



September Newsletter 2019

The new school year is now under way. We hope that all in our school community had a very enjoyable summer holiday. A special welcome is extended to those parents and children joining us for the first time. We hope that you and your child enjoy your time in our school. We would like to welcome back all our existing pupils and parents and we look forward to another fantastic year in the school.

Our Staff:

Gerard Sexton – Caretaker

Paula O'Grady – Special Needs Assistant

Eileen O'Connell – Special Needs Assistant

Frances Killeen – Special Needs Assistant

Fiona Walsh – Support Teacher

Margaret Irwin- Support Teacher

Nicola Costelloe- Support Teacher

Karen Conmy- Junior Infant teacher

Anna O'Dea – Senior Infant/1st class teacher

Jean Hannon- 1st class/2nd class teacher

Karen Murnane- 3rd class teacher

Catherine Hynes- 4th class teacher/Vice Principal

David Reidy- 5th class teacher

Róisín Cussen- 6th class teacher

Ger Kelleher- Principal

We would like to welcome David Reidy and Paula O'Grady to our staff this year. We would also like to welcome Anna O'Dea back to Bruree NS. We wish Jo Cotter a very happy retirement and good luck to teachers, Niamh Mulchay and Meave Fehilly, who are on career break.

I wish to draw your attention to the following items. They are important and will help in the smooth running and order of your child's school life.

Communication: Parents are actively encouraged to meet with their child's teacher. If you have any queries or worries regarding your child, do not hesitate to come to the school to talk it over with the class teacher in the first instance, or with the Principal if necessary. Parents should make an appointment with the class teacher at a time and place convenient to all. In order to ensure maximum teaching time, routine enquiries, phone calls and appointments should be made before or after formal class. Your child's homework notebook is a useful means of communication between parent and teacher. Do check for messages.

The school uses a "**Text-a Parent**" service to communicate efficiently with all in the school community. We will be using this service regularly during the school year. To operate this system effectively we need your most **up-to-date** number, please. We do not share these numbers with any third party for any reason. If you have changed your number recently, please use the form attached to this newsletter. Only fill in the mobile phone number section if you have changed your mobile number since the last school year. We have also asked for an up to date email address. We are considering using email more in the future to communicate with parents. Email allows us to distribute newsletters and other information while also reducing our photocopying costs.

The school also has a twitter account that can be found under the handle [@brureens](#). We regularly post updates on daily life in the school here and it is a great way for parents to get a snapshot of what is happening in the school.

The school also has a website that can be accessed on <http://www.brureens.info/>

The school will also distribute a newsletter for parents on a regular basis during the school year.

Parent/Teacher Meeting: Mid November. Details to follow.

Sacraments: Meetings involving parents, clergy and staff will be held in connection with preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. The children will receive their First Holy Communion on 9th May 2020.

School Reports: Reports are issued each June to all Parents. We ask that parents send in a Stamped Addressed Envelope in June to facilitate the postage of these reports.

Annual Contribution:

As outlined in your child's booklist in June, we ask for a €30 contribution per child (maximum €100 per family) at the start of the school year. This contribution covers the cost of dance lessons, art and craft supplies and photocopying costs. Monies gathered through this annual contribution will only be used to benefit your child's education and to provide opportunities for your child to access the curriculum fully. We would like to thank parents for their contribution this year as well as for previous years contributions.

We are aware that September is an expensive time for parents. The contribution can be paid in installments up to the Christmas holidays.

Safety Notice: The school will open to receive pupils at 9.00 a.m. **No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time.** No pupil should arrive later than 9.15 a.m. Punctuality is expected at all times. Classes will end each day at 2.00 p.m. for Infants and at 3.00 p.m. for classes I – VI. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school gate. The person to escort them should be at the school gate no later than 3.00 p.m. as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time. Parents are asked to inform their child's teacher in writing if there is a change in collection arrangements.

