

# *Welcome*

*to the*

## *Deanery School*



*Information Booklet*  
*for Parents/Guardians*  
*of*  
*Junior Infants and New Pupils*

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## School Contact Details

**Address:** The Deanery School, Old Rd., Cashel, Co. Tipperary. E25NV05

**Telephone Number:** (062) 61833

**Website:** [www.thedeaneryschool.ie](http://www.thedeaneryschool.ie)

**e-mail:** [thedeaneryschool@gmail.com](mailto:thedeaneryschool@gmail.com)

**All parental contact is via Aladdin Connect**

## Welcome!

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I welcome you and your child to the Deanery School. I hope your child will be very happy here and that you will enjoy sharing in their journey through primary school. I look forward to having a long and happy association with you, your child and your family.

Please remember that the key to a happy learning environment is enjoyment. Remember to praise your child for their effort as well as their success.

*Elma Cooke,*

Principal & Class Teacher (Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> class)



## Introduction

- The Deanery School is a two teacher mixed school with a shared SEN Teacher, under the patronage of the Church of Ireland. We are on a shared school complex shared with St. John the Baptist Boys' School and St. John the Baptist Girls' School.
- Mrs. Elma Cooke (Principal) teaches Junior Infants – 2<sup>nd</sup> class. Mrs. Alison Nicholson teaches 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class. Ms. Claire O'Dwyer is our Special Education Teacher.
- Our school is managed on behalf of the Patron, The Bishop of Cashel and Ossory by a Board of Management. The Board of Management is made up of 8 members (2 of these members are parents in the school). The Board of Management changes members every 4 years. The current Board will be in place until November 2027. The Very Revd. James Mulhall, Dean of Cashel is the Chairperson of our Board of Management.

## Facilities

The Deanery School is located in a modern red brick building which is all on ground level. The grounds and buildings are maintained to the highest standards. Classrooms are airy and spacious. Floors are carpeted and each room contains a wet area with two toilets. We have a large general purpose Hall and a hard court area outside for play.

We have a very well stocked library and a store of equipment has been built up over the past number of years. Each classroom is well equipped with computers (all with internet access), an interactive white board and a visualiser.



## Ethos

The Deanery School is a co-educational, Church of Ireland, Primary School which strives to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

While our school is a school with a Church of Ireland ethos, it also has due recognition for all other religions.

- We will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional development of teachers through staff development programmes.
- We will encourage the involvement of parents through home/school contacts.
- We will endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community, to imbue in the pupils respect for people and property and to encourage in them the idea of being responsible.
- We will aspire to prepare our pupils to be good citizens.
- We will promote gender equity amongst the teachers and pupils.

Déanfaimid iarracht Gaeilge a labhairt



## Before your Child Starts School

- Before your child starts school, you should ensure that they are as independent as possible – physically, socially and emotionally. If they can look after themselves in these areas, they will feel secure and confident, and will settle in readily.  
It would help greatly if your child can:
  - ✓ dress and undress themselves (necessary for the swimming pool)
  - ✓ take off/put on their coat and hang it up
  - ✓ button/zip up their coat
  - ✓ use the toilet without help – they should be able to flush the toilet and wash their hands without having to be told – consider elasticated trousers as they can be easier than buttons and zips
  - ✓ use a tissue when necessary
  - ✓ share toys and other playthings with others
  - ✓ play games that require winning, losing and taking turns

- ✓ tidy up and put things away that have been used or played with
- ✓ remain contentedly for a few hours in a pre-school or home of a friend, relation or neighbour. If they have had this experience, then separation from you when they start school will not cause any anxiety
- Be consistent with discipline at home. Encourage good manners. Small and meaningful punishments/rewards are best. Remember that children respond well to praise and it's important to reinforce and reward good behaviour. It's important that your child learns to respect and to listen to authority. Teach your child to look ahead and to consider the consequence of his/her actions.
- Give your child instructions to follow. Give one instruction at a time and then increase it to two or three at a time, e.g. get your bag, put on your coat and wait at the door. By doing this you enable your child to become more independent.
- Ensure your child gets enough sleep every night.
- Provide play opportunities at home. Children learn a lot through play. Jigsaws and board games can help develop your child's concentration levels, play dough helps to develop their fine muscle skills in their hands and imaginative play such as dressing up helps to develop their creative thinking.
- Encourage children to mix and play with other children.
- Social skills are very important. We encourage good manners at all times – please/thank you, addressing teachers properly, being courteous to other pupils, teachers and school staff.



