

*Kilcummin N.S.
Kilcummin,
Killarney,
Co. Kerry.*



*Scoil Náisiúnta,
Cill Chuimín,
Cill Airne,
Co. Chiarraí.*

E-Mail: kill43163@gmail.com
Phone: 064 6643163

Newsletter September 2021

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

A very warm welcome back to our pupils, parents and the staff to Kilcummin N.S. A special welcome is extended to the children who are beginning Junior Infants this year and to Siva who has joined First Class. We hope that all will have a very happy, enjoyable, healthy and safe school year.

COVID-19 Response Plan

As a school community we have successfully navigated our way through what has been a very challenging time. Thank you all for your patience and support to date. A reminder that we need to be aware that there will be challenges ahead. Our school is operating under similar procedures as last year, in line with HSE and Department of Education and Skills guidelines. As a school community, we thank our pupils and parents for adapting quickly to new and revised practices and procedures.

The health, safety and well-being of all members of our school community is of paramount importance. Thanks to the staff, Board of Management, Middle Management team and our Lead Worker Representative (LWR), Mr. Kelliher, for the tremendous work that has been done to ensure that Kilcummin N.S. was prepared and ready to receive our pupils on 26th August.

Procedures have been put in place in line with HSE and Department of Education and Skills advice and guidance, and are subject to change as new advice or the changing needs of our school dictate. All members of the school community, irrespective of circumstance, are expected to adhere fully to the procedures put in place in an attempt to minimise the risk posed by COVID-19.

It is critical that staff, pupils, parents and visitors are aware of, and adhere to, the control measures and that they fully cooperate with all health and safety requirements. It cannot be emphasised strongly enough that all members of the school community must adhere fully to the practices and procedures put in place to ensure the safety of all.

Any instances of non-compliance will be brought to the attention of the Board of Management. Each and every individual must play their part. We all have an obligation to do what we can to ensure the safety of our school community. Breaches of procedure by any individual will not be tolerated. COVID-19 poses a serious risk to us all.

Our COVID-19 Response Policy plan has been prepared and is available for viewing. Please note that the plan, along with other COVID-19 information, is available on our website at www.kilcumminns.com. Our plan is a living document and may be subject to change as new information is forwarded by The Department of Education, NPHET, HSE, HSA etc. and due to improvements /changes that may be needed as we have returned to school.

Please continue to monitor emails from school, our Seesaw online learning platform and text messages for updates from the Department of Education and Skills, HSE and other relevant stakeholders. If you are not in receipt of an email or text message (one mobile number per family) from your child's class teacher or the school text service, please forward details to the school's email address at kill43163@gmail.com. We welcome any suggestions or feedback from you at all times, so please feel free to contact the school with any suggestions or feedback. We are in this together.

Please read the following carefully:

School Closings / Calendar Update:

Please contact the school if you require a school calendar for 2021/2022. The school calendar was distributed during our Open Day and was posted with school reports in June. Parents/Guardians will be notified about any changes to our school calendar in our monthly newsletter. Updates will feature on our website also. Thanks to the Parents' Association

for disseminating information on the Kilcummin NS Parents Council facebook page also. Please note that the Department has allocated a half day school closure to enable the staff to complete training in relation to our new Primary Language Curriculum this term. We will keep you updated with further details.

Communion and Confirmation:

Congratulations to last year's Sixth Class who received the sacrament of Confirmation in Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Wednesday, 15th September. We wish them the very best in their new secondary schools.

Our rescheduled First Holy Communion for Third Class was held on Saturday, 25th September, at 12 noon. Congratulations to Anna, Aodhán, Brooke, Cillian, Ella, Jamie, Liam, Seán, Shane and Teagan. Thanks to Miss McCarthy and Teresa for all your preparations. A special word of thanks to Fr. Jim Siobhán, parish ushers and staff members for all your help with the Communion and Confirmation this September. Best wishes to our former Sixth Class pupils and our current Third Class pupils at this happy and spiritual time.

School opening / closing times:

School opening hours 9.20a.m - 3.00p.m.

Please note that morning supervision commences at 9.10am. The school is open at this time to receive pupils. Children are now accustomed to their new entrance and exit doors and will be received by teachers in their classrooms. Please ensure that your child washes their hands upon leaving home. Hands will be sanitised upon arrival at school.

Infant children finish at 2.00p.m. All others finish at 3.00p.m.

Morning break 11.00am- 11.10am (Senior Break) 11.10am - 11.20a.m. (Junior Break)

Lunch break 12.40pm - 1.00p.m. (Senior Break) 1.00pm - 1.20p.m. (Junior Break)

These arrangements ensure that class groupings have their own yard zones to preserve bubbles on the yard. On wet days, individual class groups will use the school hall. Bubbles will not mix indoors.

