

Scoil Bhríde,
Nurney,
County Kildare.
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www.nurneyns.com
Roll no: 16345A



Principal – Dr. Vinny Thorpe
Dep. Principal – Catherine Owens

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents please ensure that you read this letter in full and make yourself familiar with its contents

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

January 2024

Welcome back and we hope you all had a nice Christmas break and are refreshed and ready to go for another school term!

Please remember to read all communication that comes home. Please visit our school website (www.nurneyns.com) to keep yourself updated on all current school information.

The FOLLOWING IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON CURRENT HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE RELATING TO COVID-19

Please note the following important points regarding **HEALTH AND SAFETY** in our school:
Our Insurance Company has requested that the following information be passed to parents:

The school will be opened to receive pupils at the hour of 9.10am. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. Classes will commence each day at 9.20am. No pupils should arrive later than 9.20am. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home after school should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school gate and the person escorting them should be at the school gate no later than 2pm for infants, 3pm for all other classes as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after the children after that time.

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children until they are handed over to the care of the school between 9.10am – 9.20am.

Access to the school yard at 9.10am on a dry morning and access to the school building at 9.10am on adverse weather mornings is to facilitate parents who physically cannot be there to supervise their children due to other commitments (e.g. work or dropping older siblings to secondary school etc.) or their children may get the school bus.

Based on a Court Case Law in the year 2000 it was found to be reasonably expected that children will be on school premises for up to 10 minutes before school, therefore the School's Board of Management has responsibility for those children who have been handed over to the school's care. In the eyes of the law when a parent hands their child over to the school from 9.10am, the school assumes what is called 'in loco parentis' i.e. the role of parent.

However, all primary teachers in Ireland (including Principals) are not required by their contract to provide supervision outside of their official working day (which in the case of Scoil Bhríde is 9.20am – 3pm). However, although not obliged to, the principal and staff in Scoil Bhríde have very kindly agreed to supervise from 9.10am to 9.20am. We are very grateful for their generosity.

On adverse weather mornings, pupils should go directly to their classrooms when the school building opens to receive them at 9.10am. On all other mornings, they line up on their designated number in their designated class line until the bell rings at 9.20am. **There will no longer be play time on the yard between the times of 9:10am and 9:20am Pupils must line up on their designated number in their designated class line until the bell rings at 9.20am.**

Wet Morning Time Routines and Supervision

- **On adverse mornings (e.g. rain, playground ice etc.)** children must enter the school premises through the **Green Yard Gate between 9.10am and 9.20am** as they normally do on a dry day and proceed to their class through the normal door they use on a dry day.
- On adverse mornings (e.g. rain, playground ice etc.) please time your arrival between 9.10am and 9.20am as our insurance company and legal group have advised that no pupils should be given access to the school building prior to 9.10am as no supervision is provided; **therefore the doors of the school building will remain locked to pupils till 9.10am.**

