

Bandonbridge N.S.

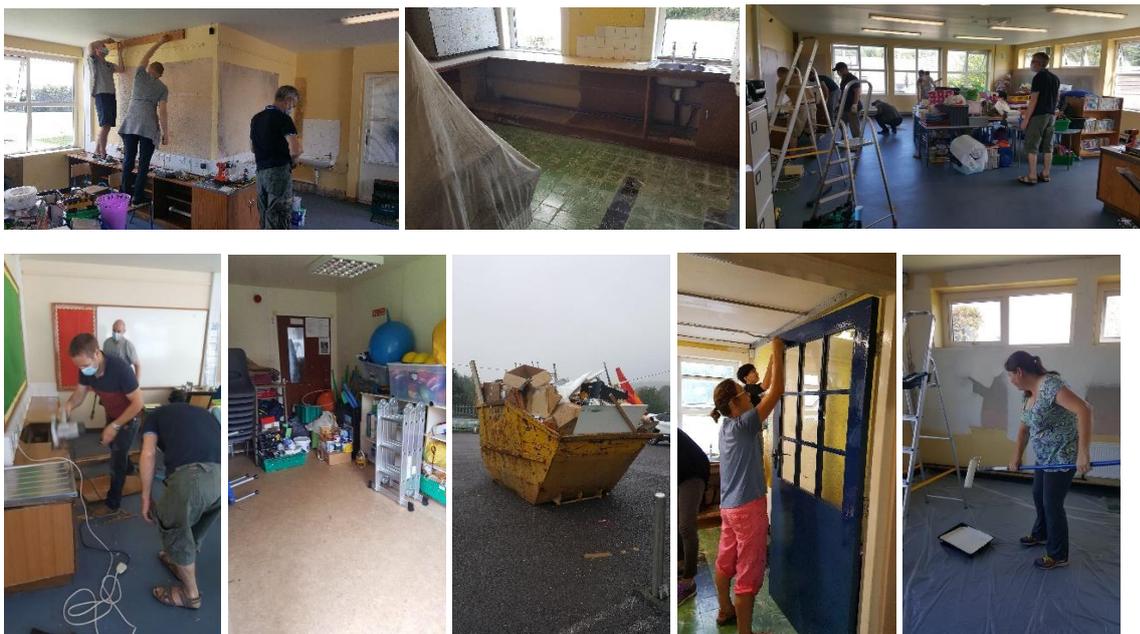
September 2020 Newsletter

Welcome

Welcome back to all the children. We are really proud of the way everyone has adjusted back to school life following the long absence from the school building. The Junior Infants seem to be settling into school life and I'm enjoying chatting with them in the playground at breaks; I'll memorise all their names eventually.



It's been a really busy summer with renovations and keeping up to date with the latest government guidelines and procedures for returning to school. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the return to school possible. Parents and staff have gone over and above to help out.



It's still a work in progress but it's beginning to take shape. It was wonderful to see so many parents yesterday to help fill the container. The staff appreciate all the support and goodwill.

We welcome Ms. Dineen to the school building; she joined our staff during lockdown and was busy working remotely with the children in her care. It's great for staff and pupils to finally meet her in person.

Welcome to Ms. Good who is our Senior Infant teacher; many of the children remembered her from their time with her last year.

Welcome to Ms. Patterson who is Ms. Buttimer's job-share partner this year. She has been working in St. Mary's N.S. in Carrigaline. We hope she will enjoy her year in Bandonbridge School. Ms. Patterson and Ms. Buttimer will work on alternate weeks.

Ms. O'Driscoll has joined the staff and will be working initially with Ms. Roche in the Junior Infants' classroom.

Welcome back to Mr. Philpott who is working with 6th class.

We wish Ms. O'Neill (and baby Fionn), Ms. Hosford (and baby Emma), Ms. Helen (and baby Lily) and Ms. O'Sullivan well while on maternity leave. Congratulations to Mr. Ross on the arrival of baby Jacob in March.

Retirement/Goodbyes

We bid a sad but fond farewell to Mary Good who retired as a Special Needs Assistant at the end of August. We wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement. A personal thank you for her support and co-operation during my first year as Principal.

Also, congratulations and goodbye to Ms. Willoughby who taught 4th class last year. She has begun teaching in St. James's N.S. in Durrus. We will miss her teaching skills and her leadership of the Green Schools' Committee last year.

Protecting your child from Coronavirus/Absence from School

There are constant changes to procedures for dealing with Covid-19 in primary schools. I will pass on new information as it comes. We are doing everything we can to keep your children safe while they are in school. We ask that you would also help to keep staff and other children safe by following the official government guidelines.

All children should attend school as normal unless they:

- have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- have other common symptoms of coronavirus - a new cough, loss or changed sense of taste or smell, or shortness of breath
- have been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus
- live with someone who is unwell and may have coronavirus

If you are worried about their health, phone your GP.

