



Scoil an Tamhnaigh

*Toonagh, Fountain, Ennis,
Co. Clare*

Roll No. 03898U

Tel: 065-6820143

September, 2020

Dear Parent(s),

Everyone has settled back well to life in Toonagh NS and we were delighted to be able welcome the children to school on August 27th.

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

COVID-19 Toonagh NS Response Plan:

Please continue to refer to the Toonagh NS Response Plan you were sent on August 24th for all the details and procedures currently in place to help minimise the risk posed by COVID-19. Attached to this newsletter is a useful guide from the HSE on Covid-19 protocols for children.

Morning Drop-Off and Evening Collection:

Thank you to everyone for your cooperation with the new procedures at drop-off and collection times each day.

The reopening plan for our school is working very well at present and all pupils are familiar now with accessing and departing the school safely. To summarise:

1. The school will be open to receive children from the earlier time of 9.05am each morning. Children may be dropped to school any time between 9.05am and 9.20am. Please do not send children into the school grounds before 9.05am as it is not safe to do so. We stringently have to maintain the class 'bubbles' and as per the guidelines they cannot mix anywhere in the school. At present the children must go to their pods in the classroom each morning, the doors will be opened at 9.05am and supervision will start at this time.
2. We have 80 children from 1st-6th class leaving each evening. Therefore, to minimise congestion and to minimise contact the following times will be in place until Halloween and we will review then: 1st & 2nd Class will leave the school at 2.55pm, 3rd & 4th Class will leave the school at 3.00pm, 5th & 6th Class will leave the school at 3.05pm.
3. Only children going on the school buses will enter or exit the school through the main school gate. All other entry or exit from the school must be via the new pedestrian gate. For parents that park up the top of the school grounds near the hall, all children must enter and exit the school grounds via the steps at the back of the school by the basketball court.
4. Please at all times keep the area in front of Toonagh Hall free for the school bus and cars to turn.
5. While we are waiting for the building work in our Basketball court to be finished, staff will park here in order to help ease the pressure on the road while we get our systems up and running each morning and evening. This will also leave a little more room around the hall for cars to turn each morning and evening.

School Payments:

Our school uses the Aladdin **ePayments** system for the collection of most payments. It is not possible to have money lying around the school or in classrooms and the ePayments system is the most convenient way for the collection of money.

September is a busy month for school expenses and we are aware that there are a number of ePayment requests at this time. Please note you can spread out the payments in September and you don't have to pay all the ePayment requests together. I also realise that back to school payments can be extremely difficult for some families, in this case please contact me and I will give financial help in the strictest confidence. Should you have any questions about ePayments, please contact the school secretary.

Pupil Insurance:

Pupil Personal Accident Insurance is now being collected for the 2020-21 school year. An ePayment request for the fee of €8 per pupil will be sent out in the coming days. This fee offers very good value and it is important to get this paid by the end of next week, accidents unfortunately do happen.

All pupils in the school will be covered 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year under this Policy. Please see allianz.ie for further information on the schedule of benefits. Should you wish to make a claim, forms are available to download from the Allianz website and the school office.

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 explaining the reason for absence for the school's records.

Collection Arrangements for children:

If the collection arrangements for your child(ren) change, please inform the class teacher in writing. Mobile numbers/Address changes please inform the school of any changes to these details.

Healthy Lunches:

Again, this year we are asking children to bring healthy lunches to school. We ask that you do not include chocolate, fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps or any treats in your child's lunchbox Monday to Thursday. 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.

Accelerated Reader Programme Update:

Accelerated Reader (AR) was an amazing success in Toonagh in the last school year. The children did fantastic reading all throughout the year, an amazing 52 million words and 2242 books were read in Toonagh NS by children using AR. AR will start back for children from 2nd- 6th class next week and we will have more details during the week for the children on how it will work.

With this programme children pick books at their own level and read it at their own pace. When finished, the child takes a short quiz on the computer. (Passing the quiz is an indication that the child understood what was read.) AR gives children and teachers feedback based on the quiz results, which the teacher uses to help set reading targets for your child and direct ongoing reading practice.

Label everything:

Please ensure that all your child's belongings are clearly labelled; Jumpers, Tracksuits, Coats, Lunch Boxes, Books etc. This is very important in line with the COVID-19 Guidelines for schools as sharing of belongings is not permitted.

Communicating with the school:

Please note our secretary (Noelette) works on **Mondays, Wednesdays** and **Fridays** and you can contact the school on these days. Outside of these days we try to check the school voicemail, at the end of the school day. Also outside of these times the phone will rarely be answered as all staff are in class. School contact details are 065-6820143 or via email at toonaghschool@gmail.com

If any parent wishes to meet their child's teacher, please arrange a prior appointment. We regularly communicate with parents using text message and email via Aladdin, our school administrative system. One text message per household will be sent with notifications. Please contact the school if you are not receiving texts/emails.

Hurling, Camogie and Fundamental Movement Coaching:

Ann McMahon will start back coaching hurling, camogie and fundamental movement skills for all classes on Friday, September 11th. The children from 3rd - 6th are asked to bring in their own hurley and helmet every Friday. Children from Juniors to 2nd don't need to bring in any equipment for now. The coaching takes place outside in our Astro Turf or on very wet days in the ventilated Indoor Astro Turf. Thanks to Ruan GAA Club for funding this excellent Physical Education initiative for the girls and boys.

First Holy Communion:

First Holy Communion takes place this Saturday September 12th at 11:00 am in Ruan Church. We wish all the Holy Communion Children the very best and hope they have a nice day.

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 power washing, landscaping as well as a deep clean of the interior of our school building. Thank you to all the members of our Board for their regular meetings and work they did to have everything in place for reopening.