## Preparing for your Child's First Day at School!

- Please be positive with your child in preparing him/her for school. Tell your child about school beforehand in a casual way. Talk about it as a happy place where there will be a big welcome for them and where they will meet new friends.
- Try to meet up with some of the other children starting in Junior Infants during the summer holidays. It is always great to see a familiar face on the first day.
- School bags are optional. All pupils will receive an A4 zip wallet to store their homework items. All children will be provided with a free lunch box which can be used to transport a small snack each day. A bottle for water is also required. We have free hot lunches which can be ordered through The Lunch Bag App. We will provide you with details for this in due course.
- Junior and Senior Infants do not require a pencil case or stationery, this will all be provided by the school
- Ensure your child can open and close their school bag and lunch box easily.
- Please label all your child's belongings.
- Children in the Junior Room should wear shoes with velcro fasteners.



## Your Child's First Day at School

- It is important that you establish a good routine early. Check that all items - bag, etc. - are ready for the morning. Do this in a calm fashion; don't let your child get over excited or anxious going to bed. Give plenty of time in the morning for dressing, washing and eating a good breakfast.
- It is important that your child arrives at school before class starts (i.e. between 8.40 a.m. and 8.50 a.m.). Arriving between these times gives your child the opportunity to play, relax and interact with the other children. As well as this children can find it very intimidating to walk into class already in progress. Class officially starts at 8.50 a.m.
- Encourage your child to carry their own school bag/homework folder and lunch box. When you arrive your child will be shown where to hang their coat, where to put their schoolbag and where they will sit.
- After meeting the teacher and some 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. If your child is upset, trust the teacher. The teacher is very experienced and knows how to comfort an anxious child. The first few days of school can be harder on the parent than on the child! You must be firm from the start – even if your child is upset, you must insist that they stay, even for a short time. Patience and perseverance can work wonders!
- The first day can be a big wrench but please be assured that you may leave your child safe in the knowledge that they will be cared for until your return.





## At the End of the School Day!

- Junior and Senior Infants are collected at the front door of the school. Please do not ring the door buzzer. The teacher will bring all the children to the door together at 1.30 p.m.
- It is important that you arrive on time to collect your child from school. Children will become upset if they see other children being collected and feel they are being left behind. Please inform the teacher if you need to make any changes to this list during the school year.
- It takes time for children to adapt to school life and routine. Don't expect too much too soon. Talk to them about what happened and allow them to respond in their own way. If you ask: "What did you learn today?" you will most likely be told "nothing". Most of the work at infant level is activity based and children are not conscious of "learning" as adults understand it. If, however, you ask "What happened in school today?" "What did you do?" "Did you sing?" "Did you draw?" "What games did you play?" you will have more success.
- Try not to worry about comments such as "X didn't play with me today". It can take a few weeks to settle and children change best friends many times! Encourage your child to mix and play with others rather than being dependent on one friend only. Teachers always do their very best to ensure that children aren't playing alone.
- Your child will be tired coming home from school. It is very important to set a routine of quiet time together and early to bed.

**If you feel that your child is worried about something school related, talk to the teacher. After all, nothing can be done to remedy a situation if we, the teachers, do not know the problem.**



### Please remember:

- The rate of progress of children can vary greatly. If your child's progress seems slow do not compare him/her to other children. It is important that you do not discuss any of your child's difficulties in front of him/her or compare your child to another sibling in front of him/her. By discussing a problem in front of your child they may become even more nervous about the issue and develop a fear or lack of confidence for a particular subject. Loss of self esteem can be very damaging.
- It is also important that you do not tell your child of a dislike or difficulty you have with a particular subject as they may quickly decide they have this dislike/difficulty also.



### School Times

- **Arrival Time: 8.40 a.m. – 8.50 a.m.** The front door of the school will be opened every morning at **8.40 a.m.** and will be closed at 8.50 a.m. Children are not permitted onto the school grounds before 8.40 a.m. even if the teachers are on the premises. Pupils must remain at the gate and be supervised by parents until the school door is opened. Teachers often arrive before 8.40 a.m. to do preparation work, children and parents are requested to respect this and **not to ring the buzzer before 8.40 a.m.**
- Please bear in mind that if you arrive after 8.50 a.m. the school doors are closed and you will have to be buzzed in by your child's teacher. This is very disruptive so please make every effort to arrive on time. It can also be very intimidating for a child to have to walk into a class already in progress.
- Parents are encouraged to allow their child to walk into school from the school gate independently.
- Teachers are not available to meet with parents at the start or end of the school day unless you have an appointment. If you do need to contact your child's teacher please do so via email.
- **Infant Day: 8.50 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.** *Only* Infants travelling by bus or those living further than 8km from the school may remain in school until 2.30 p.m.
- **1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class Day: 8.50 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.**

