communication between home and school.

The teacher on duty in the hall each morning is also more than willing to pass on any message you might have to the class teacher at the beginning of a school day. Go raibh mile maith agaibh.



## **INTERNET SAFETY**

As we begin another school year we feel it is very important to highlight again the importance of monitoring your child's use of the internet at home. While we are a pro-technology school, we also aim to educate students and parents of any potential risks, such as cyber-bulling etc.

We would like to remind parents that the minimum age for all social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Viber, Whatsapp etc. is 13 years and 16 years for others. Therefore, technically, no child in our school should have such accounts. If your child has their own account on any of the above, we would advise you to talk to them. It may be best that these accounts are disabled until your child has reached the appropriate age.

Primary school pupils would not be considered socially mature enough to understand the complexities of social interactions via social media. The act of one friend receiving a message and another not receiving it, could be misunderstood as isolating a classmate. They may unintentionally (or indeed deliberately) hurt each other's feelings in the way they interact online or speak about each other online. It is the school's strong opinion that pupils should not be using these social media accounts at their age, and if they do, they should be monitored and supervised closely.

Psychologist David Coleman wrote a very interesting article on this last year, which you may like to read: <http://www.independent.ie/life/family/parenting/psychologist-david-coleman-there-is-absolutely-no-reason-why-11-year-olds-need-to-be-on-snapchat-or-engaged-in-online-socialising-of-any-kind-34887193.html>

Either way it is important to discuss this with your child, and supervise and monitor their internet usage. The website, [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie), is a useful tool for parents, who might want to learn more about children and the internet / social media.

## **MOBILE PHONES**



Please note that mobile phones are not permitted in the classroom. If your child needs to bring a phone to school for any reason, please write an explanatory note to the Class Teacher outlining clearly the circumstances involved. Your child will then bring the phone to the Principal where it will be locked in the school safe and collected in the afternoon. Any mobile phone found in school, even when turned off, will be confiscated and returned only when a Parent or Guardian collects it. Our 'Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Policy' is available to

view on our website: <http://www.scoilbarranaofa.ie/mobile-phone-policy>

## **HEAD LICE**

Schools experience an increasing amount of incidents of head lice in our school. It is imperative that we are pro-active in trying to eliminate lice from our classrooms and prevent outbreaks. All household should be vigilant in checking and treating all children.

**‘Hair Up’ Policy:** We appreciate the support of those families who have ensured that long hair is tied up coming to school. Plaits & buns can be effective hair styles (prevents lice transfer by hair flicking). Bandanas and hair bands also can help (but not swapped!)

The HSE has offered the advice below:

### **PROTOCOL FOR TREATING HEADLICE WHEN LOTIONS HAVE FAILED:**

Day 1:

1. Wash hair using ordinary shampoo.
2. Towel dry hair.
3. Apply conditioner liberally
4. Comb with ordinary comb
5. FINE comb
6. Rinse off conditioner.
7. Comb with ordinary comb.
8. FINE comb again.

**NB – Repeat this EVERY SECOND DAY for the first 14 days.**

When the 14days are over begin again with DAY 1. BUT, this time, you repeat on DAY 5, DAY 9 and DAY 13. If live lice are found on day 9 or day 13, it is likely that this is a new infestation. Continue combing hair EVERY day until no live lice are found over 2 weeks. **FINE COMB ONCE A WEEK THEREAFTER USING CONDITIONER**

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:

- Lice cannot fly or hop. They are commonly transferred by hair flicking (hence our HAIR UP policy), or heads/hair being in close proximity.
- It has a life cycle of 35-40 days
- It procreates after 10 days & lays 6-8 eggs. It is therefore important to follow the incubation period of 1-8 day procedure outlined above.
- If you find head lice, please note that all bed linen, hats, scarves and coats (hoods in particular) should be washed at a high temperature.

We hope this advice helps. Contact your local pharmacist / GP for more advice on products and treatments!

If you do discover headlice, **please treat immediately and let the school know so that the class** can be checked at home.



First Aid

## **FIRST AID & ACCIDENTS**

As you can imagine with large numbers of children playing on the yard, bumps and bruises can be frequent. Any cuts or scrapes are cleaned with medi-wipes and dressed with plasters or bandages if appropriate. **If your child has an allergy or reaction to these, it is important to let the school know as soon as possible.** Otherwise, this will be our usual course of action. The teacher may put a note in your child's journal to outline the treatment, if they feel it is necessary.

Our procedure with regards to head bumps is:

- **TEXT MESSAGE:** If your child has bumped their head, and it is minor with no immediate cause for concern, you will receive a **TEXT MESSAGE**. The purpose of this is merely to inform you, so that if there is any concern later at home, you will be aware of the minor incident in school. Staff will monitor in school. All head bumps are treated with an ice-pack. *You can of course ring the school at this point if you would like more information or are concerned.*
- If, after monitoring in school, staff become concerned or there is a deterioration – you will at that stage receive a follow up **PHONE CALL**. Staff will advise you at this point if they feel that your child should be collected, or what steps will be taken by the school.
- If your child has bumped their head, and there is immediate cause for concern, you will receive a **PHONE CALL**, informing you and advising you of the next steps to be taken by yourself and by the school. Staff will treat injuries, following our Accident & Injury Policy.

**Please do not be alarmed if you receive a text**, and feel free to contact the school for more information. It is VITAL that there is an emergency contact number, other than parents, on file here in the office, in case of emergency. Please ensure this number is up to date.

## **PAYMENTS**

We will be sending a note to all parents in the coming weeks, to explain our new payments system, which is in the process of being set up. We hope that the new system will be a convenient and secure method of paying Class Expenses, Voluntary contributions etc. Thank you as always for your support.

