

Bennekerry N.S. Newsletter

September 27th 2018

Fáilte Ar Ais Ar Scoil: We are delighted to welcome back our pupils after the long hot summer. We extend a very special welcome to our Junior Infants, who are settling in well, and several other new pupils who have joined various classes throughout the school. We now have a total of 425 pupils and 267 families are represented. We sincerely hope all our pupils will have a wonderful school year with plenty of opportunities for learning, friendship and fun.

Múinteoirí Nua: Welcome also to Ms. Marie Claire Murphy and Ms. Ann-Marie Murren who have joined our teaching staff in a temporary capacity. We are pleased that Mr. Danny Curry has returned to us and he will be working in the SEN department over the coming months.

Línbh Nua: Congratulations to Laura and Cathal Ryan on the birth of their daughter, Daisy, and to Colette and Diarmuid O'Toole on the birth of baby son, Iarla. We wish them continued good health and happiness.

Páirc Nua: Our pupils were both excited and delighted when we were given the go-ahead to use our brand new all-weather pitch. We assembled to watch Ms. Tomlinson, who was chosen to kick the inaugural ball, launch it into the air and the 6th class on the far end of the pitch each attempted to catch that very first ball. What a spectacle it was and what a fantastic facility it is. We feel both proud and privileged to have it. Great credit goes to the Board of Management and successive Parents' Associations who consistently work hard and are dedicated to providing the best possible facilities for our pupils. We expect that the ground works will be finished shortly, and we will then have use of the walking track and better access from the courts via a new ramp.

Cumann na dTuismitheoirí: Our Parents' Association gathered for their first meeting of the year on 10th September and it was great to see several new faces amongst the group. The committee agreed to run another clothing collection in conjunction with NCBI to raise funds for the school as there were two very successful collections last year. Some dates in October were suggested and your child/children will receive a flyer with all the details nearer to the time. This might be the perfect opportunity to do a clear out at home and help raise funds for the school at the same time. Your support would be much appreciated. The next meeting of the PA will be on **Monday next, 1st October at 7:30pm.** All are welcome

Am Oscailt: A reminder that official school times are from 9:20am – 2:00pm for the Infant Classes, with all other classes finishing at 3pm. Gates will open to allow for assembly at 9:10am. Please ensure that children are in time for school each morning and are collected promptly at home time, unless participating in afterschool activities, as the school does not take responsibility for them outside of these times. Pupils should **stay behind the barriers** at the school gate when waiting to be picked up after school. They **should not enter the Churchyard /graveyard** as this area is not the property of the school and children should be reminded to treat it with respect. As we are obliged to report school nonattendance to TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency, it is very important to **inform your child's teacher if he/she is absent from school.** Your child has School Absence Management Slips in his/her journal and these should be used to report absences and provide details of the reasons for these absences. If your child is unavoidably late for school, for whatever reason, please send him/her in for the remainder of the day if possible, so that a full day is not missed. Regular attendance is essential if your child is to make good progress socially and academically.

Foirmeacha Eolais/Information Forms: All contact numbers etc. need to be kept up to date for school records. This is especially vital if a child is ill or have an accident. **Please let Deirdre know in the office if you have changed address, phone number or have a new contact person** other than yourselves. In the case where family circumstances may have changed, please let us know in confidence. Such situations can affect children hugely and we would like to help and support them where possible.

Éide Scoile: School uniform should be worn every day, either the navy and grey uniform for general wear or the PE uniform on designated days. When consulted, there was overwhelming support among parents for school uniform. The idea of uniform is just that; that all will be dressed the same, thus eliminating competition between pupils relating to style and fashion. Therefore, remember that uniform includes **footwear** which should be **dark** in colour. **Tracksuit bottoms** should be **plain without stripes and logos**. Please ensure that all of your child's clothing is labelled clearly in indelible ink with his/her name. We already have quite a collection of unlabelled jumpers, cardigans and sweatshirts since the start of the year.

Lón Folláin: Remember that, in line with our Healthy Lunch Policy, your child should bring a nutritious lunch to school every day. All wrappings and uneaten lunch should be brought home by pupils daily so that you can monitor what has been eaten and what your child likes to eat. Sharing lunch is not permitted. A small treat such as a funsize chocolate bar or biscuit bar may be brought to school on **Fridays only**. **Nuts, foods with nut traces and nut based products such as peanut butter or Nutella are forbidden** in school because some of our pupils are allergic to nuts.

Ailléirgí agus Asma: Please ensure that the school is made aware of any allergies, asthma or medical conditions which may necessitate careful monitoring or administering of medication during the school day. Inhalers, epi-pens or other medication should be stored in the cabinet in the office. Pupils may obtain this medication if necessary, but only under supervision by Deirdre or another member of staff.

