

Drumacrutin National School

General School Procedures

The following procedures are an important part of the smooth running of our school and it is vital that they are adhered to by teachers, pupils and parents

1. School opens at 9.10a.m. and all children should be in school **no later** than 9.30a.m. when teaching begins.
2. Roll call is carried out between 10.20 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.
3. Junior and Senior Infants should be collected at 2.00p.m. All other pupils go home at 3.00p.m.
4. If a pupil needs to leave early or an infant cannot be collected at 2.00p.m. the **parents must inform the teacher** by letter, message in the homework diary, by telephone or in person.
5. If a child is being collected by someone other than his or her parent the class teacher must be informed in advance.
6. Pupils who have been absent from school are required, upon their return, to **bring a signed, dated letter** from a parent explaining their absence.
7. Homework is given Monday to Thursday. Parents are encouraged to supervise homework and **to sign the homework diary**.
8. Please let the Principal know if your child must take medicine in school. The staff must have signed authorisation from a parent in order to administer any form of medication. An authorisation form is available from the Principal.
9. Should a parent wish to contact their child's teacher or the Principal, **an appointment should be made** through the school secretary, for a time convenient to both parent and teacher/Principal. The reason for the appointment should be given.
10. Only in exceptional circumstances or emergencies are teachers/Principal available without an appointment.

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Parent – Teacher Communication

Formal Communications

The school has in place a number of formal structures that allow for communication between home and school

Parent – Teacher Meetings

- Annual Parent-Teacher meetings are held each year towards the end of November in accordance with DES Circular 14/04.
- Parents / guardians are given a 10 minute appointment for each child at least a week in advance.
- A school family register which is updated each year allows for the efficient allocation of times to families with more than one child in the school.
- One afternoon is allocated for the purposes of the meetings.
- Parent-Teacher meeting report sheets are available to teachers who choose to use them as a method of conducting the meetings.
- Prior to the meetings, a handout is circulated to teachers outlining
 - (a) the aims of the meetings
 - (b) suggestions on how to conduct the meetings
 - (c) suggestions with regard to preparing for the meetings.
- Where necessary, teachers are available to meet parents by appointment during the school year.

End of year reports

- Teachers complete end of year reports for every child in their class during the month of June.
- Grades or comments are based on the year's work and not strictly on results of tests.
- The Sten score from the Micra-T and Sigma-T standardised tests carried out in May are entered on the end of year report. An explanatory letter is sent with the report.
- Reports are posted to parents / guardians. Reports are posted about five days before the end of school term to allow for parental feedback or comment.
- A standard report format is used throughout the school. Currently, the school uses NCCA Report Card Template Version 6.
- A copy of each report is filed in the school.

Communications during the school year

There are a number of ways that parents and teachers can communicate with each other during the school year.

- **Notes in the homework journal/folder/notebook.** Teacher/parent should initial the note to show that the message was received.
- Teachers are busy in the morning and at home time with preparation for teaching for the day ahead and would appreciate if interruptions are kept to a minimum. A quick word with the teacher in the morning or at hometime for the delivery of a short message or for an emergency is fine.

If a parent or teacher wishes to discuss an issue in more detail it is important to make an appointment at a time suitable to both parent and teacher. The arrangement of an appointment allows both teacher and parent to give their full attention to the issue being discussed.

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School Attendance

There are a total of 183 working days in the school year. We acknowledge that it can be difficult to have full attendance each year, due to illness or unforeseen circumstances. However, we do encourage pupils to aim for full attendance.

At the end of the year special awards are given to pupils with a full attendance record.

We also wish to let you know that, under the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Board of Management has a legal obligation to notify the Education Welfare Officer if a pupil misses 20 days or more during one school year, these days need not be in succession. **Any pupil who has been absent from school is required by this law to bring a signed letter from a parent/guardian explaining his/her absence upon their return to school.**

Leaving school early

We do understand that sometimes it is difficult to arrange appointments for outside the school day and that family emergencies can arise resulting in your child needing to go home early. It is important that your child only leave school early if it is completely essential as teaching and learning is on-going throughout the full school day and they will miss out. If it is necessary to take your child away from school before the end of the school day **we require a written note explaining why your child must leave school and at what time they will be going.**

A record will be kept in the roll book each time a child goes home early from school and the parents note retained.

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Homework Policy

Why give homework?

- Homework is a reinforcement of the work covered during class on that day. It also offers an opportunity to widen experiences begun in the classroom. It encourages organisational skills and the ability to work independently.
- Homework is important in creating a link between home and school. It gives parents/guardians an opportunity to view their child's work and assist in ongoing assignments. It is important that parents and teachers communicate with each other about the correct terminology and methods being used by the children.

How often is homework given?

- Homework is given on Monday to Thursday night inclusive. As a general rule homework is not given at the weekend.
- Sometimes, at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given 'homework off' as a treat or as acknowledgement of some special occasion.
- Please note that extra homework may be given during the week or at weekend if a child has not done homework, has not made a suitable effort or presented untidy work.

How much help should parents give?

- Children should do written homework themselves and parents should only help when the child has difficulty. If a child has difficulty with homework, parents should help the child to overcome the difficulty with further explanation or examples, but not by actually doing the homework for the child. In this case the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the problem.
- Children often feel that reading and 'learning by heart' is not real homework. Parents can play an important role in listening to reading and items to be learned ensuring this work is done well.
- **Parents should check homework and sign the child's homework folder/journal and written work (Reading record) every evening.** Please check for notes from school on a regular basis.

Remember

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong! This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. Should this happen on a regular basis, please make an appointment with the class teacher.