Parents of infant children are reminded of prompt collection of children at 2.00p.m.

- If a parent/ guardian/ minder is late, please contact the school. The child **MUST WAIT IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS**. Parents were asked recently to email your child's class teacher granting your child permission to walk home or walk to your car. A gentle reminder to forward this email if you have not done so.
- In the interest of safety and traffic management, we would appreciate your cooperation in: dropping your children in a safe location outside the school, moving off promptly and giving due consideration to other pupils, parents and staff. Similar procedures should be applied at pick-up time at 2.00p.m. and 3.00p.m. A reminder to adhere to social distancing and to wear face masks when collecting children. This is for the protection and safety of all. Thank you for your understanding.
- If your child is being collected for an appointment, it is necessary that a note/email is sent to class teacher. Class teacher or teacher on yard supervision should be informed when your child is leaving. The person collecting should ring the school upon arrival, as we cannot receive visitors to the school at any point. A staff member will walk your child to the school gate for collection.
- A reminder that persons mentioned on the enrolment form can only collect your child. Please forward an email/note if arrangements need to be changed.
- If a child is late to school for any reason, parents should ensure that their child reaches the classroom safely and should not interrupt the smooth running of the classes.
- If your child is late for school, they may miss out on important activities and may be marked absent in the roll book. It is essential that your child is in school at 9.20am.
- If a child will be late due to a hospital, dental or doctor's appointment, please let the class teacher know- otherwise they will be marked absent for the day. Please try to arrange such appointments for times that minimise your child's absence from school.

New Appointments:

Best wishes and congratulations to our Special Education Teachers, Miss Kelliher and Miss O' Mahony on their recent appointments. They will be covering Maternity Leaves for both Ms Poff and Ms Casey. Best wishes also to Mrs. Irene O' Donoghue, who will be Job Sharing with our SNA Rena for the school year, and to our new Part-Time Secretary Ms. Marie Cronin. We wish all the staff the very best in Kilcummin N.S. for the year ahead.

Kilcummin N.S. Staffing:

Junior Infants: Ms. Gillian Sheehan (Principal/ Designated Liaison Person- Child Protection)

Senior Infants: Ms. Christine Desmond

1st Class: Miss Charlene O' Connor

2nd/ 3rd Class: Ms. Muireann McCarthy

4th and 5th Class: Mr. Patrick Mannix

5th and 6th Class: Mr. Michael Murphy (Deputy Principal)

Special Education Teachers: Mrs. Marie Condon/ Mrs. Marguerite Dineen (Job Share), Mr. Michael Kelliher, (Assistant Principal II), Ms. Deirdre Poff (Maternity Leave covered by Miss Elaine Kelliher), Ms. Bríd Casey (Maternity Leave covered by Miss Louise O' Mahony)

S.N.A.s: Ms. Rena Daly/ Ms. Irene O' Donoghue (Job Share), Mrs. Margaret Nagle O'Neill, Ms. Teresa Cremin and Ms. Jennifer O' Sullivan

Breakfast Club & After School Service:

Best wishes to our SNA, Ms. Jennifer O' Sullivan, who will be operating the Breakfast Club and After School Service from the Recreational Hall again this year. Jennifer can be contacted at 087 9663770.

Attendance/ Punctuality:

This year our top priority is everyone's health. While it is accepted that there is a direct link between school attendance and pupil progress, we must make exceptions this year. We thank you all for erring on the side of caution - keeping children home who are unwell, getting GP advice when the symptoms are on the Covid 19 list and observing all the guidelines around isolation etc. It will mean attendance figures may be lower. However, if we manage to keep the school open and keep each other well, we are doing the right thing. Our attendance initiative will be put on pause, but please do keep up punctuality. Please keep letting us know details of all absences by email please child's teacher and thank you for following the protocols.

The school is obliged, by law, to inform Tusla when a pupil is absent for a total of 20 school days in one school year. The whole idea is to miss as little time as possible. As teachers have to fill in the category of absence when informing Tusla it is essential that an email is forwarded after every absence explaining it. Please note if absences are Covid 19 related (we will have all your email notes) this will be indicated to Tusla. Thank you for your co-operation and understanding. Please note that parents are welcome to forward the Return to School HSE Parental Declaration. Please contact your child's teacher if you have not yet received a copy of this. Keep safe and well.

Communication with Parents:

If a parent has a worry, no matter how small, please come to us and we will do our best to resolve any issues. Unfortunately, we will not be able to receive visitors into the school building, so please phone the school or email your child's class teacher. It is very important to keep in regular contact, even informally, with your child's teacher. If you wish to talk to the teacher formally or you have a specific issue that you wish to discuss with a class teacher an appointment must be made so that arrangements can be made for the class to be supervised and a call can be facilitated privately. We would emphasise that if a parent has a complaint, then this must be dealt with through the class teacher and not directly with other children. This is for the safety and well-being of all our children. It is essential that this rule is adhered to.

