

*St. Lachtain's National School,
Freshford ,
Co. Kilkenny*

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**Parents'
Information Booklet
2023-2024**

St. Lachtain's National School, Freshford, Co. Kilkenny

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We welcome you as part of the community of St. Lachtain's National School.

During the next few months you will be preparing your child to begin primary school. While most children will be excited at the prospect, some may be a little anxious.

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with some of the immediate information that you may need and to help you prepare both your child and also yourselves for what is a very big and important event in your family's life.

We hope this will assist you in understanding how the structure within the school works. Our aim is to provide a happy, safe, supportive environment for all in our school community.

GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING SCHOOL

- The school is a Catholic Primary School under the patronage of the Bishop of Ossory.
- The school depends on grants and teaching resources provided by the Department of Education and Science and it operates within Department regulations.
- The school follows the curricular programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science.
- Within the context and parameters of Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the Patron as set out in the Education Act, and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of
 - Inclusiveness, particularly with reference to children with a disability or other special educational needs.
 - Equality of access and participation in the school.
 - Parental choice in relation to enrolment.
 - Respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, cultures, traditions, languages and ways of life in society.

Teaching Staff

Brendan Tynan (Principal), Róisín Bolger (Deputy Principal / Sp. Ed. Co-ordinator / SET), Claire Doyle / Julie Bryan (SET), Katie Byrne (SET), Siobhán Meehan, Elizabeth Murphy, Paul Flood, Laura Furney, David McGuire, Joanne Harrison, Mary Roche, Miriam O'Neill, Kevin Shortall, Mary-Evelyn Drennan (Preschool Lachtaín), Eilís Bergin (Preschool Lachtaín), Cian Mullally (Preschool Lachtaín)

Special Needs Assistants: Susan Drennan, Paula Stratford, Rachel Dowling, Catriona Galster, Anne Marie O'Hara, Laura Marnell, Audrey Harrington, Ruth Levins, Lucy Burke and Mary Hughes.

Ancillary Staff:

Susan Condon (School Secretary), Frank Doheny (Caretaker), Michael Brennan and Gary Barnaville (Assistant Caretakers)

Board of Management

The Board of Management of the school consists of eight members who are responsible for the running of the school. A new board is appointed every four years. The current board is as follows: Angela Durnan, (Chairperson), Brendan Tynan (Principal), Constance Hennessy (Treasurer), Monsignor Kieron Kennedy P.P. (Patron's Rep.), Martin O'Donnell (Community Rep.), Miriam O'Neill (Teacher Rep.), Kevin McCarthy and Deirdre Dalton (Parent Reps.).

Parents' Association Committee 2022

Caroline O'Kane (Chairperson), Lucy Carroll (Vice Chairperson), Majella Morrissey (Secretary), Claire Mooney (P.R.O.), Julie Kavanagh (Treasurer), Róisín Bolger (School Rep./Dep. Princ.) Teresa Gibbons, Catherine Campion, Susan Condon, Anna Morrissey, Mark Webster, Mark Bowden, Afeefa Ashran, Maryna Potapenko, Oryna Borisenko, Kevin McCarthy (Parent's Rep on BOM), Deirdre Dalton (Parents Rep on BOM)

Enrolment

The relevant dates and timelines for ST. LACHTAIN'S NS admission process are set out in the school's annual admission notice which is published annually on the school's website at least one week before the commencement of the admission process for the school year concerned.

The application form for admission is published on the school's website and will be made available in hardcopy on request to any person who requests it.

The Board of Management is bound by the Department of Education and Science's Rules for National Schools which provides that pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upwards.

Parents are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the Office) with an original Birth/Adoption Certificate to the school.

Preschool Lachtain

Our Early Intervention Unit for preschool children with ASD opened in September 2013. A third class was opened in September 2021. In each of the three classes the pupil teacher ratio of 6:1 will apply with the provision of two Special Needs Assistants in each. Children in the unit will remain with us for approximately two years before advancing to their local mainstream school or to an ASD unit attached to a mainstream school.