Bainistiú Tráchtá/Traffic Management: The following guidelines are contained in our Health and Safety Statement which is currently under review. This may be a good time to refresh our memories on the procedures which are in place to help keep us all, and especially our young pupils, safe.

- Please exercise extreme caution at all times when dropping off and collecting pupils.
- Consider carpooling with friends or neighbours to reduce traffic.
- Parents should stand outside the pupil's designated waiting area at 3pm to leave ample room for the children coming out of school i.e. the area inside the bollards is intended for pupils only.
- Always reverse into a parking space rather than driving in and reversing out.
- Do not park close to the pedestrian crossing.
- Use the designated drop off areas for set down only.
- Do not use the pedestrian area around the bus parking space for parking or set-down at any time as moving vehicles in this area pose a serious risk to all students as they enter and exit the school premises, whether they travel by bus or by car. This applies even when the bus is not in situ.
- Avoid doing a U-turn anywhere in the vicinity of the school.
- The staff car park is strictly for the use of staff.
- Please show consideration to other parents by exiting the car park promptly in the mornings as soon as you have dropped off your child. This will ensure that there will be spaces available for others to do likewise.
- Be mindful of our neighbours living close to the school and ensure that the access to their homes remains unobstructed by school traffic at all times.
- Mini-buses collecting a number of pupils for after-school care may be driven into the school grounds and may be parked in the area at the back of the old school building. This is to facilitate safer collection of a group of pupils. The driver is responsible for opening and closing the school gate and for driving cautiously while on the school grounds. The mini-bus should be in place before the pupils are released from the building and the driver should collect the pupils from the classrooms or main school doors.
- Designated parking spots nearest to the front door may be used in the event of a person with a disability or reduced mobility, due to an illness, accident or injury, wishing to gain access to the building.
- Pupils should be made aware of who is likely to collect them each day. If there is a change of plan and a different person will now collect, the parents/guardians should ring the school informing us of this change of plan. The secretary will pass this information on to the class teacher and pupil(s) in question.
- If, due to a court order or protection order, access to a particular pupil or pupils is denied to another person, the school must be informed of this situation and furnished with a copy of the court order or protection order.
- It is important to pass on this information to child minders or anybody else who collects your child.

Gruaig: Unfortunately, headlice continue to be a problem, not alone in our school, but in every school throughout the country. I heard a suggestion on the radio that Fridays might be designated “Fine comb Friday”, the day on which all parents/guardians would take the time to use a fine comb and check their child’s/children’s hair for headlice or nits. It seems these little creatures are becoming immune to many of the chemical treatments which are available in pharmacies. Perhaps if we go with this suggestion, we may be able to control the problem within our school. The good thing about choosing Friday is, if you are too busy on Friday, you still have Saturday and Sunday on which to complete the task before returning to school on Monday. Let’s all give it a go.

Eachtaí/Achievements: On Tuesday 25th September several pupils from the school were invited to a prize-giving ceremony in Tullow Community School as they had each won prizes in the schools’ category in the Tullow Show. The winners were **Anya Li** (1st class) Poetry- **Gavin McDermott** (3rd class) Handwriting **Sean Breen** (6th class) Handwriting **Emily Long** (2nd class) Art **Juliet Powell** Essay (4th class) **Alannah O’Dwyer** (6th class) Poetry and Essay **Fionn Dowling** (4th class) Poetry. Comhghairdeas libh go léir!

Ranganna larscoile/Afterschool Activities:

Cór: Our school choir are busy practising each Monday from 3-4pm in the school hall. Pupils from 3rd-6th class are welcome and, any child who wishes to, may take part on a trial basis before being asked to commit after Halloween.

Táipli: Draughts continue with Mairéad and Pat Breen on Tuesday afternoons in Seomra 4.

Ealaín: After school Art Classes with Jean Robertson will be on Wednesdays from 2pm-3pm for Junior and Senior Infants and 3pm-4pm for 1st to 6th classes. The term will run from October 3rd until December 5th. Please contact Jean at 086 8686783 for details or to book places.

Rince Gaelach: Irish Dancing lessons with Adeline Dargan will resume in the school hall on Fridays, beginning on October 12th from 2-3pm for children in Infant Classes and from 3-4pm for older children. Contact Adeline at 085-7259865.

Trumpa agus Trombón: Lessons for pupils who played these instruments last year take place on Wednesdays from 3-4pm and classes for beginners will be offered to 5th class pupils shortly. It is expected that these lessons will take place on Thursday afternoons.