Parent/Teacher meetings are scheduled for the first term. In the interim, if you wish to talk to a teacher or the principal, an appointment system in place will facilitate this. Generally, communication with parents will be through our monthly Newsletter, text message and other short notes. Please take the time to read all correspondence from the school, especially from the HSE or Department of Education and Skills. The school may need to communicate urgent messages to parents/guardians by texting their mobile phones. Please notify school if you have changed mobile numbers or email address.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Parents' Association for continuing to organise the text service for the school, especially in these unprecedented times. A special word of thanks to our Deputy Principal, Mr. Michael Murphy, for operating the text service on behalf of the school. Míle buíochas.

COVID-19 symptoms/ Contagious/ Infectious Illnesses/ Rashes/ Head Lice:

If your child has any COVID-19 symptoms or a contagious/ infectious illness (including head lice), please notify the school immediately. Please ensure that children are not sent to school if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or any other infectious illness. If a child has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, living with someone who is unwell and may have COVID-19 or if they have an existing breathing condition that has recently got worse, they should remain at home. It is advisable to contact your GP for advice.

In terms of headlice, it is wise to have a head lice shampoo or lotion, special fine combs etc. at home at all times, so that you are prepared if a request is made to treat your child's head. We advise that every parent/ guardian fine combs their child's hair at least once a week. It is advisable for all children to be examined and treated, where necessary, immediately.

Hand Hygiene:

Children are reminded to wash their hands when leaving home in the morning and again upon arrival at home each evening. We will be washing hands regularly throughout the day and sanitising also.

Anti-Bullying/ Buddy Bench:

The aim of the school's Anti-Bullying policy is to counteract bullying behaviour. Each child participates in an anti-bullying programme. Generally, we find that pupils benefit greatly from this programme and are aware of the sanctions in place to deal with bullying behaviour. We would kindly ask you, as parents and guardians, to discuss this programme with your child regularly and explain the benefits of ensuring that our school is a bullying free zone. Unfortunately, due to bubble restrictions in the yard currently, children will be unable to access the Buddy Bench, so please advise your child to chat to the adults supervising in the yard if any issues arise. We hope that our Buddy Bench will be back in operation in the near future. In the interim, we will strive to ensure that each of our pupils enjoy a happy break with friends.

Art/Craft & Photocopying:

A reminder to forward the school contribution of €35 per child (€60 for two children, €75 for families with three or more children) to cover art/craft and photocopying costs for the coming year, if you have not yet done so. Please forward to class teacher before the end of September. Receipts will be emailed. Please contact the school if you have not yet received an receipt by email.

Post Office Savings Scheme/ Credit Union Savings:

The school generally takes part in a voluntary savings stamp scheme with the Post Office. If you wish your child to save a little each week, we would encourage you to continue this at Kilcummin Post Office. We hope to recommence this wonderful initiative in the near future. We will keep you updated regarding the Credit Union savings scheme also.

Lee Strand Milk Tokens:

Please continue to send Mighty Mikey mascots, featured on the Lee Strand milk labels to school. Tokens collected last year were used for our school diaries and for entry into Lee Strand competitions during the year.

Insurance:

Thanks to the Parents' Association of Kilcummin N.S. for funding the Personal Accident Insurance of each child in the school to cover accidents during school hours or while participating in school related activities. Please contact the Parents' Association if you have any queries regarding this.

Uniforms:

Please ensure that all children wear their school uniform or tracksuits, practical and sensible footwear and make sure all personal belongings are labelled clearly. All clothing should be clearly labelled. Unclaimed lost property will be included in our Used Clothes Collection or donated to a local charity. Please contact the school immediately if your child is missing any items of clothing.

Children are invited to bring a warm (labelled) gilet/bodywarmer jacket for school use, as we will be leaving windows and doors open to ensure that the school building will be well ventilated. These can be left in school. Coats will be required as normal. Please feel free to alternate the uniform and tracksuit to best suit your child's needs.

Lunches:

Children have two short breaks in the day and should bring easy to eat food. We do not encourage sweets, fizzy drinks or any food of a high sugar content in daily lunch boxes as these are unhealthy, bad for children's teeth and can have an adverse effect on behaviour. Please notify the school if your child has any allergies, if you omitted this information in the School Enrolment form. Please remember to include healthy snacks such as fruit and vegetables in lunchboxes. We will not be in a position to provide snacks or water for health and safety reasons, so please ensure that your child brings their lunch and drink to school. We would remind you also not to include products containing nuts or eggs in lunchboxes, as there are pupils in the school who are allergic to eggs and nuts. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any queries regarding this.