School Timetable

School starts at 9.20 am

(Preschool Lachtaín 9.30am - 2pm)

Small Break: 11.00 am - 11.10 am
(Children have small lunch)

Big Lunch: 12.30 pm - 1.00 pm

Junior Infants & Senior Infants finish at 2.00 pm.

- ❖ For the first two weeks of school, the infants' hours are from 9.20am – 12.15pm
- ❖ Junior and Senior Infant dismissal at **2pm sharp**. When collecting your child please be on time and stand in the school playground close to your child's classroom door.
- ❖ If your child is being collected by someone else other than yourself please inform the office or the class teacher.

First Class to Sixth Class finishes at 3.00 pm

All children must be collected promptly.

Curriculum

The school follows the Curriculum programmes prescribed by the Department of Education and Science.

ICT

Each classroom is fully equipped with Interactive Whiteboard and broadband. Cameras and visualizers are also well utilised. Each class has access iPads and Chromebooks for use in their learning.

General Information

St. Lachtain's National School

- **All visitors must report to the main reception area of the school.**
- School begins at 9.20. Children will not be allowed into their classrooms before this unless it is a wet morning. Yard supervision begins at 9.10am. Children should not be left unaccompanied in the school yard before this time.
- Each morning, in the interest of health and safety, and for child protection reasons, all parents need to drop their children and leave the grounds promptly
Junior Infant parents may, if necessary, assist their children in dropping their bags at their classroom wall before leaving. From Seniors Infants upwards, pupils can be dropped at the school gate, thus increasing their level of independence and self-organisation.
This will also aid traffic management in the dropping off area outside the school as the need to park for more than a minute or two will be eliminated.
- We should regularly remind children of the golden rule: Never talk to, or accept a lift from strangers.
- Arrange for the safety of children coming to and from the bus.
- Visits by children to a friend's house should be arranged prior to coming to school and never allow your child to arrange the visits amongst themselves.
- If you make an arrangement to collect your child at a particular time – **‘Be Punctual’**.
- If your child is to be collected by someone other than yourself, please inform the office or Class Teacher.
- Communication with parents will be by email and text via Aladdin Connect. Our ‘School Newsletters/Bulletins’, which will issue through this platform.
- **All possessions, including P.E. gear, should be labelled with your child's name and with some distinguishing thread or badge which a small child can recognize.**
- No glass bottles or tin cans are allowed in the school. An easy open screw top plastic bottle for lunch drink is best.
- All monies will be collected through online payments in Aladdin.
- Please cover all books – with your child's name marked clearly on **the front cover**.
- ‘Little accidents’ may sometimes warrant a change of underwear for your child. In the event of this happening, new underwear will be provided by the school which you are asked to replace with new underwear, please.
- In response to the increase in food allergies (nuts etc), please discourage your child from sharing or exchanging lunch items with other children.

Car Park:

- ◆ Parents are asked to park in the Church car park. No cars are allowed in the school yard.

Please keep the drop off point outside the school clear and moving smoothly.

Please be extremely vigilant of children crossing through the car park areas.

Care of Hair:

- Parents are asked to check their child's hair for head lice regularly, we would prefer if this could be done on the **1st Friday of each month**, as it is a national problem. If a parent contacts the school about an infestation, all pupils in the concerned class receive a letter regarding the procedure to be taken. Pupils who are infected are to be treated at home. Long hair is to be tied back or plaited.

Birthdays & Invitations:

Birthday party invitations should not be distributed within the school - children get very upset if they've been excluded.

FIRST AID/ ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

Illness:

1. Parents/Guardians should inform the school of any known problems associated with a pupil's health.
2. A pupil who becomes ill while in school should report this to a member of staff. He/she must not leave the school without permission from the Principal or Deputy-Principal.

A pupil who shows signs of illness should be kept at home.
3. Every effort will be made to contact the parents/guardians. The pupils will remain in the care of the school until the parent/guardian or their designated representative can assume responsibility.
4. In the case of an emergency (in the opinion of a teacher or other such person of the school authority) any pupil complaining of serious illness or who has suffered injury will be taken to hospital for treatment either by car or by ambulance. In this regard the school authorities accept NO liability and are at all times-deemed to be acting in the best interest of the pupil.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE:

- Depending on the injury parents/guardians will be contacted to come and collect the pupil.
- If it is not possible to contact the parent/guardians or if they are unable to come and collect the pupil:
 - a. The pupil will remain in the care of the school unless, contact having been made, the parents/guardians arrange otherwise.
 - b. The pupil will be brought to a doctor/to the hospital.