In the case of children travelling on the school bus, the school cannot accept responsibility for escorting them from the bus to the school or from the school to the bus. Parents who feel that their children need to be escorted on these occasions should make arrangements to ensure escort is provided.

*I would appeal to parents collecting children at 2.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. to **collect their children at the school door or at the side gate**, as crossing a busy car park with cars pulling in, reversing and driving away is fraught with danger.*

For the safety of the children travelling on the school bus please allow room for the bus driver to park as close to the side gate as possible.

*Children who walk/cycle to school should enter through the **front gate**.*

Homework: This should become a routine of the child's day. It is a habit which, if acquired at an early age, will be of huge benefit to him/her at a later stage. We ask parents to ensure that what is given is completed neatly. The following is a *general outline*. It is a good idea to sign the homework notebook each evening.

Junior Infants: At the teacher's discretion

Senior Infants: 10 – 15 mins

1st/2nd Class: 30 – 45 mins

3rd/4th Class: 1 hr

5th/6th Class: 1 – 2 hrs

If your child is experiencing problems with homework, please contact the teacher.

Parents Association:

We would like to thank the Parents Association for their hard work last year. We look forward to working with the association this year on a number of different initiatives. The association contributed to the painting of the main school corridor and four classrooms which was greatly appreciated and has made a big difference to the older section of the school. Parents also helped out with many school events last year such as Grandparents Day, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, 6th Class Graduation ceremony and organised ice cream for all our pupils in June which was a lovely treat. The association also organised fundraising raffles at Christmas and Easter which were of great benefit to the school.

The Parents Association will hold its A.G.M. on the **7th October** in the school hall at 7.30pm. All parents are welcome to attend this meeting.

Silver Circle Draw: The school will hold a draw in aid of school funds in October/November. As in the past, proceeds will be used to purchase educational materials, in the upkeep of the school and to enhance the children's educational experience. Over the past year our Silver Circle Draw has provided a variety of resources e.g. new graded and levelled readers, sponsored school outings and contributed to the purchase of classroom materials.

Your support for the draw would be very much appreciated. The first draw will take place on Wednesday 6th November and will continue every Wednesday for the following four weeks. The subscription is €2 a week for five weeks. For your convenience, cards and money for each draw can be sent to the school with the children. A draw card will be issued shortly.

Savings: We draw the pupils' attention to the life-long advantages of saving regularly. To facilitate this, we are continuing with the Sammy Stamp Savings scheme this year. Kilmallock Credit Union encourages the children to open accounts with them once they have filled a card.

Dress Code: The school uniform is worn on all school days other than on days of PE classes. Research has shown that where schools and children have a proper respect for the uniform and appearance that school life benefits in many ways. Please ensure that all clothes likely to be removed i.e., hats, scarves jumpers etc. are clearly labelled in bold writing with your child's name on it.

Health/Safety: Please check your child's hair regularly for outbreaks of head lice. This is a huge problem nationally. If there is an outbreak of head lice in a class, all parents of pupils in that class are informed by note/text, and are asked to take immediate action to treat infestation.

Pupil Personal Insurance.

Application forms for the Allianz Pupil Personal Insurance Scheme are attached to this newsletter. The benefits of the scheme are outlined in the application form and we strongly advise parents to sign up to the scheme.

Mobile Phones

For health reasons, to avoid the possibility of theft and to eliminate one method of bullying, pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones on to the school premises. Mobile phones are not permitted on school outings or trips. If your child needs to contact you during the school day this can be done through the office. On the very rare occasions that your child may require a mobile phone for some reason after school, your child's mobile phone will be stored under lock and key in the principal's office and will be returned at the end of the school day. If a pupil is found in possession of a mobile phone during the school day, the pupil's parents will have to come into the school in order for the phone to be returned. We ask that these guidelines are strictly adhered to during the school year in order to avoid more serious issues which can occur around the use of mobile phones.