**Please be punctual collecting your child.**

**Arrive a couple of minutes before the end of the school day so that you are waiting to receive your child as they leave the school building.**

### Breaks

- ***For the first week, your child will be going home at 12 noon (settling in period) and will therefore only need a snack to eat at breaktime.***
- There are two breaks during the day:
  - 1) 10.50 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. (children are given a couple of minutes to eat a small snack in the classroom before outdoor playtime)
  - 2) 12.20 p.m. to 12.50 p.m. (children play outside for 20 minutes and then have 10 minutes to eat their hot lunch (provided free))
- **Snacks: please ensure snacks are healthy**
- **Supervision:** There is always a teacher supervising the playground during play time.
- **Wet Days:** On wet days the children are supervised in their classroom where they may play with school toys. Children are not permitted to bring in toys from home.
- **Cold Days:** On cold days, the children still go outside so please always send a coat!
- **Toys:** Children are not allowed to bring toys, games or computer games into school from home unless otherwise instructed. Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones to school either.



### Drop Off and Collection

- The school car park is for staff use only. Parents are not permitted to use the staff car park as a drop off/collection point. In the interest of Health and Safety all children and adults must use the pedestrian gate and not the car park gate when walking into and out of the school grounds.
- In September you will be requested to give information regarding the people who have permission to collect your child/children from school.
- **Early Home Going/Late arrival:** If a child has to leave the school during the day or needs to arrive late please complete the details on the Aladdin App
- **Children travelling by bus:** If your child is going to travel to school by bus, please ensure that they wear their seat belt and behave at all times.

Behaviour on the bus is not the responsibility of the teachers in the school. Issues regarding school transport must be taken up with the bus driver/bus company or the bus inspector.



### **Parents contacting Teachers**

- All school related queries must go through Aladdin or the school office.
- Parents are requested not to contact teachers on their home phone or their personal mobile phones.
- We promote positive home school contacts. If you have a concern in relation to the social or academic progress of your child please follow these steps:
  1. *Meet with the class teacher **on appointment**.*
  2. *If this does not resolve the issue the class teacher informs the Principal of the nature of the complaint.*
  3. *If the matter remains unresolved the parent may raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.*

### **Teachers contacting Parents**

- The school uses Aladdin to inform parents of events.
- Formal Parent Teacher meetings will take place in February. However, do not wait until then if you have a concern, please arrange to meet with your child's teacher.

## Code of Behaviour

All children must follow The Deanery School Code of Behaviour while on the school premises and while on any school trips. A copy of the Code of Behaviour is on display on the school website: [www.thedeaneryschool.ie](http://www.thedeaneryschool.ie).

## Attendance:

Under the Education Welfare Act (2000) you must ensure that your child attends school regularly. If your child is absent from school for any reason you must notify the school of the reason via Aladdin. The school must inform the National Education Welfare Board when a pupil is absent for more than 20 day in a school year.

## Child Protection

- In accordance with the Department of Education Child Protection Guidelines, if the staff has reasonable cause for concern about a child or if a child makes a direct disclosure the Designated Liaison Person (Mrs. Elma Cooke) is bound to report the matter to the Health Board. Parents are welcome to view a copy of the Child Protection Policy by appointment with the principal.
- If there is anything happening in your personal/family/home life that you would like to discuss with your child's class teacher in **confidence** please feel welcome to do so. It is important for your child's teacher to be aware of such circumstances as they may be impacting on your child's learning.

**Designated Liaison Person: Mrs. Elma Cooke**  
**Deputy Designated Liaison Person: Mrs. Alison Nicholson**

## Garda Vetting

Any parent who wishes to be involved in school activities must be Garda vetted.