- c. Accidents occur despite supervision. Minor accidents are treated at school. Slight cuts and grazes are normally treated by cleaning with water. Parents are asked to check the cut that evening. Ice packs are applied in the case of a bruise.

Medication/Inhalers

In keeping with the CPSMA advice the administration of medicines **by staff** will only happen in emergency situations. A letter of consent needs to be signed by parents/guardians if their child needs to use an inhaler or take medication while at school. The letter of consent is available at the school office.

Mobile Phone Policy

To avoid disruption in class and because of the possible harmful effect, pupils are strongly encouraged not to bring mobile phones to school. If, however you feel it absolutely necessary that your child does have a mobile phone on his/her possession the following rules must be adhered to:

1. The phone must be powered off between 9.20 am and 3.00 pm
2. The phone must be given to the teacher, sent to the office and collected at the end of the day.
3. The school authorities accept no responsibility for the safety or security of a mobile phone. The loss or damage of a phone is the responsibility of its owner.

If the phone is **visible or rings** during school hours, it will be confiscated and returned only to a parent.

If you wish to convey a message to your child, please ring the school. Tel: 056 8832400

No form of recording device is permitted without the permission of teacher or principal.

Healthy Lunch Policy

Having received Rural DEIS status in 2022, we now enjoy free, hot school lunches. Parents may supplement this lunch as deemed necessary. Contact Susan, our secretary, if in need of assistance in setting up your account etc.

The remaining contents of hot lunches and boxes must be brought home in the systemic container. All other packaging must also be taken home and recycled / disposed of appropriately. For Health & Safety reasons lunches are eaten in class before breaks.

The school has a very positive policy on healthy lunches. We encourage all children to eat healthy foods and ask that, sweets, sugary biscuits, crisps, popcorn, fizzy drinks etc are not included in the lunch boxes.

Since March 2012, we have, at various times, participated in the 'Food Dudes' programme which encourages our children to enjoy a healthy range of fresh fruit and vegetables as part of their lunches. The success of this has encouraged staff and pupils alike to reinforce our healthy eating policy. Pupils are encouraged to keep packaging to a minimum.

HEALTHY PACKED LUNCHES RECOMMENDED

School Uniform

A crested tracksuit has been introduced as school uniform for Autumn Term 2023.

Consisting of:

Crested half-zip tracksuit top

Crested tracksuit bottoms

Runners

The Principal will regularly carry out a uniform check. A note must be forwarded to the school to explain the reason for your child not wearing his/her uniform.

Our uniform is available in 'Hennessy Sports', Newpark Shopping Centre, Kilkenny.

Activities and Extra-Curricular Activities

This is a list of the growing number of activities available at our school: -

School Concert

A Christmas Carol Service is produced annually. We also have an outdoor summer concert in June. We are pleased to participate in local community shows and activities.

Quiz

Teams from the school take part in a variety of local and national quizzes during the year.

Swimming

Swimming is part of the P.E. Curriculum. Classes 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th attend the pool for a number of swimming sessions. The programme extends from being comfortable in the water to learning the basic strokes. Pupils take part in the Swimming Gala organised by The Watershed in Kilkenny

Gaelic Football, Soccer and Volleyball

Both boys' and girls' Gaelic football is organised and teams are entered in the Cumann na mBunscol competitions. We participate in the FAI Futsal soccer competition. Volleyball coaching began in 2023

Junior Achievement Ireland Programme

Junior Achievement Ireland (JAI) is a member of one of the world's largest educational non-profits, helping prepare young people for their futures by delivering hands-on, experiential learning in entrepreneurship, employability, financial literacy and the value of STEM. Last year our engineer worked with Rang 2 and Rang 3.

Hurling and Camogie

Hurling and camogie is played all year round (weather permitting). Lunchtime sessions are organised during fine weather. A team participates in both the Kilkenny Primary Schools League and the G.A.A I.N.T.O Sevens. We also take part in blitzes and friendly competitions.