Cursaí Spóirt:

Iománaíocht: A number of students from the school who play for Setanta Hurling Club reached the County Final on September 9th. The boys were excited to have the opportunity to play in Network Cullen Park and were even more thrilled when they defeated Naomh Moling and were crowned County Champions. The boys on the team from our school were **Cathal Flynn, Dylan McGrath, Elliot Hutchinson, Joe Bermingham, Joe Carbery, Lorcan Kelly, Oran O’Boyle, Marc Mulhall, Sé Stafford, Seamus Bible and Shane McCarthy.** **David Lynch** was part of the Carlow Town club U13 team who won their final also. We hope the experience they have gained will be put to good use when they take to the field to represent our school in the last school term.

Cluichí Poiblí: The Community Games finals took place in Limerick during the summer holidays. The local U12 boys relay team which included **Aidan Ryan** (6th class), **John Hendricken** (4th class) and **Seán Breen** (6th class), as well as James Cranny in the U14 boys’ hurdles, all came through their heats and semis, making the finals. Unfortunately, they didn’t make the medals on this occasion but did themselves proud. **Ella Hendricken** (2nd class) also did well, coming 2nd in her heat and qualifying for her semi-final. She earned herself a lovely gold participation medal.

Cumann na mBunscol-Peil: The Cumann na mBunscol football competition is underway at present and both our boys’ and girls’ teams had great wins over the Gaelscoil on Wednesday 19th September. They have several more games to play so we wish them continued success. Once again, they are under the expert guidance of Ms. Deirdre Tomlinson and Mr. Danny Curry.

Peil: We have close links with our local GAA club, Palatine, and therefore are delighted to hear about their various successes over the summer. The U10 Football team won the Garda Tournament for the second year in a row recently and the U-13 footballers have qualified for the County Final which will be played on Monday next. Both U11.5 teams reached finals but were just beaten. We are particularly proud of the senior team who beat Rathvilly in the county semi-final on Sunday last and will now meet Éire Óg in the final. Go n-éirí libh a bhuachaillí. The Bennekerry/Tinryland team will play the replay of the Senior County Ladies final next Sunday against Leighlinbridge. We wish our own Ms. Deirdre Tomlinson and many of our past pupils who play on the team, the very best of luck.

Lúthchleasaíocht: St Laurence O'Toole Athletics Club held their annual School Athletics Day for 4th, 5th and 6th classes on Wednesday 26th September in Carlow Town Hurling Club. Fifty-one pupils from the school took part and all behaved impeccably. They returned to the school with quite a haul of medals including 4 team gold medals, won by 4th, 5th and 6th class boys and 6th class girls, and a team silver and bronze for 4th class girls and 5th class boys respectively. Since there were up to 160 athletes in each race, medals were awarded to those who finished in the top ten places. From our school the following pupils were awarded individual medals; **Mark Buggy, Cormac McConnan and Síofra Harvey** (4th class) **Sam McHugh** (5th class) and **Marc Mulhall, Seán Breen and Marie Cranny** (6th class). Comhghairdeas libh go léir! Thanks also to the múinteoirí, Ms. Tomlinson who did most of the organising and Mr. Finnegan, Ms. Kelly, Mrs. Doyle, Mr. Curry and Ms. Murphy who were all on hand to supervise.

Snámh: Pupils from Seomra 8 (Ms. Murphy's class) and Seomra 11 (Ms. Griffin's class) have begun their 8 week block of swimming lessons. All are progressing well, and we are delighted that our pupils have the opportunity to learn to swim at a young age and in the company of their friends.

Ceardlanna Eolaíochta/Science Workshops: As part of our Green School initiative, Brendan Joyce will visit 3rd-6th class pupils to facilitate interactive environmental workshops entitled "What a Waste" on November 8th.

Caranachtaí/Charities: As many of you are aware, one of our 1st class pupils, Callie Kavanagh, has been undergoing treatment for Ewing's Sarcoma, a rare form of cancer. Her treatment is going well and we were delighted that she felt able to join us for a few days over the past few weeks. However, she still has a considerable way to go before what we hope and expect will be a full recovery. Some friends of the family have set up a "GoFundMe" page to help support Callie through her treatment. On Thursday 25th October the pupils may dress up in a Halloween costume or alternatively may wear a jersey of their choice. An anonymous collection for charity will be taken up on the day. A donation of €2 per child is suggested but no records will be kept and there is no pressure on any pupil to contribute. The money collected will be divided between Goal and the "GoFundMe" for Callie. We also hope to go on a "Witch Walk" if weather permits.