Healthy Eating: We encourage children to bring healthy lunches and snacks to school. All of us are well aware of the effects of fizzy drinks, crisps etc., have on the children's health and wellbeing. The pupils have a fruit break at 10.00a.m. each morning.

Attendance:

The school is using the Aladdin school management system at present. This system automatically texts parents when your child misses 10,15 and 20 days. The school is obliged to report to TUSLA (Child & Family Agency) when a pupil misses 20 days in a school year. If you wish to discuss your child's attendance, please make an appointment through the school office.

When your child does miss a school day please send a note to the class teacher when he/she returns. This note will be stored in your child's file. The school requires a short note. A phone call explaining an absence is not necessary.

Where possible, appointments should be made for after school time. Pupils leaving school early on a regular basis do end up missing a lot of teaching time during the school year and this should be minimised where possible.

Active School Flag:

The school signed up to the Active School Flag initiative last year in a bid to improve and develop physical activity in the school. The initiative has been a great success with the pupils taking part in many different activities last year. It has also given our staff an opportunity to review physical education in the school. We will continue with all our hard work in this

area this year and will be applying for our flag in the first term. I would like to thank the teachers, pupils and in particular our Active School Flag Committee for all their hard work and dedication with this initiative.

Nut allergies.

There are pupils in our school who suffer from nut allergies. We ask that pupils **do not** bring nuts to school as part of their lunch.

Insurance:

Allianz run a Personal Pupil Insurance Scheme for all pupils in primary schools in Ireland. An application form regarding this scheme has been distributed along with this letter. We would encourage all parents to sign their children up for this scheme. Please return all application forms for this scheme by **27th September 2018.**

School Calendar:

A copy of the school calendar has been attached to this newsletter. The school will also closed for a curriculum training day on the new Language Primary Curriculum during the 1st term in 2019/2020 and this date will be relayed to parents once the school has been notified.

Term 1	
September	School reopens on Monday 2nd September
October/November	Mid- term break: Monday 28 th Oct- Friday 1st Nov
December	Christmas Holidays: School will close at 12.30pm on Friday 20th Dec.
Term 2	
January	School opens Monday 6th January 2020
February	Mid-term break: Thursday 20th & Friday 21st February
March	School closed Monday 16th March Public Holidays: Tuesday 17th March
April	Easter Holidays: School will close at 12.30 p.m. on Friday 3rd April. School will open on Monday 20th April.
Term 3	
May	First Holy Communion: Saturday 9 th May Public Holiday: Monday 4th May
June	Public Holiday: Monday 1st June Summer Holidays: Schools will close 12.30 on Thursday 25th June.

Extra Curricular Activities – Term I, II & III:

Activity	Class	Time of Year
Cycling	4 th class	September
Gaelic Football coaching	Juniors-6 th class	Term 1
Hurling coaching	Juniors- 6 th class	Term 3
After school GAA coaching	5 th /6 th class	September/October
Boys school leagues	5 th /6 th class	September/October
Girls school leagues	5 th /6 th class	September/October
Christmas Shoebox Appeal	Juniors- 6 th class	October/November
Mary Immaculate Science Exhibition	6th class	Term 2/Term 3

Discover Primary Science Awards	Juniors-6 th class	Term 2
Swimming	1 st /2 nd class	January/February
Boys hurling league	5 th /6 th class	Term 3
Girls camogie league	5 th /6 th class	Term 3
School Excursions		Term 3
Active School Flag	Juniors-6 th class	Term 1/2/3

The Department of Education & Skills provides a capitation grant each year. This does little more than cover insurance and day to day running costs. It is due to your generosity that we can carry out a programme such as above.

All in the school community here in St. Patrick's N.S., are looking forward to the new school year. I would like to thank everyone for making my first year as school principal a very enjoyable and successful one. We look forward to working in partnership with the parents and all in the Bruree community this year to ensure that the pupils in the school achieve the best possible learning outcomes.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Your support and cooperation in the past is appreciated and we all look forward to a happy and productive year for the children.

Ger Kelleher,

Principal.