Helmets and gum shields must be worn for both hurling and camogie sessions.

Gymnastics

Our Gymnastics Club with Miss Furney takes place weekly in the Hall at lunchtime. All are welcome.

Green Schools

Our school has been awarded green flags for Litter and Waste and also for Energy. We are currently working on our third flag based on Water.

Music, Choir and Trad Group:

Music and music theory is taught to all children from Junior Infants to 6th class. Recorder is introduced from 1st Class upwards. Children enjoy playing a range of instruments including hand bells, chime bars, tambourines, agogos, the cabassa, claves and many percussion instruments. The school choir performs at school concerts, First Holy Communions and Confirmation Masses.

This year we began our Trad Group for pupils interested in learning traditional Irish music.

Members play tin whistle, bodhrán, keyboard and guitar, and are led by Mrs. Bolger on the flute and Mr. Shortall on the button accordion. All new comers are welcome.

We also participate in the **Peace Proms Choir** with the **Cross Border Orchestra Ireland**.

Discover Primary Science:

We are developing our science club and plan to dedicate more time to the Discovery Primary Science Programme. Each year, science week is during the first term. Children enjoy the array of projects and experiments on display in the hall. **In 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 our school was awarded the 'Discover Primary Science and Maths Award of Excellence'.**

School Garden:

We are currently developing our school garden with the help of parents and friends of the school as a fun and practical way of supporting our science curriculum. In summer term 2021, we planted our school orchard. **We are currently in the process of completing our Sensory Garden in our school courtyard.**

Playground Games: -

A new tarmac surface was placed on our playgrounds a few years ago. A variety of new games and activities for all ages have been painted. We've also installed a new outdoor agility trail for the children, as well as special playground equipment for our pre-schoolers and infant classes. Skipping Club is also very popular. Packs of lesser well known games and games from the past have been printed and laminated for pupil/group use as part of our Health Promoting Schools project.

Foras na Gaeilge

Competitions and quizzes are organised to promote the speaking of Irish.

Art & Crafts

Various local and national competitions. We are also developing links with local artists and through the 'Artist in Residence' scheme, we have organised, and are currently organising, workshops for the children.

Health Promoting School Project

In conjunction with the H.S.E., we began this project in 2013/14 to promote health and wellbeing throughout our school. We were formally recognised as a Health Promoting School in June 2016 and awarded our flag. Health and Wellbeing now is under the stewardship of the Department of Education. We plan to develop our Wellbeing and SPHE experiences for all in our school community in coming years.

Code of Behaviour and Discipline (Summary)

Every effort is made to adopt a positive approach to behaviour in the school. A greater emphasis is placed on rewards and recognition of good behaviour than on sanctions. We recognise the variety of differences that exist between children and try to accommodate these differences.

Our school rules aim to ensure that each child respects and cares for himself/herself and has respect, care, consideration and courtesy for others.

In order that these rules are understood and adhered to by all the students of the school and as part of our S.P.H.E Programme, time will be spent each term discussing and reinforcing our code.

General School Rules

1. Children are expected to be caring and courteous in their attitude to all.
2. **All pupils are expected to be in school no later than 9.20am on each school day. If for any reason a child is absent or unable to attend on time, an absence note should be completed via Aladdin.**
3. Children are expected to move about the school in a quiet and orderly manner, showing respect for classes in session nearby. In the interests of safety and hygiene children do not run or eat in the corridors of the school.
4. All children must go to the playground at break times, weather permitting. In the playground it is expected that they play and move about in a manner that will allow all to play safely. In the interest of safety certain areas adjacent to the playground are out of bounds. Children are not allowed outside school ground without supervision.
5. Bullying in any of its forms will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as per the school's 'Anti-Bullying Policy'. Hard copies available on request or also available on our school's website.
6. When school finishes each day, all children must leave the school grounds in a quiet and orderly manner taking particular care in the Car Park area.
7. Bad language will not be tolerated in the school or the immediate area surrounding the school.
8. Homework should be done neatly and in full and checked by a parent. A written note from parent/guardian is required if homework is not done.
9. Pupils are expected to wear **full** school uniform on all school days except when otherwise instructed.
10. Pupils are expected to respect the school environment, the property of others and their own property.
11. Pupils are expected to be attentive in class, work to the best of their ability and take pride in their work.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF CHALLENGING ATTITUDES:

