



Scoil an Tamhnaigh

Toonagh, Fountain, Ennis,
Co. Clare

Roll No. 03898U

Tel: 065-6820143

September 2024

Dear Parent(s),

Everyone has settled back well in Toonagh NS and well done to all the children. A special welcome to our new Junior Infants who have settled in so well in the school.

There are a number of important items that I would like to bring to your attention in this back to school newsletter:

Free School Book Scheme:

On return to school, all your child's school books (covered) and copybooks were distributed. Thanks to Seán Eustace for organising the whole process of this for our school and thanks to Mary and Maelisa for assisting Seán.

School Fees Payment 2024-25:

An epayment request for the school fees 2024-25 will issue in the coming days. The cost will be €40 per pupil and maximum of €80 per family. This payment will include a fee for pupil insurance (24-hour, 365 day cover), and a contribution to help with the expense of the following: Art and Craft materials for the children, photocopying and printing, Aladdin message a parent system, Accelerated Reader Licences, Digital licences and Literacy Lift Off programme.

Pupils will be asked to pay €5 for a bus trip to a match or field trip. The cost of buses last year was extremely expensive on the school and we expect a similar cost this school year. €5 towards a bus trip will help contribute towards this cost. If your child is going on a bus journey to a match or a field trip you will receive an epayment request for €5.

I also realise that back to school payments can be difficult for some families, in this case please contact me and I will give financial help in the strictest confidence. Also please note you can spread out the payments on the Aladdin epayments system.

Should you have any questions about ePayments, please contact Noelette.

Morning Drop Off and Evening Collection Arrangements:

1. **Morning Drop Off:** The school doors will be open from 9.05 each morning, strictly no children on the school grounds before the doors open as there will be no supervision. The doors will be opened at approx. 9.05am and supervision will start at this time.
2. **Evening Collection:** Only children going on the school buses will enter or exit the school through the main school gate, it is not safe for children to walk out this gate onto the road. All other entry or exit from the school should be via the pedestrian gate.

We do not recommend any child to be collected via our back gate outside Toonagh Hall or by the wall where the double yellow lines are. We recommend all children to leave via our pedestrian gate and be collected from there.

If any children are leaving the school via the back gate and steps near Toonagh Hall, **parents/adults must collect them from the top of the steps and be visible** to the teacher on evening supervision as we will not allow any child leave through this gate unsupervised due to cars turning here and walking directly onto the road. The safest exit point for children is our pedestrian gate.

Thanks for your cooperation and the continued safety of all our children is of utmost importance.

Communicating with the school:

Please note our secretary Noelette works on **Mondays, Wednesdays** and **Fridays** and you can contact the school on these days by phone. Outside of these days we check the school voicemail at the end of the school day. Outside of these days and times the phone will rarely be answered as all staff are in class. School phone contact details are 065-6820143. You can email the school toonaghschool@gmail.com and direct the message for a teacher or Noelette's attention. Alternatively, you can email each teacher at the following email address:

Ms. Browne: msbrownetns@gmail.com

Ms. Garrahy: fordeaoife@hotmail.com

Mr. Eustace: seanieeustace@gmail.com

Ms. Cullinan: clairecullinan1@hotmail.com

Ms. Griffin: msgriffintns@gmail.com

Mr. Roughan: toonaghschool@gmail.com

If any parent wishes to meet with their child's teacher or principal, please arrange a prior appointment through the office or through the email address provided above.

Please contact the school if you have changed your mobile number or email address and if you are not receiving texts/emails.

Absences:

As a parent, you must let the school know if your child is absent and the reason why. It is school policy that reasons must be given in writing to the class teacher. Please supply the class teacher with a written note or email explaining the reason for absence for the school's records. The school must notify TUSLA – Child and Family Agency when a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absences gives rise to concern.

Mobile Phones for pupils:

Toonagh NS has a strictly no mobile phones permitted at school policy. It is a matter for all parents to decide on allowing your child access to mobile phones and social media apps outside of school. Pupils are reminded that Class group chats and online social media groups are discouraged. Schools working together with parents must cooperate to ensure the safety of all pupils. Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Healthy Lunches:

Our school continues to promote healthy eating with a Healthy Lunch Policy in the school. Sweets, chocolate bars, crisps and fizzy drinks are not permitted. One small treat is permitted on Friday which can be eaten at big lunch. We look forward to embracing a healthy school. Many thanks for your continued co-operation.

Label belongings:

Please ensure that all your child's belongings are clearly labelled; Jumpers, Tracksuits, Coats etc as they can get mixed up at times.