- If you are dropping your child to the school yourself please **give a hug, say goodbye and leave!** If parents stay around, they are giving their child, especially smaller children, great temptation to run out of the yard to be with them rather than mixing with their friends. It is also unfair to supervising staff trying their best to supervise over 200 children. Believe us, all children will settle more quickly.
 - Adults please do not congregate and crowd together on the school paths. Please be mindful of pathways and car drop off zones. In terms of health and safety these must be kept clear. So again, our advice would be, when dropping your child to the school, give a hug, say goodbye and leave! Believe us when we say, all children will settle more quickly.
 - It is imperative that parents do not try to have meetings with members of staff in the playground at drop-off and collection times – meetings between parents and teachers can only take place on the phone by prior arrangement.
 - The above routines are being put in place with you and your child's Health and Safety in mind and we look forward to your full co-operation.
- The school day commences at 9.20am for all pupils. It finishes at 3.00pm for senior pupils and at 2.00pm for junior and senior infants
 - Schools are not party to the School Transport System (*this is a private paid contract between parents and their service provider*) and the fact that the pupils are conveyed to or from school by bus does not impose any additional obligations on the school or teachers. No arrangement exists for the supervision of pupils who arrive at the school, whether by school bus or otherwise, before the official opening time. No arrangement exists for the supervision of pupils who remain after school hours awaiting collection, whether by school bus or otherwise.
 - We ask all parents/guardians to allow their child enter through the fence gate unaccompanied at the morning drop of time. As a school we will be there seeking that this request is carried out. This will allow us to foster and develop their independence and monitor with ease any unwanted and unsupervised adult access to your child. If you wish to remain outside the new yard gate with your child till the bell goes that is fine too. Thanks for your co-operation.
 - Once a pupil enters the school building, the teachers are in loco parentis and thus primarily responsible for the child's health, safety and welfare. Parents and guardians, however, must take specific responsibility for their other children (non-pupils e.g. toddlers etc.), especially young children, accompanying them in the school and its environs. For this reason, non-pupils are not allowed in the school yard from 9.10am as it is not the responsibility of school staff or pupils (even if siblings) to supervise them. In the interests of health and safety, child protection and school insurance, responsibility for other children (non-pupils e.g. toddlers etc.), especially young children must occur outside the school building and school yard from the third week.
 - Children crossing the road in the morning should only do so with the School Warden. **For everyone's safety, please co-operate with the School Warden** and be especially mindful of where you park. There is a set down area only (**note set down = 'drop and go!'**) within the school grounds, which you are welcome to use each morning; **It is not a 'Park and Wait' Facility (with the exception being for staff).** Please be mindful of children crossing at the pedestrian crossings either side of the set down area.
 - **Pedestrians must keep the paths beside car 'drop of zones' clear in the morning** to allow room for children and parents to open car doors. Standing in this area can delay traffic trying to drop and go so please keep these path areas clear.
 - Responsibility for traffic outside of school grounds rests with individual drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, Gardaí and Kildare County Council (who also employ the School Traffic Wardens). Please be mindful of local homes and business. For more information please visit www.rulesoftheroad.ie or if you have any concerns please contact Kildare County Council on 045-980200 or Kildare Garda station on 045-527737
 - If you send your child to school it is vital that you or someone from your family can be contacted at all times during the school day in the event of your child displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms. It is your responsibility to ensure that the school has your most up to date email and phone contact details.
 - While all children will be welcome back to school, we would remind parents that, where children are displaying colds, coughs or flu like symptoms, they should not be sent to school. Children who display such symptoms in school will be isolated and parents asked to collect them from the school.
 - At break times out on the yard, each class, for Health and Safety, will have its own marked out area to play on.

- A healthy eating policy operates in the school to encourage healthy eating among our pupils. Lunch breaks are at 11.00am and 12.45pm. We have an optional 'fruit break' each morning at 10.20am. This coincides with daily roll call and your child may bring a small piece of fruit e.g. a peeled orange, grapes, raw carrot sticks etc. to eat at this time. Friday is designated 'treat day' when your child is permitted to bring a treat in their lunchbox. It is not intended, however, that lunch on Friday consists of only treats.
- **Lunch drop off and equipment drop off**
Ideally all pupils should come to school organized and prepared with a packed healthy lunch and all the items and equipment they need for the day ahead. However, in exceptional circumstances this may not always be possible. To cut down on interruptions to teaching and learning time in the classroom, a lunch basket and an equipment drop-off box is located just beside the office slide window inside the school's front door. Please write your child's name and class on lunches or items and then place them in the appropriate basket or box. For Health and Safety, children will not be allowed to go to the school office unsupervised to collect items. If possible, staff will bring the items to the children, however due to unforeseen circumstances this may not happen or be delayed. The simple solution is for parents to ensure that they are organized and they ensure that their children bring their lunch and any equipment they need to school first thing every morning. This helps busy pupils and staff get on with their learning without interruption and ensures everyone's safety.
- **As we have children in our school with food allergies, (nut allergies in particular) our school is a NUT FREE ZONE. It is vitally important that your child is not sent to school with nuts of any kind or products containing nuts e.g. Nutella and other chocolate spreads, hazelnut chocolate, peanut butter or products where peanuts or nuts of any kind are listed in the ingredients. We also ask you to impress upon your child the importance of not purchasing treats containing nuts on route to school and of not sharing food while in school. This especially applies to Friday treats.**
- **More information on safety in Scoil Bhríde Nurney can be found on our school website www.nurneyns.com**
- **Parent Suggestion Box**. This is now moved to the school postal box. But please remember it is not a complaint box. To make a complaint please follow the proper procedure outlined in the display cabinet outside the school front door and on our school website.
- **School office opening hours: 11 – 1pm (Mon-Fri) and 1.30pm – 3pm (Mon-Thurs), Sat-Sun: Closed**
- **For Health and Safety and to cut down on interruptions to teaching and learning time in the classroom, all parents/visitors entering the school building must have an appointment (except in the case of a medical emergency). No appointment means no entry. It is advisable for all parents/visitors entering the school building/grounds to wear a face mask. All parents/visitors must not enter the school play yard during school hours due to Child Protection.**
- **Pupil Well-being and Party invitations**
We are asking all parents/guardians to please distribute party invitations outside the school gates (the gates beside the roadway) once the child has been handed over from the School to a Parent's duty of care. The sharing of such invitations is not permitted by pupils or adults on school grounds due to health and safety and pupil well-being. We have also had some very upset children who did not receive party invitations when given out by their classmates/pupils in their classrooms or on the school yard. As you can imagine when a child does not receive an invitation it can cause them great stress, anxiety and really knocks both their confidence and self-esteem. So, we please ask for your co-operation. School policy is that invitations are not to be issued in school, neither in the classroom nor in the yard before or after the school day (even if for the whole class).
- Junior and senior infants wear their school tracksuit all year long. This prevents any difficulties with bathroom use and will make things easier for the children.
- All classes from 1st class to 6th class are to wear their school tracksuit on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. PE will only be on these three days. This will allow the PE Hall, if used, to be fully cleaned between each day. Full school uniform is to be worn on Tuesday and Thursday only.
- No children are allowed leave their classroom during the school day unsupervised for messages, to collect lunches, to use the phone, trips to the staff room, trips to the office for photocopying etc. Pupils must remain within their classroom during the school day, unless otherwise supervised.
- No food or drinks will be allowed on the school yard by any pupils. All snacks and lunches must be eaten in their entirety in the classroom.