The school wishes to stress the positive attitudes to challenging behaviour. The school encourages and reinforces exemplary behaviour with minimum attention to those who wish to choose inappropriate attitudes:

- ❖ Praise and commendation for work well done
- ❖ Recognition for effort
- ❖ Rewards for success and achievement
- ❖ Merit awards
- ❖ Promotion of games, craft and pleasant opportunities to enjoy
- ❖ Certificates

The co-operation of parents and guardians in dealing with discipline and other problems is deeply appreciated.

Therefore, we would ask you to ensure your child has a good understanding of the Code of Behaviour / General Rules for the school and understands the need to abide by these rules.

The objective of this code is to ensure a safe and happy learning environment for the children of St. Lachtain's National School.

Every child has the right to:

1. Be called by his/her own name.
2. Be themselves and to be treated equally regardless of appearance, race, colour, gender or religion.
3. Be listened to.
4. Feel safe from mocking, threats, verbal and physical abuse.
5. Have beliefs and personal belongings respected.
6. Be included in school activities and have friends.
7. Give expression to his/her own opinions and feelings.
8. A good education without prejudice in a clean, healthy environment..
9. Use and develop his/her own talents.
10. Have privacy and confidences respected.

Sanctions

1. The overall responsibility for discipline within the school rests with the principal. Each teacher has responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within his/her classroom while sharing a common responsibility for good order within the school premises. A child will be referred to the deputy principal or the principal for serious breaches of discipline and for repeated minor incidents.

2. The following strategies may be used to show disapproval or unacceptable behaviour.
 - ✓ Reasoning with the child
 - ✓ Reprimand (including advice on how to improve)
 - ✓ Temporary separation from peers, friends and others
 - ✓ Loss of privileges
 - ✓ Prescribing additional work
 - ✓ Referral to principal
 - ✓ Communication with parents
 - ✓ Withdrawal for a day
 - ✓ Suspension (temporary)
3. In the case of serious misbehaviour or persistent disruption the following steps may be taken.
 - a. Class teacher will keep a written record of all incidents of serious misbehaviour and will inform the principal of the problem.
 - b. Parents will be notified by letter (of which a copy will be kept in the school) requesting one or both of them to meet with class teacher. The Principal may be in attendance.
 - c. If the difficulty is not resolved the principal will seek a meeting with parents who will be notified by hand or registered mail. A copy of all correspondence shall be kept in the school files. Class teacher may be in attendance at meeting.

If, after the above steps have been taken, there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents/guardians will be requested in writing to attend at the school to meet the Chairperson and the principal. If the parents/guardians do not give an undertaking that the pupil will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may be suspended for a period. Prior to suspension, where possible, the Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. Suspension will be in accordance with the Rules for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents/guardians.

In certain circumstances the Principal with the approval of their Chairperson of the BoM may suspend a pupil for 5 school days. A meeting of the BoM may authorise further suspension up to a maximum of 10 days. Suspension will be in accordance with Section 23 of the Education Welfare Act 2000.

(Copies of the school's full 'Code of Behaviour' are available on request from the school office and is available on our school's website.)

Complaints:

If a parent/guardian has a particular difficulty about any aspect of the school's work then the matter should be referred, in the first instance, to the class Teacher and subsequently to the Principal, if necessary. In the event of continuing disagreement, the parent may follow the steps as laid out in our Complaints Procedure Policy (see website or hard copy available on request).

Formal Meetings: -

Formal timetabled Parent/Teacher meetings take place in the First Term. However, if a parent wishes to arrange a meeting at any stage during the year they may do so by prior appointment.

Stay Safe Programme

Aim:

To teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations, which could be upsetting or dangerous.

