



Starting School

Scoil Mhuire gan Smál,
Drimina,
Tourlestrane,
Co. Sligo
Roll NO. 18029A

Information Booklet

Dear Parents/Guardians,

A very warm welcome to Drimina National School. We hope that your child will be extremely happy here.

Our school is a happy and safe place where every child matters. Without your support we cannot succeed, so we look forward to working in partnership with you, in the best interest of your child's all-round learning and personal development.

We have a wonderful staff and you can be assured of our full co-operation and commitment at all times.

Should you have any query or concerns please feel free to come and talk to us.

Beir bua agus beannacht,

Mrs Gerardine Gill
Principal



Failte go dtí Scoil Mhuire gan Smál, Druimeanna
Welcome to Drimina National School

BACKGROUND:

Drimina NS was originally located down the road from today's building in Carrigeenagowna. In 1955 the children moved up the road to a new two-classroom school. As the school expanded two additional classrooms were added and the extension and completion of work on our new school took place in 2006.

Children in Drimina NS now enjoy the comfort of a state-of-the-art school where they engage with a curriculum that aims to provide a broad learning experience and encourages a rich variety of approaches to teaching and learning to nurture the different needs of individual children.

Drimina NS is a co-educational, Catholic School catering for children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

At present there are 61 pupils and 3 mainstream class teachers. We also have a Special Education Teacher.

The staff is made up of:

- ♦ Mrs. Gerardine Gill - Principal/Special Education Teacher
- ♦ Mrs. Helena Neary - Deputy Principal/Mainstream Teacher
- ♦ Ms. Lauren Taheny - Mainstream Teacher
- ♦ Ms. Navalene Singh - Mainstream Teacher
- ♦ Ms. Marian Doherty - Special Needs Assistant
- ♦ Mr. Kieran Neary - Caretaker
- ♦ Mrs. Rita Brett - School Secretary

Parents Association:

The Parents' Association contributes greatly to social aspect of school life in Drimina. It is a very active body which organises meetings, talks, events and fundraisers. Your ideas and support are crucial in helping to make the Parents' Association a success.

Remember, the Parents' Association is your voice. You are the Association, so please get involved.

Board of Management:

The school is run under the auspices of the Achonry Diocese. At local level the Board of Management takes overall responsibility for the running of the school.

The Board is made up of eight people:

two parent representatives:

Mrs. Aileen Calvey & Mr. Gerard Korrane

two community representatives:

Mrs. Paula Gavaghan & Mr. Brendan Leonard.

two patron nominees:

Fr. John Glynn (Chairperson) & Mr. Eddie Walsh

two members of the teaching staff:

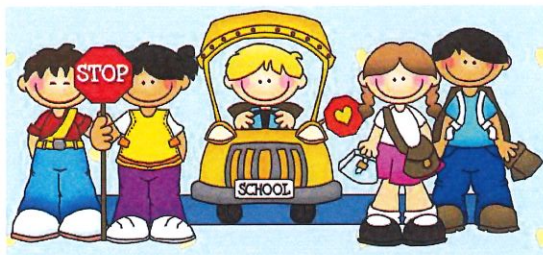
Mrs. Gerardine Gill & Ms. Navalene Singh

The Board of Management has a four year term 2019-2023

*"A million billion miles from home,
Waiting for the bell to go.
To go where?"*

(Taken from "First Day at School" by Roger McGough)

Welcome to a new and exciting stage in your child's life. During this year your child will make new friends, enjoy new experiences and learn new skills. As teachers and parents, we have the chance to work together to foster a positive attitude towards education, based on social and academic confidence.



First Day - A Happy One:

Please be positive with your child in preparing him/her for school and explain what will happen in relation to arrival to school, teacher, other children, breaks, tidy-up time and departure from school. On arrival it is very helpful if you can show your child where to hang his/her coat and leave his/her lunch. After meeting the teacher and some of the other children please leave promptly because your child will pick up on your anxiety. Most children, even if initially upset soon become distracted by their surroundings and settle down.

Primary Curriculum:

In 1999 a new revised curriculum was introduced into Irish Primary Schools. The curriculum consists of 6 curriculum areas and these are further divided into 11 subjects.