- Written homework is not given during the first two weeks of September or the last two weeks of June
- We are obliged, by law, to inform TUSLA of any child being absent for 20 days during the school year. Consequently, after each absence, we must have a signed and dated note explaining the absence. **All absences must be explained by a written note otherwise it is recorded on our electronic attendance system as “Unexplained”.** A reminder of a child’s attendance record will be sent to parents/guardians when they miss 15 days of school. Children must produce a written note to class teacher, if being collected by parent/guardian before the end of the official school day or children who become ill during the day must be “signed out” by parent/guardian, when being collected. There is a book for this purpose just inside the main door. This record will be kept beside the office by the school secretary. A detailed attendance report is given to each family at the end of the year.

School Attendance - What every parent needs to know

- **What should I do if my child cannot go to school?**

You must tell the school that your child cannot attend and say why. Write a short note to the school to explain why your child was out of school and send it in with your child when they go back to school.

- **What will the school do if my child misses a lot of school?**

The school must tell the statutory Educational Welfare Services of the Child and Family Agency if your child has missed 20 days or more in the school year, or if it is concerned that your child is missing too much school.

- **Can I take my child on holidays during term time?**

Taking a holiday during term time means that children miss important school time. It will be difficult for them to catch up on work later on. As a result, they may fall behind with school work and lose confidence in their abilities. We strongly advise parents do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time.

- **If someone other than parents/guardians are collecting the child from school it is up to parents/guardians to inform the school with plenty of notice by note or phone call.**

- Please label your child’s school jumper, tracksuit top and coat if you have not already done so. It will save considerable time and money. School ties are available in the office – 4euro per tie. **Full and proper school uniform is to be worn every day as part of the school’s Code of Behaviour (unless advised otherwise by the school).** A full copy of the School’s Code of Behaviour can be found on the school’s website www.nurneyns.com or by appointment in the Principal’s office.