Reminder: Mobile Phones.

Please remind your child that phones are not permitted in school. If it is necessary to provide your child with a phone, all phones **MUST** be given to the class teacher or principal for the duration of the school day. Phones will be returned after school. We cannot guarantee phone safety and they will be confiscated if they are seen or heard during school hours.

Mobile Library:

Teachers will hopefully be using the library service for the provision of novels. We have not yet been contacted regarding the Mobile Library service. Please continue to encourage your children to read each day.

Parents' Association:

Kilcummin N.S. Parents' Association welcomes new committee members. Please contact the school if you are interested in joining. Please note that the Parents' Association Annual General Meeting will be held online on Thursday, 7th October, at 7.30pm. Please check text messages for details of the Zoom link. All are welcome to attend the online meeting. Tá fáilte roimh chách.

REMINDER REGARDING PEANUTS AND EGGS IN SCHOOL:

The school is enforcing an outright ban on nut items in lunch boxes. PLEASE ENSURE THAT CHILDREN DO NOT BRING PEANUTS, NUTS OR PRODUCTS CONTAINING NUTS OR EGGS TO SCHOOL AS PART OF THEIR LUNCHESES. Please note that all nuts, sesame sticks, hazelnuts, pine nuts, monkey nuts, barmbrack, chocolate spreads, peanut butter, almond butter, chocolate biscuits and eggs etc. are not permitted in school. We have a number of other children who have allergies to nuts /eggs and we are anxious that they do not come in contact with them. Being in the vicinity of nuts/eggs can trigger a serious shock for some people. Products will have to be removed as exposure to products containing nuts will cause serious reactions. Please ensure that hands are washed carefully each morning after breakfast, to ensure that any traces of nuts/eggs are removed before school also. Please be extra vigilant.

Safety Issues:

These rules are for the safety of all children:

Kilcummin N.S. will open to receive pupils at 9.10am. Please ensure that children are not arriving in the school prior to this time. The Breakfast Club and After-School co-ordinator, Ms. Jennifer O' Sullivan, can be contacted (087 9663770) regarding a morning drop-off and afternoon collection service for children.

Please ensure that children are collected promptly. If children are permitted to walk home, please forward an email giving your consent for this.

Please exercise caution in the mornings and in the afternoons, especially while roadworks are continuing outside the school. Children should not walk/climb on the school walls and will follow our new yard marking to their assigned entrance door.

Junior and Senior Infants parents, please ensure that your children stay with you when leaving the premises as the road can be very busy and we are concerned for their safety.

Pedestrians and cyclists are encouraged to use the small gate by the main road. Cyclists must dismount their bikes before entering the school grounds and when leaving the school grounds. (Please remember to lock your bicycle!) Pedestrians should enter and leave the school through the main gates.

Green Schools Used Stamp Collection

Please send any used postage stamps to school for recycling. This is part of the school's recycling initiative, while raising funds for charity. Stamps will be given to the Rural Development Office on a monthly basis as part of this initiative.

Green Schools

Walking to school on Wednesday (W.O.W.) and cycling to school on Wednesday (C.O.W.) is recommended for families. We are pausing the walking buses for the moment as teachers are required to be present to meet their pupils in the classrooms currently. We are encouraging you to walk/ cycle to school where possible. We greatly appreciate your support, as we will continue to work on our Green Flag initiative. A special word of thanks to our committee members and teachers for your dedication to the Green Schools Project.

Enrolment Details

Please forward a copy of your child's Birth Certificate and Baptismal Certificate to school if you have not already done so. Your child's PPSN is required for our Primary Online Database, so we would be most grateful if you could forward this at your earliest convenience.

Thanks!

Thanks to our Board of Management, Parents' Association, parents and all those who helped organise school activities, during the last school year. Our children, staff and school have benefitted enormously from all your hard work and time. Our work together ensures that the ethos of the school permeates all we do. Sincerest thanks to the priests of Killarney Parish, especially Fr. Kieran O' Brien, Fr. Niall Howard and Fr. Jim Lenihan, along with Mrs. Siobhán MacSweeney, the Rural Development Office, Recreational Hall committee and the Post Office for your help and support.

Most especially, thanks to all members of the teaching staff and our SNAs, who ensure that all our children are educated in a happy, safe and respectful environment. Thanks to Mr. Paudie Cahill for maintaining and cleaning the school over the busy summer. We are indebted to you all for your dedication and teamwork.

Thank you all for your support and help and we hope you and your child/ children will have a happy and successful school year.

Le gach dea-ghuí,
Gillian Sheehan
Principal and Staff