Content:

The lessons cover the following areas:

- ▶ Feeling Safe and Unsafe
- ▶ Friendship and Bullying
- ▶ Touches
- ▶ Secrets and Telling
- ▶ Strangers

Children participating in this programme will learn:

- ▶ To distinguish between safe and unsafe feelings.
- ▶ What to do if lost.
- ▶ What to do if the phone or doorbell rings when they are alone in the house.
- ▶ The importance of friends in children's lives.
- ▶ What to do if bullied.
- ▶ Stay Safe Rules: Say No / Get Away / Tell.
- ▶ Why not to bully others.
- ▶ Appreciating normal, appropriate touches.
- ▶ That unsafe touches should never be kept secret.
- ▶ How to respond to inappropriate touches (Stay Safe Rules)
- ▶ Good and bad secrets.
- ▶ That some secrets should not be kept.
- ▶ Who and how to tell if in trouble.
- ▶ About strangers and safety strategies.

Relationship & Sexuality Education

The school recognises that parents/guardians are the primary educators of the children in their care and supports them in this crucial role. In this area above all, its role is complementary to that of the parents.

At all times the school will seek to accommodate and be sensitive to the religious and cultural beliefs of all parents while fulfilling its responsibility to ensure the availability of adequate RSE for all children

Parents/guardians retain the right to withdraw their children from this programme if they so wish. Before so doing, they are urged to discuss their concerns with the school principal.

Code of Conduct for Children's Sport

Foreword: -

Sport has a very special place in the life of all people. It enriches our lives and helps us cope with the stresses and strains of daily life and enables us to participate more fully and more confidently in our local community. Sport is an educator which develops character, personality and attitude. Its power and influence to do good must never be underestimated.

Adults, young people, children and their families should have every confidence that they are treated with respect, care and understanding when they take part in sport.

Principle of Fair Play

Fair play is defined as, 'much more than playing within the rules'. It incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing with the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just behaving".

Atmosphere and Ethos:

Children's sport must be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. A child-centred ethos helps to ensure that competition and specialization are kept in their appropriate place. Too often competitive demands are placed on children too early and results in excessive levels of pressure on them, with the consequence of high levels of dropout from sport.

Equality:

All children in our school are treated in an equitable and fair manner, regardless of age, ability, sex, religion, social and ethnic background.

Guidelines for Adults:

- ✓ **Attending adults must be a role model for children, and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, parents, officials and organisers.**
- ✓ **Encourage children to play by the rules.**
- ✓ **Always behave responsibly on the sidelines and not seek to unfairly affect the game or sport.**
- ✓ **Take care not to expose any player, intentionally or unintentionally to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of flippant or sarcastic remarks.**
- ✓ **Respect referees, coaches, organisers and other players.**
- ✓ **Do not publicly question the judgment or honesty of referees, coaches or organisers.**

- ✓ **Teach children that honest endeavour is as important as winning, and do all they can to encourage good sportsmanship.**

Bullying: Advice for Pupils and Parents

In class, at play and at home, children will learn the difference between *right and wrong*; what is acceptable, what is unacceptable and where the boundaries are. As parents and staff we share an important responsibility to secure a caring environment for all the children in the school, to help them make positive friendships and offer useful strategies if things go wrong and if difficult situations arise.

We hope that all pupils will be well behaved and show respect towards others. However, sometimes children can behave unacceptably, either individually or in groups - on occasion quite unwittingly, causing another child to become distressed and upset.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying and
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour. **(Copies of Code of Behaviour / Anti-Bullying Policy available on request from school office and are available on our school's website.)**

Any pupil can be a victim of/or perpetrator of bullying.

Advice for Parents:

- a) If you feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour, inform the school IMMEDIATELY. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- b) It is important to advise your child not to fight back. It can make matters worse.
- c) Tell your child there is nothing wrong with him/her. It is not his/her fault that they are being bullied.
- d) **Never criticize someone else's child's behaviour directly. If there's a problem, contact the school.**

Advice for children

What to do if you are bullied: **Tell Tell Tell**

Tell your friends, your teacher, your principal and above all, your parents

At St. Lachtain's N.S we take cases of bad behaviour and bullying very seriously.