## **Health and Safety**

- If your child is unwell please do not send them to school.
- As part of our school health programme we encourage regular washing of hands, particularly around eating time and after toilet use. We are not, however, always able to oversee this so please remind your child of its importance.
- If your child has a toilet accident or gets sick we have a change of clothes to lend your child. We would ask that you wash and return the school clothes as soon as possible in case they are needed for others.
- Unfortunately, germs and viruses spread very quickly in a classroom environment so it is vital that the children are encouraged to use a tissue when blowing their nose and to cover their mouths and turn away when coughing.
- If your child develops any infectious illness such as chickenpox 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 lice, treat immediately if they occur and inform the teacher so that notification of possible risk may be sent to other parents.
- Administration of any form of medication needs to be discussed with the teachers.
- Minor accidents will be tended to by your child's class teacher and an Accident Report will be sent home. Parents are requested to inspect wounds when child comes home from school. In the case of a more serious accident, you will be notified immediately

***All information regarding your child's health is treated in the strictest confidence.***



## The Primary Curriculum

The Curriculum contains twelve subjects in all:

English, Mathematics, Gaeilge, Visual Arts, Drama, Music, History, Geography, Science, Religious Education, Physical Education and Social, Personal and Health Education. All subjects are taught at all class levels.



### English

- **Oral:**

A huge emphasis is placed on oral language in the Curriculum. We discuss different topics on a weekly basis in school. Encourage your child to speak in detail about things e.g. going along in the car, a story book, a game, a toy etc. Talking to your child promotes their confidence in speaking and also develops their vocabulary which will be beneficial to them when they are at the writing stage.

- **Phonics** (Letter Sounds):

Phonics is the key element of the English curriculum at Infant level. Jolly Phonics is taught in the Junior Classroom.

### **Pre-writing phase:**

Your child needs to acquire good muscular co-ordination in order to write correctly. Activities which will develop fine motor skills are building blocks, play dough, cutting, pasting, tracing, bead threading, construction toys, colouring and drawing.

- **Writing phase:**

Junior Infants learn the letters of the alphabet in lower case. Letter practise will be done in their special letter copies, in workbooks and on worksheets.

Please help your child to write their name in lower case letters and **only use a capital for the first letter**. Correct letter formation is very important so please check with the teacher if you are unsure, bad habits can be difficult to break. When your child is writing at home please ensure that they are sitting correctly with feet on the floor and that **they hold their pencils correctly**. Chubby triangular pencils are helpful if your child is finding it difficult to write with a narrow pencil. Pencil grips are also useful.

In Senior Infants children will learn to form all the capital letters and revise the lower case letters also.

Once your child gets the idea of letter formation and spelling they will become confident in the whole area of writing as a means of communication. They will be encouraged to write their own personal news, short stories, write about pictures, answer questions and fill in close exercises.

- **Pre-Reading Phase:**

The following are some pre-reading phase activities that you could enjoy with your child at home :



Visual Discrimination:

Matching shapes, matching colours, matching pictures, matching letters, jigsaws, making comparisons, sequencing games and playing games such as 'I Spy' and 'Spot the Difference'.

Auditory Discrimination:

Saying nursery rhymes, singing songs and saying poems.

Listening Activities:

Listening to sounds, music and stories.

Language Games:

Threes: Call out three words and your child has to tell you which words starts with a particular letter or which word is the odd one out.

Clue Time:

Call out a clue, e.g. I live in a kennel and I bark.

Initial letter sound:

Can you think of a word that starts with 'a'?

Can you think of a word that starts with the same sound as daddy?

Which word do you hear twice? E.g. boy, fun, dog, boy.

Odd one out: eg. Top, toe, bath, tin.



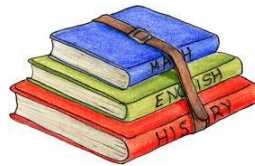


- **Reading at Home:**

A good standard of reading is the key to success in nearly every subject. The following are some activities that you could enjoy with your child at home. You do not have to complete all of the activities every time you share a book with your child, but if you can sometimes spare the time to do some of these things, you will be giving your child a valuable start to becoming a reader.

- ✓ Read to your child as often as possible.
- ✓ Read signs in the environment.
- ✓ Label things around you home and use this as an enjoyable reading game.
- ✓ Discuss the pictures and the cover of books.
- ✓ Ask questions about the story and the pictures to find out if your child understands what you are reading to them.
- ✓ Relate what is happening in the story to your child's life.
- ✓ Discuss the name of the book before and after you read the story.
- ✓ Discuss whether it is a suitable name or not. Ask your child to make up a name for the book.
- ✓ Make predictions about what is going to happen in the story by looking at the name and front cover.
- ✓ Talk about the ending of the story. Did you like it? Why? Why not? If you were the author how would you have ended the book?
- ✓ Read a story and then discuss what might happen next.
- ✓ Explain the words your child does not understand.
- ✓ Encourage your child to make predictions about the name of the book and the story.
- ✓ Ask your child questions to test their understanding of the story: questions to gain word meaning, to identify details, sequence and opinion.
- ✓ Run your finger or allow your child to run their finger under the words in the left to right reading direction.
- ✓ If possible, join a library and provide opportunities for your child to pick out books that you can read together.