Your child will be learning in the following areas and subjects:

- 1) **Language: Gaeilge & English**
- 2) **Mathematics**
- 3) **Social, Environmental & Scientific Education: History, Geography & Science.**
- 4) **Arts Education: Music, Art & Drama**
- 5) **PE: Physical Education**
- 6) **Social, Personal & Health Education: SPHE**

The Curriculum aims to ensure that all children are provided with learning opportunities that recognise and celebrate their uniqueness, develop their full potential and prepare them to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The focus is on the child as a learner.

The curriculum aims to ensure that children's experience of school will lead them to value and enjoy learning as a lifelong process.

School Uniform:

Uniform:

- ◆ Navy jumper or cardigan
- ◆ Navy trousers/pinafore/skirt.
- ◆ Sky blue shirt/t-shirt with collar.
- ◆ Shoes
- ◆ Tracksuit and runners for PE days

Please ensure that all clothes likely to be removed i.e. coats, hats, scarves, gloves, jumpers etc. are **clearly labelled** with your child's name. Many children possess similar items and labels ensure that lost/found items can be returned to the correct owners.

We have some spare clothes and underwear for use if needed.

However, if your child has any toilet problems please let the teacher know and send in a spare set of clothes for emergencies.

Please note that, if you wish, a school crest can be sewn onto your child's jumper. School crests are available directly from Teresa Walsh at Embroidery Bliss on 087 4125606.

Full uniform should be worn every day apart from PE day.

Helpful Hints for Infants

- ◆ Elasticated waistbands on trousers and skirts are easier for small children to manage.
- ◆ Velcro fasteners on shoes and runners are easier to secure than laces.



Stationery:

The class teacher will buy all necessary stationery and books for the children in September. Children do not need any pencil cases/crayons/pencils etc.

EVERYTHING WILL BE SUPPLIED FOR THEM IN SEPTEMBER BY THEIR CLASS TEACHER.

Mobile Phones:

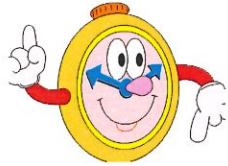
Children are not permitted to have a mobile phone in Drimina NS at any time.



Toys:

There is no need for children to bring toys to school and we do not encourage this practice because of breakages and peer pressure.

Punctually and Attendance:



The children are expected to be punctual and to attend school every day. Good school attendance is crucial to your child's progress.

It should be noted that your child may not enter the school premises before 9:20am.

No responsibility is taken by the school for children who arrive on the premises before that time or who remain on the premises after 3pm.

In the interest of safety and the fostering of independence, children are encouraged to say "Slán" to their parents/guardians at the school gate.

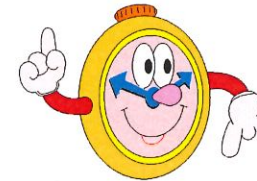
Parents/guardians should collect their children at the school gate at 2pm (infants) and 3pm (all other classes).

Medication:

It is the policy of the school **NOT** to administer any medication to children. This school will be happy to facilitate parents/guardians needing to give medication to their child.

The School Day:

Junior infants will go home at 12:30pm for the first few weeks of the year. From September 19th the Junior Infants will go home at 2 o'clock.



All infants go home at 2 o'clock.

1st to 6th class go home at 3 o'clock.

It is important to be on time. Your child may fret if he/she thinks that you have forgotten to come.



If there are any special collection arrangements please let us know in advance. **ONLY PEOPLE LISTED ON YOUR CHILD'S EN-ROLLMENT FORM ARE PERMITTED TO COLLECT YOUR CHILD.**

Morning Break:	11:00am - 11:10am
Lunch Break:	12:45pm - 1:15pm

Access to the school:

