



31st August, 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am delighted that your son(s)/daughter(s) are settling in well at school. Students have engaged with the induction programme and work is progressing right across the curriculum. I wish to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the following:

New School Building

There has been an unfortunate delay with the completion of the new school extension, as a result of the certification process. We are hoping it will be resolved in the coming weeks and students and staff will be able to enjoy the new school extension.

Astro Turf

We are delighted to have our Astro Turf and Ballwall fully completed and available for students. This was funded by the Sports Capital Programmes, with the Board of Management meeting the shortfall.

Access to the School

There are some changes regarding how we access our school during the school day. Students are free to enter the school from Church Avenue (Main Entrance) and Main Street (Back Entrance) before 8.50am. In the evening students can leave through either entrances. ***The Main Street(Back Entrance) gate will be closed at 8.50 am daily for the duration of the school day, with the exception of pedestrian access for senior students at lunchtime.*** All Parents/Guardians and visitors to the school must access the school from Church Avenue (Main Entrance) and report to the main office. Students arriving or leaving school during the school day must access the school from Church Avenue (Main Entrance) only.



School Canteen/Tuck Shop

As you know we moved to a cashless system in 2021 due to the closure of the Bank of Ireland (Templemore Branch). This academic year the Debitrak system has been upgraded to an App. There have been some technical issues with the changeover, these have now been resolved. Please remind your son/daughter to order their food online using the App from 4pm on the previous day up to 9am on the school day in question. All students purchasing food or confectionary in the canteen/tuck shop will require a fob (fob is not required for app orders). Please log on to the school website to find the link and follow the instructions to download the App, topping up and using the system. When creating an account with your son/daughter's fob use your son/daughter's name. A new feature has been added in the profile setting, where it says student/parent, tab down and select your son/daughter's yeargroup. Please note that all ordering is now done through the App system. The website ordering system is no longer operational.

Communication with parents/guardians

We will continue to communicate with parents/guardians using the school text messaging system and the VSware App. Letters will be available on the school website in the "Information for parents/guardians" tab and will be sent on a text message or VS App notification with a link. Please contact the school secretary to arrange meetings with teachers, yearheads, guidance counsellor or deputy principal/principal as required.

VS Ware (Student Administration System)

Log in details for VS Ware remain the same as last year. Student reports will be uploaded to the system throughout the school year and parents/guardians will receive a text message or a notification on the App to alert them to new information on the system. Fee requests have been added for all year groups. Timetables and behaviours have been released to parents/guardians. This year parents/guardians will also have access to your son/daughter attendance record for classes. Please see the section below on attendance. In the coming days parents/guardians of incoming first years will receive a text message with a link to VS Ware. Parents/Guardians are invited to click on the link, download the VSware app and register for access to VS Ware.



School Journal & School Attendance

Students are reminded to enter all homework assignments in the school journal. Please review the journal regularly and assist your son/daughter in organising books and equipment required for the next day. If your son/daughter is absent from school, you can provide a written note on the journal. Alternatively, you can now use the VSware app to monitor your son/daughter attendance and provide explanation for absence from school. If your son/daughter needs to leave school during the school day, please provide a note in the blue section of the journal. The note can be given to the deputy principal/principal and a record will be entered on VS Ware. Alternatively, you can provide an explanation for your son/daughter leaving school on the VSware App. Please see the instructions at the end of this letter. Note the student absence email addresses have now been retired.

Further details on school attendance can be accessed on page 6 of the student journal and there is a legal obligation on parents/guardians to explain all school absences. We encourage attendance at school for the full school day. Routine dental and medical appointments should be arranged outside school hours.

Administration

Please return insurance forms to the school secretary. Online payments must be supported by the written application form to activate the insurance. The texting form should also be returned without delay especially if any details have changed. Please bring changes in phone numbers, address etc to the attention of the school throughout the year. I remind parents/guardian of the school finance contribution of €100 (for one student) or €150 for a family. This is a flexible payment on the VS Ware system. Please set the amount which you wish to pay. We welcome payments by instalments.

School Uniform & Jackets

Thank you to parents/guardians for sending your son/daughter back to school in full school uniform. Please ensure adherence to the school uniform policy (see page 5 of the school journal) in the weeks and months ahead. Parents/guardians of students who present out of uniform will be contacted and invited to supply the missing garments. We want all our students to wear the school uniform with pride. This year, following a consultation process with students, teachers and parents we opened an online O'Neill's Shop for the provision of school jackets and other items. All items in the shop have been approved for school.

This year, only school crested Jackets will be permitted for use in school. These can be purchased in Grey's Templemore or in the O'Neill's online shop.



Toilets and Toilet Permission

The provision of safe comfortable Toilet facilities has been an ongoing challenge for our school community. Parents/Guardians are reminded that students should use toilets in the morning at breaktime and lunchtime. Generally, students should not be requesting toilet permission during class, however if an emergency arises we have procedures in place to allow student access to toilets during class. If your son/daughter has any medical condition which requires frequent access to toilet facilities, please inform us if you have not previously done so.

Teaching and Learning

All students have a school email address and access to MS Teams. A Team/Class Notebook has been set up for all subjects. Students are reminded to log on to MS Teams regularly to access homework assignments and resources. Parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with this platform and support students where possible.

If a student is absent, he/she where possible should continue to study course work and complete homework assignments where possible. Parents/guardians of students who do not have an iPad are reminded of the importance of the student having access to a device (computer, laptop or tablet) in order to facilitate the continuation of learning and completion of schoolwork.

Supervised Study

Study will commence on Monday 4th of September, Monday to Thursday 4pm to 6pm and 2pm to 4pm on Friday. Should your son/daughter wish to avail of supervised study, please contact the school office

I take this opportunity to congratulate students on making the transition back to school and I wish our students and their families a safe, healthy, and successful year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Principal

Deputy Principal



Submit Attendance on the VS ware App

Information for Parents/Guardians

1. Open the VSware app and tap on your son/daughter profile
2. Tap on attendance.
3. Select 'Submit Absence'
4. Select 'Single Date or Multi Date'
5. Select 'Full Day or Partial Day'
6. Enter the detail of the Absence request and submit
7. When approved you will receive a notification

