

Scoil Dean Cussen

Information Pack for New Pupils

2014/2015

Our Mission Statement

“CHILDREN ARE GOD’S GIFT TO US.
WHAT WE MAKE OF OUR CHILDREN IS
OUR GIFT TO GOD”

With the above quote in mind, we the teachers of Scoil Dean Cussen National School realise and value our role in the development of your child.

Our aim is to develop the full person, spiritually, emotionally, socially and academically in a happy atmosphere of faith, love, trust and caring. We do this with your most valued co-operation and support.

This task is for all parents and teachers, not only a great privilege, but also a great responsibility. Home and school must work hand in hand. Together, we hope to give our children what Christ came to give –

“LIFE AND MORE ABUNDANT LIFE”

Name of school	Scoil Dean Cussen
Address	Bruff
	Co. Limerick
Telephone No	061 382568
Fax No	061 382923
E-Mail	scoildeancussen@gmail.com
School Hours:	<u>Opening</u> 9.10a.m.
	<u>Closing</u> 2.50p.m.
	1.50 p.m. for Junior & Senior Infants

Fáilte!

School Staff 2014/2015

Principal	Joan O'Connor
Deputy Principal	Maria Sheehy
<i>Mainstream Teachers</i>	
Junior Infants	Jane Meehan
Junior/Senior Infants	Brenda Lane
Senior Infants/Rang 1	Sarah McNamara
Rang 1	Breda Irwin
Rang2	Susan Patton
Rang2/3	June Phelan
Rang 3/4	Breda Kennedy O'Connor
Rang4	Julianne Ryan
Rang 5	Marie O'Shea
Rang5/Rang6	Amy Kelleher
Rang 6	Shane Mullane
<i>Learning Support Staff</i>	
Learning Support Teacher	Áine O'Donoghue
Learning Support Teacher	Julianne McCormack
Learning Support Teacher (5 hours per week – base school : Manister)	Carl Musgrave
Resource Teacher	Maria Sheehy
Resource Teacher	Helen O'Sullivan
SNA	1. Mary Moloney-Meany 2. TBC
<i>Ancillary Staff</i>	
Secretary	Corrina Daly
Caretaker	Mike Cronin

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Scoil Dean Cussen welcomes you and your family to our school. We hope you will find this booklet helpful and informative and that it will help you and your child to settle more easily into school life.

FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

School opens on Thursday, August 28th 2014 @9.10a.m.

Junior Infants will go home at 12 noon up to Friday, September 12th. This will give the children an opportunity to gradually adjust and provides for the smooth integration of infant pupils into the regular school system.

From Monday, September 15th, the full Infant day will apply for all junior & Senior Infants. i.e 9.10a.m. to 1.50p.m.

At the end of the school day teachers will accompany pupils to the exit doors.

If your child is to be collected by somebody other than you PLEASE INFORM THE CLASS TEACHER. Please collect your child on time.

Please refer to the school calendar 2014/2015 for school closures during the school year. It is important to retain the enclosed School Calendar in a safe place.

Starting in primary School can be an anxious time for infants and parents! In Scoil Dean Cussen we work hard to ensure that your children feel safe and secure and begin to enjoy their education with us from the very first day.

You can help to prepare your child for his/ her first day at school-

- Talk to your child about your own school days. Emphasize the opportunities for making friends and for getting involved in new activities.
- Teach your child how to put on and take off his/her coat and how to open and close zips, buttons, buckles and laces. Zips/Velcro are preferable to buttons. Elasticated clothing is best of all.
- Show your child how to use and flush the toilet properly and how to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Encourage your child to share his/her toys and to tidy up after playing.

Important Notice

If your child has to take medication during school hours please collect a copy of our **Administration of Medicine Policy** from the school office. The attached forms must be completed and returned to the school as soon as possible.

Experience has taught us that:

It is important that children arrive in school on time every day. The school day begins at 9.00am sharp. Children assemble in the school playground where their class teacher collects them. Children are not allowed into the school building before this time.

Important: Children should not be left unsupervised by Parents/Guardians in the school grounds or on the schoolyard before the school opens at 9.00am.

The first day at school can be an emotional time for child and parent. Trust us!!! Your child's safety and happiness are our priority. If you are feeling upset, don't show it. Leave your child with the teacher and tell him/her that you will be back at the appropriate time to collect him/her. If your child is upset, again trust the teacher!

Encourage your child to talk about his/her day at school. If you ask, "What did you learn today?" you will probably be told "nothing". Most of the work at Infant level is activity based and children are not conscious of learning, as adults understand it. Instead of questions like "What happened?" ask instead "What did you do?", "Did you sing?", "Did you colour?" With questions like these you will have more success. Work with your child when they start to take small assignments home.

School Uniform

School uniform is available from Raspberry Red, Bruff; Fennessy's, William St. Limerick; Shaws and other chain stores.

Boys:

Grey trousers, wine V-necked pullover, grey shirt, striped tie

Girls:

Grey pinafore, wine cardigan, white shirt, striped tie, white or grey socks/tights

Tracksuits: wine tracksuit for boys & girls

Tracksuits & runners must be worn on PE days.

