

Newsletter February 5th 2020

Dear Parents

As we move on into the second term I would like to draw your attention to the following notices:

School Calendar Change.

Due to a staff training day the school will be closed on Wednesday February 19th. This means that Tuesday 18th Feb will now be the final day before the mid term break Apologies for any inconvenience this may cause. The revised calendar is as follows:

Feb. 19 th	Wednesday	School closed for teacher Inservice
Feb. 20 th	Thursday	School Closed for Midterm Break
Feb. 21 st	Friday	School closed for Midterm Break
Feb. 24 th	Monday	School reopens at usual time
March 3 rd	Tuesday	First Confessions @ 7p.m. St Patrick's Church
March 16 th	Monday	School Closed - St Patrick's Holiday
March 17 th ^h	Tuesday	School Closed - St. Patrick's Holiday
April 3 rd	Friday	Final Day of Term 2 - School closes for Easter Break
April 20 th	Monday	School reopens - First Day of Term 3
May 4 th	Monday	May Bank Holiday
May 16 th	Saturday	First Holy Communion

Internet Safety Day.

On Tuesday next February 11th, the school will participate in Internet Safety Day as part of Internet Awareness Week. This will involve raising awareness among our pupils of the advantages, disadvantages and dangers associated with the Internet. All classes will deal with online safety as part of the SPHE programme and children have been asked to participate in an In-school poster/art competition using the theme ***'Together for a Better Internet'*** to mark the occasion. It is vitally important that you, the parents, support the initiative and assist with the work of the teachers by taking a little time to discuss internet safety with your children.

www.webwise.ie has a wealth of useful resources and information which I'm sure you will find very helpful.

Internet safety presents us with an emerging challenge in ensuring the safety of the children. A recent discussion during a school assembly informed us that a large body of our children spend a significant amount of time online daily (Ranging from 30 minutes - 2 hours). Much of this time is spent on online gaming or on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Snapchat etc). A number of pupils also indicated that they had their own YouTube channel. The potential for danger to children including cyberbullying, stranger danger etc. is huge. As such I implore parents to join us in ensuring that our children are safe in all ways at all times.

Enrolment

Enrolment of new pupils in Scoil Íosa for the 2020-2021 school year is now ongoing. Application forms are available from the school secretary or can be downloaded from the school website www.iosaballyhaunis.com

School Uniform

Please ensure that the children are adhering to our uniform policy particularly in avoiding wearing leggings and explicitly striped or branded tracksuits.

As the weather is still quite unpredictable, we strongly advise that children should wear warm clothing to school.

Behaviour.

Unfortunately we have had to deal with a couple of bullying allegations since returning to school after the Christmas break. One or two of these have proven difficult to deal with particularly in the senior classes. Our policy on bullying behaviour is clear -we operate a zero tolerance approach and that is constantly reinforced by the teachers. Once we become aware of an instance of bullying, this is dealt with firmly and fairly. We would be grateful if parents would speak to their children periodically on this subject.

Exemptions from the Study of Irish.

A number of parents have enquired about the procedure around gaining exemptions for their children from the study of Irish language. ***Please note that this exemption from the study of Irish is not at the discretion of the Principal or school.*** The conditions under which such exemptions are granted are explicitly laid out in

DES Circular 0052/2019 available on www.education.ie. A link to this circular is available on the school website.

Schools may grant exemptions in line with section 2.2 of this circular only. The following are the only circumstances in which an exemption may be granted:

2.2a: Pupils whose education up to 12 years of age (or up to and including the final year of Primary Education) outside of the state and where they did have the opportunity to engage in the study of Irish.

2.2b: Pupils who previously enrolled as a recognised pupil in primary schools who are being re-enrolled after a period spent abroad, provided that at least three consecutive years have elapsed since the previous enrolment in the state and are at least 12 years of age on re-enrolment

2.2c: Pupils who have at least reached second class and present with significant and persistent learning difficulties and present with a standardised score in a discreet test at/below the 10th percentile in either word reading, Reading Comprehension or spelling.

2.2d: Children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland

This applies to very few of our pupils and exemptions are the exception that the rule. I wish to reiterate that the school is informed by the above and cannot issue an exemption in any other circumstance.

With Thanks,
K. Dennedy

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Scoil Íosa

“Ní neart go cur le
chéile
("Our strength is in our
unity)



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