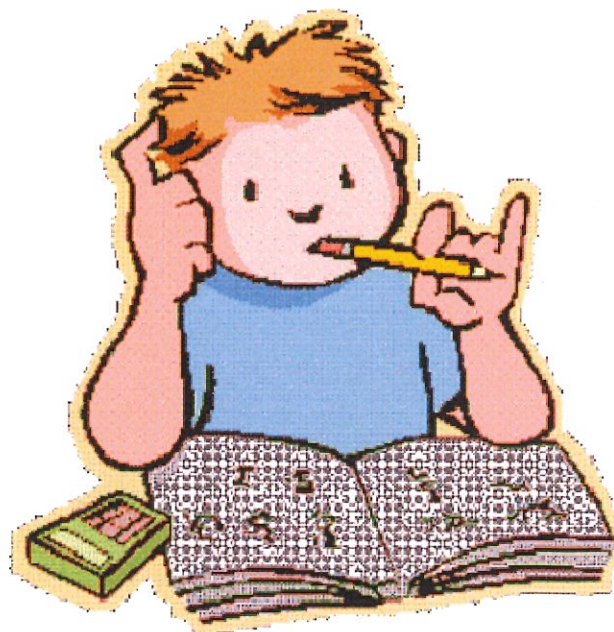
If you need to take your child out of school early, for a dental or medical appointment, you are asked to inform the class teacher in advance e.g. the day before. You must sign your child out using the official 'SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT' book.



Please note that children will not be allowed to leave the school building on their own. They must be collected by an adult. Children will not be released into the care of another juvenile.

We would urge you not to collect your child early unless he/she has a prearranged appointment. It can be disruptive for your child's learning and it is also disruptive in terms of the allocation of homework.

Homework is assigned before children go home in the evening. If children are taken out early from school then the class teacher may not be in a position to have homework assigned to your child.



WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD TO GROW

- Give your child time, spend time together
- Talk to your child and encourage him/her.
- Listen attentively to your child.
- Read and enjoy stories together. Talk about the story.
- Repeat Nursery Rhymes.
- Identify colours and shapes.
- Provide paper, crayons and paints for colouring.
- Provide jigsaws, lego, playdough etc.
- Help him/her to cut using safe scissors.
- Allow sand and water play.
- Have fun together.
- Praise his/her efforts at every opportunity.
- Try not to criticise.

If children feel you have confidence in them they will feel they can achieve.

In short, do as little FOR your child and as much WITH your child as possible.



Absence and Sickness:

Regular attendance is crucial to your child's progress. However, children get sick from time to time. Please **DO NOT** send your child to school if he/she is sick. Allow your child to recover before he/she returns to school.

Remember to send a note, explaining the reason for the absence, when your child is returning to school.

If the principal/class teacher feels that a child is not well enough for school, either as a result of becoming sick or as a result of an accident, then parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.

In the event of an accident, your instructions from the **ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY FORM**, will be followed for your child.

In accordance with the Educational Welfare Act and TUSLA (child and family welfare services) the school has a duty to report any child who has missed 20 days or more in one academic year. The principal has no discretion in this. When your child reaches 15 days absence you will be notified by a written letter from the school.

It is important to notify the school if your phone number changes during the school term.

Meeting with the Class Teacher:

Please do not hesitate to approach the Junior Infant teacher, at any time, if there is an urgent concern. However, if you wish to arrange a more detailed discussion please organise a convenient time in advance. This can be done by sending a note to school with your child or by contacting the teacher via the SeeSaw Learning App.

Formal written reports are sent out at the end of the Summer term.



Preparing your Child for Schoolwork:

Good writing is all about muscle control so it will help your child greatly if he/she engages with colouring, drawing, painting, manipulating materials (e.g. plasticine/playdough) and construction work (e.g. building with blocks/lego, making jigsaws or creating new items out of recycled materials). Noting visual differences is essential to reading and this skill can be practised and encouraged by the use of matching games, construction work, jigsaws etc. Reading aloud to your child will cultivate an interest in and love of reading.

HELP YOUR CHILD BE INDEPENDENT by teaching him/her:

- to use the toilet
- to wash and dry hands without help
- to put on and take off his/her coat and to do and undo buttons and zips.
- to open and close schoolbags, lunch boxes and drink containers
- to use a tissue/handkerchief when needed.
- to recognise his/her own belongings.



“Education is a lifelong journey. We want your child’s first steps to be as positive as possible. Join us as we walk the path of learning together”

Reading:

We use a combination of two approaches, look-and-say and phonics. In Junior Infants your child will pair/share read with you for the most part of the year. You will read to and with your child and foster his/her love of reading. As the months go by you will notice your child becoming more able to pick out sounds from the books and then eventually words. This is very exciting to watch. Please affirm and encourage your child each step along the way.

Remember each child is unique and will move along at his/her own pace. So encourage and reward your child's success, no matter how big or how small.