The staff all work together to follow up incidents and ensure:

- *The situation is brought under control promptly.*
- *The aggrieved child feels secure, not intimidated and is helped to feel better.*
- *Those responsible are made to understand the effect of their behaviour.*
- *The matter is laid to rest, but kept under review.*

Bullying is not normal, and is something that no child should have to endure. Bullies have to be stopped, for the welfare of everyone.

Bullying can have a profound effect on children's lives and can have a lasting effect on them into adulthood. It can undermine their self-esteem and self-confidence. An unfounded accusation of bullying can have the same effect.

See our Anti-Bullying Policy for full details (*see website or hard copy available on request*).

Weight of School Bag

Scoil Lachtaín wishes to remind parents of the problem of overweight school bags.

Teachers are aware of the potential health hazards posed by overweight schoolbags. In Scoil Lachtaín pupils are asked and reminded regularly by their class teachers, to bring home in their school bags, only the books they require to do their homework. Doing so encourages pupils to develop their organisational skills. Teachers include back care as part of the SPHE programme. Parents are asked to check the weight of their child's school bag regularly and inform the school if they are concerned. Parents are encouraged to purchase correctly designed school bags. In the interest of hygiene parents are requested to ensure that the bags are tidied out on a regular basis.

Homework Policy

Aims: -

- ✓ To consolidate work being done at school.
- ✓ To keep parents in touch and involved in their children's work.
- ✓ To develop and encourage the habit of independent study.

Guidelines for Parents:

Parents are encouraged to:

- ✓ Establish a set routine and time for the child to do his/her homework, in a quiet place free from distractions.
- ✓ Supervise children's homework, checking and signing it on completion.
- ✓ Help and encourage the child but not to do the homework for him/her.
- ✓ Forward a note to the teacher if homework has not been completed.

National Education Welfare Board (N. E.W.B.)

The National Education Welfare board was set up under the Education Welfare Act, 2000. Under the new Act, you must let the school know if your child is absent and why. It is best to do this in writing.

Every school must notify the national Education Welfare Board if it is concerned about a child's attendance. This will generally happen if a child has missed a total of 20 days in the school year, even if those absences are accounted for by letter.

Very often, there will be good reasons for the absences. A child might be sick or there might have been a family difficulty.

If there is a worry that your child is missing out on his or her education, an Educational Welfare Officer may visit you to discuss the matter. He or she will work with you and the school to see what needs to be done to ensure that your child gets every chance to enjoy school.

Child Protection

The Principal, Mr. Tynan, is the school's DLP (Designated Liaison Person) and Ms. Róisín Bolger is the deputy DLP.

The DLP's function is to liaise with the HSE in the event of child welfare concerns.

The Board of Management has adopted as school policy the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2017). We are obliged to report matters of concern in relation to abuse of children to the local Health Service Executive. They will assess the case and provide the necessary support for the child concerned.

(Copies of our 'Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment' are available on request from the school office *and* are available on our school's website.)

Our Golden Rules

**Every child at St Lachtain's N.S. is encouraged to keep the
School's Golden Rules:**

Please help to make sure our school is always a good place to be in, by remembering these few basic rules: -

Be Gentle

Don't Hurt Anyone

Be Kind and Helpful

Don't Hurt People's Feelings

Be Honest

Don't Cover Up the Truth

Work Hard

Don't Waste Time

Look after Property

Don't Waste or Damage Things

Listen to People

Don't Interrupt

Everyone in St. Lachtain's has a basic right:

To Learn

To be Safe

To be Respected

In registering children in Scoil Lachtaín parents are expected to support teachers in following the policies and procedures of the school.

A copy of all policies and procedures is available to view by all parents.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism, he/she learns to condemn

If a child lives with hostility, he/she learns to fight

If a child lives with ridicule, he/she learns to be shy

If a child lives with shame, he/she learns to feel guilty

If a child lives with tolerance, he/she learns to be patient

If a child lives with encouragement, he/she learns confidence

If a child lives with praise, he/she learns to be appreciative

If a child lives with fairness, he/she learns justice

If a child lives with security, he/she learns to have faith

If a child lives with approval, he/she learns to like himself/herself

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,

he/she learns to find love in the world.



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