PE days will be advised by class teacher as per PE timetable for use of the school hall.

Please label all your child's clothes and belongings clearly

Useful Things to Know

Absences:

A written note from a parent/guardian is required for all absences. The class teacher will give your child a Pupil Absence Sheet which must be signed and returned the next day. A class teacher must inform the Principal when a child has reached 15 days absence in a school year. At this stage, parents receive a letter to remind them that the National Education Welfare Board must be informed when a child has accumulated 20 days absence.

Accidents:

In the event of significant accidents parents are informed immediately by phone.

Assessments:

Children are assessed formally and informally through the school year. Senior Infants take the MIST test which is the Middle Infants Screening Test. The standardised tests used in this school include Drumcondra Maths & English and Micra-T English. Teachers continually assess informally to inform teaching and learning.

Breaks:

Morning break 10.50 – 11.00. Lunch 12.30 -1.00

Children eat a snack in the yard at the small break. They eat their “big lunch” in the classroom before going out. Two teachers supervise the yard at break times. There is no supervision in the classrooms or corridors during breaks. Therefore children are encouraged to use the toilet before going out. Class teachers collect the classes from the yard after each break.

Buses:

Buses are available to certain parts of the parish. If this is of interest, please check with the school secretary to see if routes include your area.

Classrooms:

Junior/Senior Infant classrooms are to the front of the school on the Kilmallock Road.

Communication:

We use email to send general school information home. Please ensure we have your email address and remember to check it each day!

Concerns:

If you have a query or concern regarding a school matter relating to your child, this is the procedure to follow:

- 1) Always make an appointment to speak to the class teacher first. In most cases things can be resolved at that level. The teacher will inform the principal of any serious complaints.
- 2) If, at that stage, you feel that the issue has not been resolved, you are welcome to make an appointment with the Principal to discuss the matter.
- 3) If you still feel unhappy with the outcome, you can bring your concerns to the Board of Management. In order to do this, the concerns must be put in writing to the Chairperson of the BOM.

Code of Behaviour

Scoil Dean Cussen Code of Behaviour is attached. It is important to read this document with your child and sign your agreement to its implementation. Please return your agreement to the class teacher.

Code for Parents:

Parents are expected to:

- Equip pupils with appropriate school materials, a sufficient healthy lunch and full uniform
- Be courteous towards pupils and staff
- Make an appointment to meet with teacher/principal through the school office
- Respect school property and encourage their children to do the same
- Label pupils' coats and other property
- Supervise their young children on the premises when collecting other pupils or visiting the school
- Refrain from bringing family pets/dogs into the school yard – even on a lead
- Refrain from smoking while on the school grounds
- As the BOM is responsible for the Health & Safety of all staff and students, parents are requested not to approach or reprimand another person's child on the school premises.
- Keep the school gate closed at all times.

Collecting Infants:

Parents collecting children from Infant classes are requested to please use the doors at the infant rooms at the front of the school. Wait for your child at the door leading to the yard. The teacher will lead the children out. Please arrive on time as young children can get upset if they have to wait.

Curriculum:

The curriculum followed is as laid out by the Department of Education and Skills. Scoil Dean Cussen is a catholic school and a catholic ethos is part of who we are. Local clergy support the teaching staff in the preparation of the children for the Sacraments.

Environmental Education:

Our school has always promoted environmental responsibility/awareness. This is part of the Social, Environmental & Science Education curriculum. We have a Green Schools Committee made up of the Student's Council, the Green schools Co-ordinator & the Principal. We encourage parents to get involved where possible. This will have a very positive effect as we aim for the whole school to have ownership of the programme. It is our aim to instil in children the importance of respecting our environment and for them to become responsible environmental citizens.

Fire Drill:

A fire drill is held once a term. A practice announced to the staff is held in September to familiarise new pupils. Teachers and children are made familiar with the location of the nearest fire extinguisher to their classroom, their means of exit and their assembly point in the yard.

First Aid:

A first aid box is kept in the staffroom and first aid is administered by staff. Two other boxes are located in corridors.

Games & Activities:

Swimming is scheduled for 2nd to 5th classes. This is held during the 2nd term. An additional fee is payable to cover the cost of coaching, pool & coach hire. As it is part of the PE curriculum, a valuable life-skill and an opportunity for children to develop other social skills and practise self-responsibility, exemption from swimming is only permitted with a medical certificate.

Hurling & Football are played in all classes with extra coaching provided by the GAA.

Camogie is played by the girls in the senior classes.

Basketball, volleyball & spikeball are played

School teams have participated competitively in all of these.

A Sports/Fun Day is organised in June of each year. This is done by the Parents Association in conjunction with the principal and staff. Teachers remain in charge of their respective classes throughout this day. For safety and insurance reasons, children must wear a tracksuit for all sporting activities. A helmet must be worn for hurling.

Tours are organised for every class – usually in the final term. They may be sports or based on another curricular area. There is always an element of fun included in the tour.