## **RECYCLED CLOTHING COLLECTION**

**SAVE THE DATE!!!** There will be a recycled clothing collection on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018.



## **HYGIENE**

Many thanks to the many parents who have sent in supplies of toilet rolls and/or soaps to the class room already - we are extremely grateful. The class teacher will send word if and when more is needed.

The school supplies towels, which are changed regularly and liquid soap in a general area in each classroom - but **we would also advise that each child have their own small 'toilet bag'**. This could be the size of a pencil case or smaller and might contain a face cloth, a packet of tissues and hand gel. It is important to wash the small towel (face cloth) regularly. The practice of having their own toiletries would minimise the spread of germs, particularly in those winter months when we all have colds and flu's!



## **HEALTHY LUNCHES**

Scoil Barra Naofa is a health promoting school and has a Healthy Eating Policy. Strictly **not allowed** are chewing gum, fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps and **nuts** (as we have children with severe nut allergies). A **small** treat may be given on Fridays. Check out the policy on our website for lunch ideas. **Again, we would like to emphasise that we are a NUT FREE school.**

We strongly encourage children to bring a waste free lunch to school i.e. lunch boxes, reusable plastic bags and bottles. Please try to avoid tin foil, cling film and pre-packed food. Awards are given to classes who bring waste free lunches – particularly as part of our Waste Free Wednesday initiative.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

A reminder to those who are organising birthday celebrations for your children, the school advises that any invitations be shared / **delivered outside of school** to avoid any disappointments.

In the past, some parents have kindly sent in birthday cakes with their children, for the whole class to share in celebration. However, due to the large number of dietary restrictions in all of our classrooms, including severe nut allergies, coeliac etc, the school **no longer allows this practice to continue.**

The school will celebrate your child's birthday in our own way – usually with a birthday announcement and a small present, so we hope that any child in school on their birthday will have appropriate celebrations in this way.

## **PARKING**

Before school and home time can be a chaotic time with regards to cars and parking around the school. A few points for us all to remember:



- As much as we would like it, we **cannot all be parked in the spot nearest the school**. It is often an idea to have pre-arranged a 'Park & Stride' option, a little further from the school with your children. This will also help us maintain our 4<sup>th</sup> Green Flag for travel!
- The roads around the school are access roads for all of the local residents and we must be conscious of this and courteous to that.
- **We CANNOT at any stage BLOCK or OBSTRUCT the road on the hill** outside the school, even for a brief time. If a resident has parked outside their home, cars should not park across from them. If there was an emergency in any home in the locality, or indeed in the school, emergency services would not be able to come up or go down the hill. While I appreciate the fact that the roads around the school are narrow to begin with, it is important that there is room for traffic to pass.
- **It is an 'unwritten' practice amongst parents, which can prove useful, to drive up the hill by the school and down the hill by the Sacred Heart Church.**
- I will be speaking with all pupils in the coming weeks about road safety and crossing the road safely, both before and after school. I would appreciate it if all parents could speak further about this at home, especially in the cases where your son or daughter has to walk home / to the car.
- All pupils will be reminded that it is not permitted to run or play in the car park as it is far too dangerous. Any adult or child who is waiting by the school gates, should stand to the side by the railings.
- Finally, **it is preferable that anyone entering the school on foot do so using the pedestrian gate (and steps) from the hill**. I appreciate that this is not always possible; however, it would be appreciated if it could be done whenever possible. Having less foot traffic coming through the vehicle entrance would further eliminate any potential dangers to pedestrians.

Thank you for your co-operation with all of the above. The health and safety of every member of the Scoil Barra Naofa community is of vital importance to the school and the Board of Management.



## **LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY**

If your child needs to leave school early for an appointment etc, please send a note into the class teacher informing them of the time you will collect your child. When collecting early, please enter the school via the office. Sign your child out using the 'Sign-Out' book. You will receive a note from the office to give to the class teacher. Please exit the school via the door by the office. Many thanks for your co-operation with this.

## **HOLIDAYS DURING SCHOOL TERM**

The school is open for just 183 days of the year – about half! Baring this in mind, there should be ample time in the remaining half of the year on which to take children on holidays. Withdrawing pupils during term times for holidays, disrupts their learning and often children can be worried upon return that they have missed school work or activities. The school calendar is always available online, so please keep this in mind when booking holidays. **If your child/ren are to miss school due to planned holidays, please speak to the school principal.** Mile Buíochas.

## **ENROLMENTS**

We are delighted to have welcomed 204 pupils back to Scoil Barra Naofa for the 2018/19 school year. A reminder that the closing date for Pre-Enrolments for the 2019/2020 school year is **31<sup>st</sup> October 2018**. Please ensure that forms for any younger siblings are in by this date. Please contact Jen in the office if you wish to confirm.

## **HOMEWORK CLUB 2018**



### **HOMEWORK**

Homework Club will once again take place (***if numbers are met***) on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays** this year, from 2:30pm-3:30pm on each of those days, for pupils from 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Classes. A minimum of 6 pupils must be met for Homework Club to take place on a particular day. We hope to commence, numbers allowing, next Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September. The cost of Homework Club is €5 per pupil per day and this must be paid in advance for the full term.

If you wish for your child to attend Homework Club on any day, please contact the office or email [info@scoilbarranaofa.ie](mailto:info@scoilbarranaofa.ie). Forms can also be collected from the office.

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***Thank you for taking the time to read this very comprehensive newsletter – they will not always be this long!! If you have any questions please contact the office.  
Go raibh maith agat!***