



# Scoil Oilibhéir

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to welcome all of our pupils back to school following the summer break. A special welcome to our new Junior Infant pupils and to those pupils who have joined us for the first time in other classes. I hope that everybody enjoyed a relaxing summer break! We are really looking forward to a happy and productive school year ahead. As the Irish seanfhocal goes: “Tús maith, leath na h-oibre” – A good start is half the work. During my visits to classrooms to welcome boys and girls back to school, I have been particularly impressed by their levels of hard work, behaviour and respect for everybody in our school. **The importance of respect between all members of our school community and good behaviour among our pupils are among the important elements that we will have a particular focus on this school year.** I know that our parents appreciate this approach and we look forward to your continuing support in this regard. I would like to bring the following reminders to your attention as we begin our new school year. It might be a good idea to keep this note for future reference.

## **Communication from School:**

As you know we communicate with you regularly to update you on a variety of school issues and activities. We have, in recent years, introduced a soft copy version of our parent memos in an effort to reduce photocopying costs. The vast majority of our parents expressed support for this. So we will continue to expand this communication system this year. We will text you if there is a new memo available on the school website – [www.scoiloilibheir.ie](http://www.scoiloilibheir.ie), for you to read. If you do not have access to the internet, please inform Mrs. Quarry, the school secretary as soon as possible and we will ensure that a hard copy version goes home to you. Some messages will still go home in hard copy (yellow notes) in your child’s schoolbag so please keep a regular eye on that. Our parent texting system will also be used throughout the year to provide you with useful reminders of upcoming events. Please check our Facebook regularly for information relating to activities in the school and within particular classrooms.

## **Communicating with Teachers:**

We appreciate the importance of communication between the school and parents. If you wish to discuss anything with your child’s teacher, please make an appointment through the school secretary and an appointment can be arranged. **Because of the importance of teaching time with your children and for a variety of other reasons, teachers will not be in a position to facilitate unplanned parent-teacher meetings, particularly at the door of the classroom. Of course the passing on of a brief message to the class teacher, especially in infant classrooms is fine, but unplanned meetings at the classroom door is something I have asked teachers not to engage with.** When a meeting is pre-arranged, it provides the teacher and parent with ample opportunity to discuss any issues in an appropriate manner. All interactions between parents and teachers must be based on **respect at all times**, and a pre-arranged meeting in a calm environment provides every opportunity for this to happen as well as a good outcome to be achieved. As an extra help to parents, all teachers will send home an **introductory note** to the parents of the pupils in their classes at the start of the school year outlining how the class will operate for the year. This note will most likely answer any queries you, the parent, might have at the start of the school year. We look forward to your full cooperation in this regard.

### **Collection of Pupils:**

If you wish to collect your child during school hours, please call to reception, where Mrs. Quarry, our school secretary will call your child to meet you, and sign the release form. Upon your return please drop your child at reception and sign the return form. This minimises disruption to classes and ensures that we are always aware of children's whereabouts during school hours. If a lunch box etc. is forgotten, please drop it into reception where we will ensure that your child receives it. **Parents should not go directly to classrooms for any reason.**

As you are aware, we operate a slightly different system of pupil collection for parents of junior and senior infant pupils. Parents of **junior or senior infant** pupils may go to the classroom to collect your child, provided you have signed your child out at reception and you have received the **collection token** from the school secretary at the office. The collection token is simply a security mechanism for the infant teacher which lets the teacher know that you have signed your child out at the office. The above measures are particularly important for health & safety and Child Protection reasons and in the event of an emergency it helps us to know the whereabouts of our pupils.

### **Photographs of School Activities:**

From time to time we may be asked by **local newspapers** such as Evening Echo to take photographs of pupils for particular features such as "Kidzone", "First Day at School" etc. We have a tradition of supporting such activities as it publicises the positive atmosphere of our school and also provides children with the opportunity of seeing themselves in "de paper". Names of pupils may be requested by the relevant publication for such features.

We also include, from time to time, group photographs of pupils on our **school website or Facebook page**. No pupil details are included in photographs for our school website.

**Please contact the school secretary if you would prefer your child(ren) not to be included in the photographs mentioned above. In the absence of such communication we will assume that we have your permission.**

### **Homework Journals:**

Journals are available from the oifig at the moment at a cost of €3.00. Each pupil in the school from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> is required to have a Homework Journal. We place great importance on this journal in school and insist that pupils look after it properly. It is imperative that the contact information section of the journal is properly completed for each child. The journal is also a useful method of communication if you need to pass information of a non-sensitive nature to your child's teacher. Please note on the inside cover of the Journal this year that we have included our new pupil designed graphic highlighting how pupils can blossom in Scoil Oilibhéir.

### **School Uniform:**

I wish to remind all parents of the importance of pupils wearing the full school uniform, including black shoes. The uniform is an important element in the identity of Scoil Oilibhéir and the Board of Management is particularly keen to maintain our very high standards in this regard. The wearing of additional garments to those outlined in the uniform policy is not allowed. We also remind parents that make-up is not allowed in our school and the terms of our jewellery policy must be strictly adhered to at all times. For safety reasons the only piercing allowed in school is a small stud earring. We request that long hair be tied up to prevent distraction during class work.

**Side Gate Users:**

At the beginning of the school year the Board of Management has specifically requested that I address parking and safety at the side gate. It is the responsibility of parents to act in a safe and responsible manner in terms of parking and dropping/collecting your child(ren).

**Punctuality:**

Our school day begins for all pupils at 08:45 each morning. Our teachers are in their classes ready to begin work before this time and it is most disruptive if pupils walk into the classroom late as the progress of the lesson is disrupted. **I urge all parents to begin with good punctuality habits and ensure that your child is in school a few minute before the bell at 08:45.** If your child is occasionally late please ensure that you provide a reason in the homework journal to avoid any embarrassment for your child.

Please note that the Board of Management accepts responsibility for all pupils from the time the gate opens at 08:30 to the time we disperse our pupils at 14:30. We allow a ten minute period to allow pupils to fully disperse. In the unlikely event that, following this period a pupil is not collected we bring him/her to reception where the parent can collect.

You will receive the introductory letter from your child's class teacher shortly and should you have any queries about any element of this memo please feel free to make an appointment to speak to me. We look forward with anticipation to a great school year ahead and we are confident of your full cooperation and support.

Le dea-mhéin,



Aodán Ó'Briain,  
Príomhoide.