Head lice:

We remind parents/guardians to check for head lice regularly. We ask that you would check your child's hair at least on the first weekend of each month.

Health & Safety:

School doors are open to the children at 9.00. Children are requested to wait in their lines until the bell rings. Then the children are met by their teacher, enter the school building and walk to their classrooms. Please inform the class teacher if another person is collecting your child after school. Once class begins entry is through the main door at reception. If you need to collect your child for an occasional appointment eg dentist etc during the school day it is advisable to allow sufficient time or make our school secretary aware as she may not be in her office at all times.

Healthy Eating:

This is a Health Promoting School. We have a Healthy Eating policy. The purpose of this policy is to encourage healthy eating habits and complies with the SPHE curriculum.

Choose a lunch box and flask that are secure but can be opened easily.

A young child will need small amounts of healthy, high energy food and plenty of water, milk or juice.

You may find the following suggestions helpful:

Include a healthy lunch (sandwiches, fruit, set yogurts, juice).

Sweets, crisps, popcorn, chewing gum, glass bottles, cans and fizzy drinks are not allowed.

Peel and segment fruit.

Carton juice drinks are safe.

Always include a small spoon for yogurt. Set yogurts help to avoid spills.

Please support our Healthy Eating policy.

Homework:

Homework is an important element of the school day. It is usually set Monday to Thursday. It is carefully planned and prepared and is generally a continuation of a lesson already taught – although sometimes, in the older classes, it may take the form of some research or study. The interest, participation and support of parents/guardians in this area is important.

Parents/guardians are obliged to sign children's homework journals each night. Teachers are always happy to discuss with you any difficulties your child may be experiencing in relation to completion of homework. Homework for Junior Infants is a gradual process but please get involved.

Information Technology (I.T.)

We are currently fundraising to upgrade our I.T. system. Our aim is to have 16 desktop computers in our computer room. This will give a computer/pupil ratio of 1:2 when any class group is using the computers. We also intend purchasing iPads/tablets for use in Learning support rooms. The purchase of visualizers in the remaining classrooms is also on our list! We will invest in software and the use of online educational sites. Our ultimate goal is that Scoil Dean Cussen will become a *Digital school of Distinction*.

Please support our Auction and Rags with Tags event in the school hall on Saturday, June 21st 2014.

Further details are available on the enclosed leaflet. You will get regular updates on the Parent's Association facebook page : **"Scoil Dean Cussen PA"**.

Library:

Children borrow books from the class library under teacher supervision. We encourage all pupils to read for pleasure and not just for homework.

Learning Support/Resource Teaching:

Our support teachers work in conjunction with the class teacher to ensure that the individual learning needs of each pupil are met. Please discuss with the class teacher should you require any further information on this service. This support should be a partnership between the class teacher, learning support teacher and the parents.

Lost Property:

Write your child's name on all items of clothing, books, stationery etc. This makes it easier for us to return it to its owner!!

Parents:

Parents are encouraged to

- develop close links with the school
- collaborate with the school in developing the full potential of their children
- share the responsibility of seeing that the school remains true to its ethos, values and distinctive character
- become actively involved in the Parents' Association
- participate in policy and decision making processes that affect them

Parent-Teacher Meetings:

Communication between parents and teachers is encouraged. Parent – Teacher Meetings are held in the 1st term – however parents are welcome to request to meet the class teacher at other times should the necessity arise.

Permission Slips:

Parents are requested to sign the enclosed permission slips and return them to the class teacher in September.

Recycling:

As part of our recycling policy, recycling of school paper, cardboard etc is actively encouraged. Pupils are asked to take home uneaten food and wrappers in their lunch boxes. Scoil Dean Cussen is currently working for its 4th Green Flag.

Reports:

Reports are posted to Parents/Guardians in June. The class teacher will request a stamped addressed envelope for this purpose. Copies of the reports are stored in a secure filing cabinet in the school office.

Roll Call:

Rolls are called at 10.00am. A daily roll is taken in each class and filled into school roll books. Absences of 20+ days must be reported to the National Education Welfare Board.

Staff Absences:

If a staff member is absent through illness, all efforts are made to get a qualified substitute teacher. Only when all efforts have failed, is a class divided among all other class teachers.

Staff Meetings:

Staff meetings are held once a term. School closes earlier on those days. You will get a minimum of a week's notice prior to such meetings.

Sammy Stamp – Bruff Credit Union Saving Scheme:

To encourage the habit of saving, children are given the option of taking a savings card and filling in savings stamps each week. Stamps cost 50c and are sold weekly. The saved money may be redeemed at any stage directly from Bruff Credit Union.

Special Needs Assistant SNA:

This year there are two SNAs working in the school. SNAs are assigned duties within a classroom – specifically assisting particular children with special needs.

Telephone:

Pupils are not allowed to use a mobile phone during the day. The school phone may be used with permission for emergencies.

Website:

Visit our school website for updates on school activities, school policies, school calendar etc.

www.scoildeancussen.ie