

How do I meet my child's class teacher?

There is a formal parent - teacher meeting every year in November/December to discuss your child's progress in school.

Parents may make further appointments to see the class teacher at any mutually convenient time through the office or by sending in a note to the class teacher.

Please send notes or inform the office of requests/problems rather than waiting at the classroom door as this disrupts your child's and other children's learning and the teacher will not be able to give you their full attention.

It is important to talk with your child's class teacher before requesting a meeting with the principal.

How do I receive information from the school?

A newsletter is emailed to parents or brought home by the pupils each term. Notes, emails and texts are also sent on an ongoing basis informing parents of various activities/news/events in the school. Paper notes are sent to the oldest child in the family only. The latest news will also be posted on the latest news page on our school blog.

<http://mercywexford.scoilnet.ie/blog>

Where can I find out about school policies?

A selection of school policies can be found on the website in the "policies" link (and through the office).

When are the school holidays?

Check it out on the calendar on our website - <http://mercywexford.scoilnet.ie/calendar.html>

A copy of the calendar is also sent to all families at the beginning of the school year.

Who decides when the school holidays are taken?

Some school closures are set by the Department of Education and Science and are standardised throughout the country. These are: Halloween Break, Christmas and Easter Holidays. The mid-term break in February can either be a two-day or a five-day break and in any school year there may be some flexible days. School holidays and any other school closures are ratified by our Board of Management and the dates of these meetings are conveyed to families as soon as they become available.

What is the school uniform?

The school uniform is a grey pullover/cardigan, blue shirt, blue tie and grey trousers or skirt/pinafore. Girls may wear trousers/skirt/pinafore. Our PE tracksuit is navy and a light blue/white polo-shirt. Our summer uniform is navy/grey shorts and a blue/white polo-shirt.

When does school begin and finish?

School starts at 9.00am and finishes at 2.40pm. The Junior and Senior Infant classes finish at 1:40. There is a short break at 10.30am - 10.40 and a lunch break from 12.10pm to 12.40pm.

When does my child need a note?

A note is needed in cases of absence, when a child is late for school, and for permission to leave the school before the end of the school day. In general, any special request should be put in writing.

What are the procedures for collecting my child early from school?

You can send a note to the teacher informing him/her that you child needs to be collected early or you can ring/email the office. A child can only be collected by reporting to the office first and signing your child out. Please note all visitors must report to the office on entering the school to ensure the safety of children and the security of the school premises.

Illness/Infectious Diseases

If your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease e.g. head-lice, chicken-pox, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, ring-worm, etc. please inform the school as soon as possible. A note will then be sent to your child's class letting other parents know of signs and symptoms to be aware of. This note will not identify your child. If you are in doubt whether the disease is infectious or not please do hesitate to contact us or ask your child's doctor for guidance.

Lost and Found

We ask that all clothing and personal property is clearly labelled with your child's name no matter what age they are. Our Lost and Found box can grow quite considerably throughout the year with coats/hats/scarves/jumpers/lunchboxes, etc. We ask that parents come in to check this box for lost property regularly as items cannot be stored in the school indefinitely. Unclaimed property is sent to a charity in the town.

When are staff meetings held?

Staff meetings are held after school on the last Thursday of every month. There is one meeting per term (end of September, January & April) where the school finishes at 1.40pm to facilitate a staff meeting.

What is the Voluntary Contribution?

A voluntary contribution of €40 per family is collected annually by the Parents' Council. This can be paid in one or two instalments. The money goes towards shortfalls in funding from the Department of Education and Skills and also to subsidise the cost of activities for some families.

Why are crisps and fizzy drinks not allowed?

The eating of crisp-type snacks is not a healthy option. As part of our promotion of Healthy Eating and Healthy Lifestyles, our pupils are not allowed to eat crisp-type snacks during school hours. Many foods and drinks contain sugar. While our bodies need some sugar, research is showing that a high sugar intake can lead to hyperactivity and in the long-term is unhealthy. Fizzy drinks contain a lot of sugar. This, combined with the acid which is present, can also cause tooth decay. Our pupils are encouraged to make healthy choices e.g. water, milk and unsweetened fruit juices (no added sugar).

Book Rental

We operate a book rental scheme in our school. Most school books are available through the book rental scheme to reduce the financial costs for parents. Families are informed each May/June of the book rental cost for the following year. For parents who do not wish to avail of the scheme a separate booklist is available which lists all books needed for the following year.

School Stamps Scheme

There are a growing number of families in the school that find September an overwhelming and expensive month for returning to school, with payments for a number of school expenses. While we run a book rental scheme to keep costs down we have also decided to make it easier on parents by setting up a scheme to allow parents to prepare for the next school year in advance.

Families can buy €5 stamps every Tuesday and Thursday mornings from the office to go towards the payment of Book Rental, Art & Craft, Tests, Dance, Music, Stretch n Grow, etc. for the next school year. In this way there isn't as much financial pressure on families as there would be in September. We have set up a computer system that prints the stamps which can then be entered into a booklet for your benefit so you can see how many you have collected. You can buy as many stamps as you want and in September you can carry on the scheme until you have paid for everything (if you wish). The scheme is set up so you can pay for school expenses, it is not for saving.

The office will keep account of each payment made by you on our database and in return will put a stamp in your book.

School Stamps FAQ

1. **What do I do if I lose my stamp book?** Don't panic, we will still have a record of all payments; the book is just for your own record.
2. **What do the stamps pay for exactly?** The stamps collected go towards the payment of Book Rental, Art & Craft, Tests and activities like Music/Dance/Stretch n Grow for your child for the coming school year.
3. **Who brings the money to school?** Either senior pupils or parents/guardians can call to the office between **8.45am and 9.00am** on **Tuesdays** and **Thursdays** to buy stamps.

4. Do I have to buy stamps every week? No, but you can buy them any Tuesday or Thursday that suits you.

5. How will I know how much I owe? Families will be notified in June and September of school expenses for their child(ren).

6. What happens if I don't have enough stamps to pay for everything in September? You can use what you have and then pay the balance, or you can continue collecting more stamps until you have paid off the full amount.

7. Who will know what I owe or how many stamps I have bought? Only Lorraine and Mr Gately have access to the financial records of families in the school.