- Please ensure your child has appropriate outdoor clothing for the weather each and every school day. This is for play time and lining up. Thank you

- Pupil’s personal accident Insurance *is a purely optional scheme*, which we administer on behalf of the insurance company, for anyone wishing to avail of it. We would highly recommend it. Please contact the school office for more information or visit www.allianz.ie

- If you wish to pay for anything during the year, you can do so by paying online, or by cheque (payable to Nurney N.S.) or by cash. If paying by cheque or cash please put your payment in a sealed envelope and write your child’s name, class and what the payment is for on the front. **Where money is owed to the school’s Board of Management (e.g. school tours, swimming, additional requirements etc.) a financial statement of your account will be issued to you before each term break seeking payment. Prompt payment allows the school to pay its bills, stay in credit and stay afloat. Slow payment forces the school to cut back on other things, such as learning equipment for the children or bus trips for matches etc. to name but a few.**

- Parent/teacher meetings normally take place once a year. Notification will issue 2 – 3 weeks in advance. This may be subject to change in light of any Public Health Guidance. In the meantime, should you wish to speak to your child’s teacher (preferably by phone), our School Secretary, will be happy to arrange an appointment time for you. We would ask where possible, that all meetings, in as far as possible, take place by phone.

- School closures for the year are outlined on our school website www.nurneyns.com and in the parents display board located just beside the school front door. **Please note:** *This year’s school calendar could be subject to change in the event of a closure for an exceptional cause, but that, as a general rule any unforeseen closure would be compensated for later in the school year.*

- Advice and information in relation to school day events such as sports competitions, active school’s week, school masses, nativity plays, swimming, gymnastics, drumming, cycling, dance, annual cakes sales, school tours and various dressing up days etc. will issue closer to the dates of these events and will be guided by public health and school insurance advice.

• **Secondary School Applications for 5th and 6th class pupils.** We would advise all parents of pupils in both 5th and 6th class to begin getting organized and ready and learning what's required to apply for secondary school places for their child in a variety of secondary school. We would advise parents to apply for places in a number of different secondary schools in their locality. Scoil Bhríde Nurney cannot advise parents on secondary schools and has no input or influence in the admissions procedure of any secondary school. For more information, please visit our school website @ www.nurneyns.com/secondary-school-2

• **Department of Education Annual Capitation Grant**

All primary schools in Ireland receive an annual capitation grant for each pupil in their school. In 2010 this grant was approx. €200 per pupil (approx €1.09 per pupil per day). In 2017 the grant is approx. €170 per pupil (approx 92c per pupil per day). The capitation grant is used for the day-to-day running of schools (heating, cleaning, lighting, maintenance of school premises and grounds) and for teaching materials and resources. Crazy as it may seem, whilst living costs have risen generally by 30% since 2010, the funding of pupils in primary school has reduced and is less than it was 7 years ago! This is why primary schools up and down the country are constantly fundraising to plug this gap. Since 2010 heating costs have risen, electricity costs have risen, phone charges have risen, service charges have risen (security monitoring, fire extinguishers, insurance, refuse, phone, internet, electrician, plumber, grass cutting) cleaning costs have risen (soap, toilet tissue, hand towels, bleach etc.) and schools pay both water charges and VAT. Other school costs such as photocopying, printing, library books, math's equipment, PE equipment, Special Education Needs resources, stationary, postage, buses for day trips and matches, furniture, paper, funding shortfalls due to non-payment of costs by parents, notice boards, flipcharts (and up until recently ICT costs) etc. are all paid from this grant also. As you can see 92c per pupil per day falls way short of what a school needs to stay afloat. So please support the Parents Association, please raise these issues with your local TD, please pay school charges and fees promptly and in full and most of all please keep supporting our school fundraisers. They are critical to resourcing your child's education.

A timeline of annual costs to allow you as a parent prepare and plan ahead for sending your child to school is as follows:

September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional requirements (arts/crafts, photocopying etc.) • School uniform (jumper and hoodie) • Swimming costs (bus, pool hire and instructors) • Extra-curricular activities with specialist instructors during the school year (e.g. dance, gymnastics, drums, cycling etc.)
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School tour costs
<p><i>Your participation in the pupil insurance scheme in September and the various school fundraising events throughout the school year are optional. But as has been said earlier in this letter, your support is much appreciated.</i></p>	

One simple big thing that all families can do to help the school and each other, as a big collective effort to limit any possibility of any infection entering our school is: please get into the habit of making handwashing the last thing your child does before they leave their house each morning.

We need you on board with this to help us ensure everyone's safety. Thank you!!!!

If you have any further queries, please send them to sbnurney@gmail.com, where we will only be too delighted to help.

Thanks for your close attention to these points. For more information, please go to www.nurneyns.com

God Bless,

Dr. Vinny Thorpe