- ✓ Visit bookshops together.
- ✓ Build up a library at home for your child. By providing them with different books at home you will broaden their experience and enjoyment.
- ✓ When reading to your child allow them to hold the book and to turn the pages.
- ✓ Ask your child to retell the story in their own words.
- ✓ Illustrate reading as a pleasurable activity by letting your child see you read.
- ✓ Repetition and discussion are important elements to reading.



### Maths

- In the maths curriculum children will have experience of all five areas of the curriculum: number, algebra, shape and space, measures and data.
- Desk top activities and oral problem solving are a key element of maths at the infant level. Examples of desk top activities are making sets, counting and representing sums concretely.
- Develop your child's mathematical vocabulary by asking questions about shapes, height, weight, colours, counting objects, measuring, position (over, under etc). Such oral work can be done when you are out and about in the car or going for a walk.

### Gaeilge

- The approach to Irish in the curriculum is based on the use of language for communication. Formal reading and writing on Irish will begin in 2<sup>nd</sup> class.

- If you have any Irish I would encourage you to speak to your child in Irish and to encourage them to speak to you. If you don't, you can have fun asking your child to teach you what Irish they learned in school

### Visual Arts

- Visual Arts give the children the opportunity to express themselves through drawing, painting, print making, using colour, modelling clay, constructing things using different materials and working with fabric and other textiles.
- Art work is displayed in the classroom. Please feel free to come in and look at your child's displays.

### Drama

- Drama consists of individual and group activities such as role plays, acting out scenes from a book, puppets etc.

### Music

- There are three main areas in the music curriculum: listening and responding to music, performing and composing. Children listen to a wide variety of music and respond to it in different ways. They sing songs and learn to read music through song-singing activities. Composing involves children in exploring sound by allowing them to play with simple musical ideas using musical instruments.



## S.E.S.E. History, Geography & Science

- Through SESE children learn how to understand the world around them. They also learn about the past and how it has made us what we are. Children learn about living things, forms of energy such as light, heat and electricity and magnetism, different forces, the characteristics of different materials and caring for the environment. There is a strong emphasis on hands-on approaches and on skills development in these subjects.

## Religious Education

- The Follow Me series is used and mainly incorporates Bible Stories, discussions, prayer, songs and Art work.
- We also use Bible Time worksheets. The children receive prizes from the Postal Bible School for their efforts on these worksheets.

## P.E. Physical Education

- PE takes place in the School Hall or if the weather is good, in the playground. The areas covered in the P.E. Curriculum are: Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Games, Outdoor and adventure activities and Aquatics. Teachers will inform the children of their P.E. days. Please ensure that your child is wearing suitable, comfortable clothing and runners on these days.
- **Swimming:** All children will receive approximately 8 swimming lessons during the school year (usually in May and June). Please ensure that your child brings a swimming hat, swimming togs, a towel and a large bag to the pool for each lesson. It would be of great benefit to your child if they are able to dress/undress themselves for swimming classes. Clothes that are easy to take off and on are advisable. Avoid jeans, tights....!



## S.P.H.E. Social, Personal and Health Education

- This subject deals with personal development, friendships, feelings and how to keep our bodies healthy. S.P.H.E. is also concerned with helping children to develop skills, attitudes and self esteem that will bring the greatest fulfilment and happiness to their lives. S.P.H.E. helps children develop a sense of care and respect for themselves and other people. It also promotes responsible and social behaviour. Through S.P.H.E. children develop a sense of belonging to a community.
- RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) is part of the SPHE curriculum. The Stay Safe programme is also taught.

### Homework

- Homework set for Junior Infants should take no longer than 20 mins.
- Homework is written into your child's homework journal and worksheets, books etc. can be found in their homework wallet. Your child's homework will vary from a worksheet, a page in a book/copybook, revising letters and sounds, sight vocabulary, reading.....
- Homework is given from Monday – Thursday. **Homework is generally set and corrected between 8.50 a.m. – 9.00 a.m**, therefore punctuality in the morning is of great importance.
- Set aside a quiet regular time for homework.
- **Please sign your child's Homework Journal every evening.**
- If your child is having difficulty with homework and it is frequently taking longer than the above guidelines please arrange to speak with your child's class teacher.

I hope that you found this booklet beneficial. I would recommend that you refer back to it regularly during the year.

I hope you and your child have a wonderful and safe summer!