Comhneartú/Confirmation: A meeting of parents of pupils who expect to make their Confirmation this year was held on Wednesday 26th September. Some very important dates relating to the preparation programme for the Sacrament of Confirmation were revealed. It is hoped that by providing these details well in advance, it will be easier for the candidates to plan to be present for each occasion. The Confirmation Ceremony itself will be held on **Friday 24th May** in St. Mary's Church, Bennekerry.

An Chéad Chomaoineach Naofa/First Holy Communion: A meeting for parents of First Holy Communion pupils was held in the school hall on Tuesday 18th September. Again, some very important dates were made known and Fr. Little highlighted the duties of parents and pupils who are engaging with the programme of preparation. A discussion ensued about differing possible formats for the receiving of First Holy Communion. Fr. Little suggested a format whereby pupils would be prepared for the sacrament, both in school and at home, and would then present themselves for Holy Communion on any Sunday in May which suited their family. While this possibility had some support, most favoured the format which we are accustomed to, and, taking the views of all stake-holders into account, it has been agreed that the Holy Communion Mass will be held on **Sunday 12th May** and the children will have full involvement in this ceremony. At the meeting, parents expressed their willingness to be involved in helping to implement the programme by organising input into Sunday Masses. With this in mind, a further meeting for parents will be held in the school on **Wednesday 24th October** at 7pm.

Clarú/Enrolments: To help with planning for the future, all schools in or close to Carlow town have decided to bring forward our deadline for **enrolments for the academic year 2019-20 to 31st October 2018**. Enrolment forms will be sent out shortly to all those who have already submitted the "Intention to Enrol" forms. **If there are little brothers or sisters of our present pupils who plan to come in 2019 and who have not yet let us know, please do so as soon as possible so that we can reserve places for them.** Places will be offered before the end of November and once these places have been accepted, we may not be in a position to take any further pupils, even if they are siblings of present pupils or are in our catchment area. Spread the word to family and friends if you think there is anyone who plans to enrol.

Cruinnithe/Parent/Teacher Meetings: Our Annual Parent/Teacher meetings will take place on **November 20th and 22nd** for 1st-6th classes. If one of these dates suits you better than the other, please let the class teacher know as soon as possible so that he/she can take this into account when designating days and times. Meetings for the Infant classes will be on **12th and 14th February**. In the meantime, should you have any concern regarding any aspect of your child's progress, please feel free to make an appointment to meet with your child's teacher. Likewise, the teacher may feel it appropriate to meet with you before the November meetings and will contact you should the need arise. As highlighted in our letter in early September, we encourage good communication between school and home and these meetings provide the perfect opportunity for such communication.

Dúnadh Faoi Leith: Voting for the Presidential Election will take place in the school on **Friday 26th October**. Under the direction of the DES, the staff of the Bennekerry N.S. will be taking part in a planning day for the New Language Curriculum on **Friday November 23rd**. This means there will be **no school for pupils on these dates**.

Grianghrafadóir: A photographer will visit the school on Thursday 11th October to photograph the Junior Infants. There is an option for parents of Junior Infant pupils to have siblings included in the photographs also. Further information will follow and all pupils who will be photographed should wear their full navy school uniform.

Polasaí: In line with DES guidelines and procedures, the Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed at the meeting of the Board of Management in June and the annual checklist was completed. The Statement remains the same and was ratified for use for the coming year. The Designated Liaison Person is Ms. Tonia Cleary and the Deputy Designated Liaison person is Ms. Lourda Griffin.

Táillí: Many thanks to those of you who have paid the fees for arts, crafts, photocopying & personal accident insurance. We understand that the beginning of the year can be a very expensive time and so we do not expect immediate payment from everybody. If there are any difficulties regarding payment, please contact me in full confidence as arrangements can be put in place for deferred payments or payments over time.

Nuachtlitriú: Bennekerry N.S. prides itself on being an environmentally friendly school and was one of the first in the country to become involved in the "Green Schools" initiative some years back. Modern technology enables us to communicate in so many ways and it may be time for us to move away from hard copy newsletters in favour of regular communications on our website. As an interim measure, I will continue to put together newsletters from time to time and will post each to the website when the paper copies are distributed. Perhaps some of you would be happy to access it online on the website, and in this way, we could cut down on paper waste and printing costs.

Please fill out the form below to indicate your preference and return it to the school on or before Friday 5th October.

Thank you in for your continued support and I'm sure that, if we all work together, we will have another happy and successful year here in Bennekerry N.S.

When newsletters are published by Bennekerry N.S. my preference is

1. to be given paper copies of any such newsletters ☐

2. to access the newsletter on the website ☐ *(You will be informed that it has been posted)*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian of: _____