Writing:

Initially, your child will learn to write lower case letters. It would be helpful if your child is familiar with his/her name being written in this way e.g. Peter, John, Amy, Ellen. You could display the name in a prominent position e.g. on the bedroom door so that it will be seen regularly. Your child will learn to recognise the letters and it would be even better if your child could form his/her name using plasticine/ playdough or practise writing it using paint, chalk, crayons etc.





Food:

We strongly urge you to follow our “Healthy lunchbox/healthy eating” recommendation and to keep sweets and other unhealthy foods to an absolute minimum. On starting school many children are too excited and distracted to eat a large lunch so we recommend a small nutritious snack, for example two small sandwiches, water or fruit juice to drink, and a piece of cheese/yoghurt/fruit. We try to ensure that the children eat a good portion of their lunch, particularly their sandwiches. We do not encourage swapping of lunch items. Please ensure that your child’s lunchbox is clearly labelled with your child’s name.

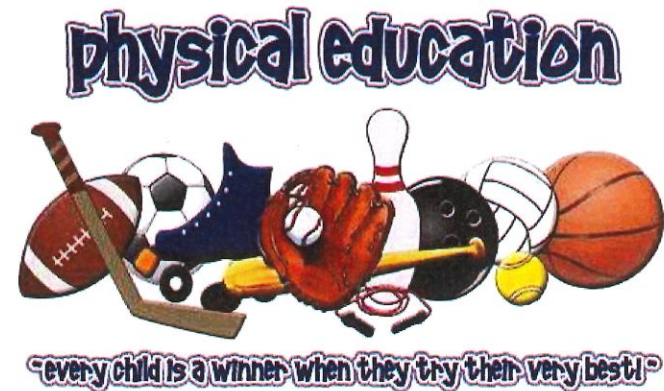
Friday is “Treat Day”. Children are allowed ONE treat in their lunchbox, e.g. a small chocolate bar. NO CHEWING GUM or CRISPS PLEASE.



Please choose a lunchbox and beaker that can be opened easily by a small child. Please label both and practise opening and closing these items with your child before they come to school.

Litter:

We work towards fostering a sense of respect for the environment. We encourage the children to take responsibility for their environment and to be litter conscious. This is a great help in keeping their school tidy.



P.E.

When your child comes to school in September you will be informed of the P.E. days. Children wear their tracksuit and runners on these days.

School Bag Post:

Please keep an eye out for notes going home. Generally your child will receive them on the way out the door in the evening time. You should also check your child’s homework folder for notes.

Book Bills:

Please discuss this with the class teacher in September.

Helpful Handouts/Policies:

Apart from this booklet we have helpful handouts on things like Road Safety, Healthy Eating etc.

We also have a great deal of policies dealing with pastoral, administrative and curricular areas which are available from the school on request.

Emergency Closing:

The safety of the children is of primary importance at all times. Should an emergency closing be appropriate (e.g. in the event of no heat, snow etc.) the decision to close the school will be taken by the Board of Management at the earliest possible time in order to maximise notice to parents/guardians. This may be carried out in written format or by our text-a-parent service.

WE ASK YOU TO ENSURE THAT THE SCHOOL ALWAYS HAS AN UP-TO-DATE AND IMMEDIATE CONTACT NUMBER FOR YOU.

If an emergency closing arises early in the morning, before school starts, parents/guardians will be informed of this at the gates. We would therefore ask that you **never drop your child without first satisfying yourself that the school is open.**



Health and Safety:

As part of our school health and safety programme we encourage regular washing of hands, particularly around eating time and after using the toilet. We are not always able to oversee this so please remind your child of its importance. Unfortunately, germs and viruses spread very quickly in a classroom environment so it is vital that your child is encouraged to use a tissue when blowing his/her nose and to cover his/her mouth and turn away when coughing.

If your child develops any contagious illness, such as chickenpox etc., please keep him/her away from school until the period of contagion is over and inform his/her teacher immediately.

We recommend that you check your child regularly for head lice, which are contagious. Treat immediately if they occur and inform the teacher so that notification of possible risk may be sent out to other parents. All information regarding your child's health is treated in the strictest confidence.

Occasionally your permission will be required for dental, eye or other health examinations.



CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.

Dorothy Law Nolte



SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!