Staff Planning and Training Closures:

The Department of Education have informed us that the teachers have a training day on the new Maths Curriculum on **Monday September 30th** in Clare Education Centre. School will be closed on this day.

The school will close on **Wednesday October 9th** @12.30 pm for a half day for a Staff meeting to facilitate staff planning. Buses will operate as normal at this time.

Christmas Concert:

Our Christmas Concert will take place on Thursday night December 5th and we'll have more details in upcoming newsletters.

Board of Management Summer Works and Maintenance:

The Board of Management has been busy preparing the school premises and grounds for the new school year. I would like to extend thanks especially to Seán Eustace for ensuring that the school was in pristine condition for the return of the pupils; organising landscaping work as well as a deep clean of the interior of our school building. Agreed Reports from each Board of Management meeting will be available to view on our school website.

Teacher Courses:

Under rule 58 of the Rules for Primary Schools, teachers are entitled to 3 Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days on foot of taking part in approved summer courses. Over the summer, the teachers in the school have taken the time to complete these invaluable courses in a variety of valuable areas. The Department of Education will not cover the cost of a substitute for the three days per teacher. The Board of Management will cover the cost of a substitute for one of the three days per teacher and the class will need to be split up into other classrooms for the other teacher course day absences.

School Instagram Page and Website:

I would encourage parents to follow us on Instagram (toonagh_school). Teachers will upload photos of activities taking place in their classroom and around the school. Our Instagram page will celebrate pupil/school achievements and allow parents and the wider school community to keep up to date with news from the school. Also from time to time we upload photos of years gone by in Toonagh NS which will be of interest to past pupils and friends of the school. Our school website is updated regularly and you can also find our school policies here.

School Sport:

- **Hurling:** Ann McMahon is coaching hurling, camogie and fundamental movement skills for all classes on Fridays. The children from 1st - 6th are asked to bring in their own hurley and helmet every Friday. Children from in Junior and Senior Infants don't need to bring in any equipment for now, we provide all children Juniors and Seniors with a hurley for this coaching session. Thanks to Ruan GAA Club for funding this excellent Physical Education initiative.
- **Cross Country:** The Cross Country Running Competition for children in 1st – 6th Class will take place in Lees Road on Wednesday October 2nd starting at 10.30am. All children in these classes are encouraged to take part if possible. An epayment request for the entry fee (€3) and bus fee (€5) will issue soon.
- **Gaelic Football:** Training for girls from 3rd to 6th class is on Mondays from 3pm-3.45pm and for boys from 3rd to 6th class on Thursdays from 3-3.45pm. Everyone is welcome. Mouth guard must be worn for training and matches.

Clothes Collection Fundraiser:

The date for the first clothes collection fundraiser will take place on **Thursday October 17th**. From Monday October 7th – 17th you can drop bags of clothes each morning to the school reception area. Also on Thursday Oct 17th you can drop off bags at Toonagh Hall 9-10am and 1.45-3pm. Please spread the word if you know anyone doing a clear out. The clothes collections were very well supported last year and are an important fundraiser. Thanks for your support.

Parents Association News:

- **Cahercalla Coffee Morning October 9th:** The children of the school have been invited to the Annual Cahercalla Hospice Coffee Morning, organised by the Parents' Association, on this Wednesday morning 9th of October between 9.30 and 12.00 in the hall. Donations of home baking welcome on the morning of the Coffee Morning. All parents are welcome to attend. A contribution of €2.00 per child has been suggested.
- **AGM Monday Thursday October 10th:** The Annual General Meeting of the Toonagh Parents Association will take place on Thursday October 10th at 8.30pm in our GP Hall. We would encourage as many parents as possible to attend this important meeting and new parents willing to join are most welcome. Helping out with the Parents' Association is rewarding as any of the events organised or funds raised are for the children of the school.

Important Dates coming up:

- **Monday September 30th:** School closed for teachers' training day in Clare Education Centre.
- **Wednesday October 2nd:** Cross Country running Lees Road.
- **Wednesday October 9th:** Cahercalla Hospice Coffee Morning 9.30am – 12.00pm.
- **Wednesday October 9th:** School closes for half day for staff meeting and planning.
- **Thursday October 10th:** Parents Association AGM @8.30pm.
- **Monday October 7th – Thursday October 17th:** Clothes Collection Fundraiser.
- **Wednesday October 23rd @7.00pm:** Information Evening our new Junior Infant Parents and Prospective Parents. More information to follow.
- **November 11th – 15th:** Parent Teacher Meetings.
- **Thursday December 5th @7pm:** Christmas Concert. More details to follow.

Best wishes to everyone for the school year ahead and thanks for your support.

Gearóid Roughtan

Principal