An extensive summer works project has also taken place on the school grounds including a full resurfacing of our school yards. This project will be completed soon and there will be an update of all the completed works in our next newsletter.

Teacher Courses:

Under rule 58 of the Rules for National Schools, teachers are entitled to 3 Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days on foot of taking part in approved summer courses. Over the summer, many of the teachers in the school have taken the time to complete these invaluable courses in a variety of valuable areas. For 2020/21, the Department of Education will cover the cost of a substitute for one of the three days per teacher, the Board of Management will cover the cost of a substitute for another one of the three days per teacher and the Special Education Teacher will cover the class for the third day.

School Calendar 2020/21:

This is attached to this newsletter.

Clothes Collection Fundraiser:

The Parents Association will hold the first clothes collection fundraiser of this school year on **Thursday, October 1st** to raise much needed funds for our school. Also from this fundraiser the Parents Association will be making a donation to Toonagh Hall and Sports Complex which has no source of income at present due to COVID-19 restrictions and the school children get fantastic use from this excellent facility. **Drop off times on this date are 9-10am, 1.45 – 3pm, and 6.30 -7.30pm.**

You can drop bags any day at Toonagh hall door if you wish to drop off bags before the above date and will put them inside each evening. Please contact Noreen Cummins or Mairéad McInerney if you wish to arrange to leave bags prior to the 1st of October after school hours. Please support and spread the word among anyone who may be doing a clear out of old clothes. Thank you.

Parents' Association News:

- **New Secretary and Chairperson needed:** Both Mary Gilmore (Chairperson) and Mairéad McInerney (Secretary) are finishing up in their roles in October, after a number of years of excellent service on the Parents' Association. We urgently need to fill these positions and hopefully there will be volunteers interested in helping out. Please contact Noreen Cummins (086 6030005) or Mairéad McInerney (086 2142359) if you would like to find out more or volunteer for a position. We've always had a Parents' Association in Toonagh NS and hopefully we'll have one again for 2020/21. The Parents' Association does fantastic work on behalf of parents in the school throughout the year and we need new parents to come on board this year. Being part of the Parents' Association is very rewarding as any of the events organised or funds raised are for the children of the school.

Important Dates coming up:

- **Thursday October 1st:** Clothes Collection Fundraiser.

Best wishes to you all for the rest of September during these very uncertain times.

Gearóid Roughan

Principal

V1.0 01.09.2020

COVID-19 symptoms: Fever more than or equal to 38.0°C or new cough or shortness of breath or anosmia, dysguesia or ageusia*

Self-isolation means staying indoors and completely avoiding contact with other people. This includes other people in your household, as much as possible. It applies to people with proven or suspected COVID-19.

Restricting movement means avoiding contact with other people and social situations as much as possible. It applies to those who are without symptoms but considered at higher risk of developing COVID-19 because they were exposed to a particular risk.

	Condition	Person	Others
1	Proven COVID-19	Self-isolate 14 days with last 5 days without a fever	Close contacts restrict movements for 14 days (after last contact with case)
2	COVID-19 symptoms, not tested	Self-isolate 14 days with last 5 days without a fever	Close contacts restrict movements for 14 days
3	COVID-19 symptoms awaiting test (this includes patients with samples reported as indeterminate/invalid until such time as repeat test is available or it has been determined that COVID-19 has been excluded on other grounds)	Self-isolate pending test result	Members of the household restrict movements pending test results
4	COVID-19 symptoms test result "Not Detected"	Follow medical advice. Restrict movement until 48 hours symptom free	Restrictions no longer needed
5	Some medical symptoms that may be COVID-19 related and awaiting medical assessment that day to determine if testing is required	Self-isolate pending assessment	No restrictions until medical assessment offers further direction.
6	Runny nose or other minor symptoms, no fever equal to or greater than 38.0°C, no cough, no short of breath, no ill household contacts or history of travel.	Keep home from school or childcare for a period of 48 hours to observe emerging condition	No restrictions
7	Runny nose or other minor symptoms, no fever equal to or greater than 38.0°C, no cough, no shortness of breath, but does have history of travel or household members with symptoms of COVID-19	Self-isolate pending assessment	Members of the household restrict movements pending assessment
8	Runny nose, not unwell, good form, good energy and normal appetite, no fever, not requiring paracetamol, ibuprofen or any other antipyretic	Can go to school	No restrictions
9	No symptoms, close contact of a proven case	Restrict movements for 14 days, testing as advised.	No restrictions
10	Travel from non "Green-List" country	Restrict movements for 14 days, self-isolate and test if develops symptoms	No restrictions unless the person who has returned develops symptoms.

*loss of sense of smell, or loss of sense of taste or distortion of sense of taste

Toonagh N.S. Calendar 2020/2021

School Opens:	Thursday, August 27 th
October Mid-Term:	October 26 th - October 30 th (inclusive)
Christmas:	Close on Tuesday December 22 nd @ 12:30p.m., re-open on Wednesday, January 6 th
February Mid-Term:	February 15 th - 19 th (inclusive)
St Patrick's Day:	Wednesday, March 17 th
Easter Holidays:	Close Friday March 26 th @ 12:30p.m., re-open Monday, April 12 th .
Confirmation 2021:	TBC
Holy Communion 2021:	TBC
May Bank Holiday Closure:	Monday, May 3 rd .
June Bank Holiday Closure:	Friday June 4 th closed. Reopen Tuesday June 8 th .
School Closes:	Friday, June 25 th @ 12:30p.m.

This is the calendar for the 2020/2021 school year with the main dates that been decided so far. The school will need to close for a half day 2/3 times during the year for a staff meeting (usually one each term), when we have these dates we will notify you.