Please click on the link below and read carefully, and follow, the government guidelines on protecting children from coronavirus. There is information on the symptoms to look out for and advice on how to proceed.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/40e9c-protecting-your-child-from-coronavirus/>

Please do not send your child to school if they are sick (irrespective of the type of illness). Contact the office if your child is sick so we can record illnesses for our school roll call. Please follow your family doctor's advice in regard to Covid testing and/or return to school.

Unexplained absences/more than 20 days of absence will be reported by the Principal to Tusla (Child and Family Agency). Children who at high risk of Covid-19 will be supported by the school remotely on receipt of certification by your family GP. Please read the attached document which outlines the possible procedures; the West Cork Education Centre is compiling a list of teachers who may be responsible for this support at some point in the future but for now, class teachers and support teachers will be liaising with high risk pupils. (These children are marked present on the school roll).

Family holidays should not be taken during term time. Class work will not be set for pupils who are out of school for family holidays or the mandatory quarantine which may result from the overseas trip.

Updating Our Files

Please let us know if your contact information has changed. We will be communicating with parents/guardians via email or phone for the most part. It is important that we have current contact details for parents/guardians, including an emergency contact person, if we cannot contact parents/guardians.

Appointments with Teachers

All appointments with teachers must be pre-arranged and will take place remotely (via Zoom etc.) All visitors to the school building (including parents/guardians **must** wear a face covering, sanitise their hand and complete a **Contact Tracing Log**. If you do need to enter the school building, you must report to the office and complete the Contact Tracing Log first. This is a mandatory requirement in all schools.

Book Rental

If you still have any school rental books or school library books at home since before the summer, please return them as soon as possible. We need to order extra copies of textbooks to ensure each pupil has their own books for the year. Bills for book rental, photocopying etc. will be issued later in the month. We hope to have a secure online payment service in place by then which will make life easier for parents/guardians.

Uniform

Our school uniform requires all pupils to wear a light blue polo shirt (not a t-shirt), a navy jumper or cardigan and navy skirt, leggings, trousers or tracksuit. Please ensure that pupils wear the correct school uniform every day. Other colours are not allowed. Pupils should wear comfortable shoes so they can run around and play freely during the day. 6th class may wear the official school hoodie when it arrives (hoods to remain down in school).

Please ensure children bring a coat/raincoat to school; children need lots of fresh air and will go outside to play unless it is raining heavily.



Please label all coats, jumpers, hats, scarves etc. with a permanent/laundry marker. We send a large amount of unlabelled lost property to the charity collections throughout the year. Please check that your child has brought home whatever clothing with which he/she arrived at school. At the end of term, any unclaimed clothing will be given away free to anyone who wants it and the remainder sent to charity.

School Buses

Ensure your child is waiting at the correct pick-up point on time every morning. Remind children to wear their seatbelts and to remain seated while the bus is moving. We expect good behaviour on the bus; if you have older children on the buses, encourage them to be responsible for the younger children. Children who travel by bus must sit with their allocated bus buddy. Should any issues arise, you should contact the Bus Éireann Inspector, Jim McSweeney on 0876836973. He is responsible for dealing with any problems on the buses and will remove the right to travel for consistent or challenging behaviour.

Mobile Phones

Children are not allowed to bring mobile phones to school (or other personal devices not approved by the school) – this applies to extra-curricular/social occasions hosted by/at the school. Should you need to pass on an urgent message to your child/ren, please contact the office.

Healthy Lunches

Our school encourages a healthy lunch to grow healthy minds and bodies. Sandwiches, salads, pasta, plain rice cakes, cheese and crackers, fresh fruit, vegetable pieces, natural yogurt are all suitable for school lunches. Include water or sugar-free squash. Please avoid too many sugary items like juice, Frubes, health/breakfast bars as these contain lots of hidden sugars. Crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks are not allowed for lunch (but may be a treat if there is a party/special occasion at some time in the non-Covid future)

At present, we cannot allow birthday cakes/treats to come to the school to be shared with the class.

As we are a Green School, we do not allow unnecessary packaging so please avoid pre-packaged snacks in the lunchbox. All packaging will be sent home in your child's lunchbox. Each child should have a reusable water bottle and a reusable lunchbox – one which has different compartments for different foods is good. We cannot supply spoons or other utensils should they be needed to eat lunch.

Headlice

Headlice are an inevitable problem when children return to school. We hope with some social distancing this may be less of an issue than it is usually. Please check your child/ren's hair once a week. You will find useful information on identifying headlice and effective treatment on the HSE website – <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/child-health/head-lice-in-young-children.html> However, the most important thing is to keep checking the scalp using a fine-toothed comb.