



STARTING SCHOOL 2022



*Welcome to St. Patrick's
Boys' National School,
Donabate*

Contents

	pg
1. Welcome from our principal	3
2. Our School & Team	4
3. Structures in our school	5
4. Attendance Policy	7
5. Parent Handbook & School Policies	8
6. Booklists & Uniform	9
7. Getting ready for Reading	10
8. Getting ready for Formal Writing	11
9. Supporting fine motor development at home	12
10. Aistear	13
11. Preparing for School	15
12. School- A Positive Start	16
13. Keeping connected with us	17
14. Summary	18
15. Uniform order form	19



St. Patrick's Boys' National School
Serving the parish of Donabate, Portrane & Balheary

A Welcome from our Principal

Dear Parents,

We are looking forward to meeting your child soon; a warm welcome awaits you all. We hope your son will enjoy eight wonderful years with us and develop intellectually, physically and spiritually and reach his full potential.

Starting school is an exciting time for you and for your child. We know from experience that a good introduction to formal education will have positive effects on your child and these will last throughout his education. In order to achieve this objective we lay much emphasis on easing the child's path into the formal structure of school. In this context we believe that the parents of our new pupils can assist us greatly by preparing the 'new recruits' in the months and weeks prior to the beginning of school.

All the usual games and activities in which young children participate contribute to their development. However, there are some specific skills which children need when they start school so that the teacher can go straight into developing areas such as reading, writing and number work. This booklet provides you with guidelines to prepare your child for the exciting new experience ahead.

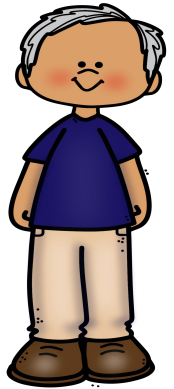
Please rest assured that, regardless of what school life next September looks like, your son will receive expert guidance and care from our highly skilled teachers.

We want to ensure that school is a happy experience - for both child and parents.

Stay safe and well,

Best regards,
Brian Horan,
Príomhoide

Our School & Team

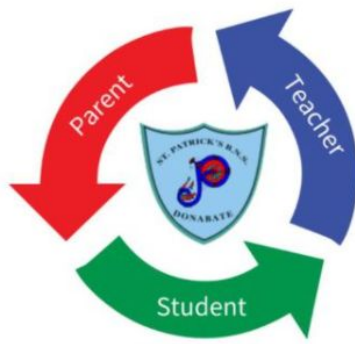


We are proud to be a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, but we are a truly inclusive school welcoming children of all faiths and none where all children are cherished with the dignity and respect they deserve. Our School Chaplain is Fr. Pat Reilly. p.p

Our school is modern and boasts a range of up to date facilities. Our classrooms are bright, modern purpose-built classrooms which allow for the provision of a whole, well balanced, child-centered curriculum. All classrooms are equipped with state of the art interactive whiteboards. Our classes can also boast access to class sets of Ipads and tablets. Our Learning support and resource rooms are equipped to accommodate all learning needs, whilst our sensory room provides children with more complex needs, a safe and calming environment.

We offer lots of after school clubs which compliment our holistic approach to your son's education. We are fortunate to have a highly qualified Speech and Drama teacher on our staff, who teaches mixed-age classes after school for boys and girls.. We have 2 GAA football teams which participate in the Fingal League and Cumann na mBunscoil League. French club, Speech & Drama, Eco Club are also very popular with the boys in our school. You will find more details about each club on our school website.

We are an all boys school with 16 classes from Junior Infants to 6th class. Our school staff comprises of experienced class teachers, special education teachers and special needs assistants. Our school also has full time secretarial staff and a caretaker. Our school is under the leadership of a full-time dedicated Principal Brian Horan and Deputy Principal Anthony Manning.



Structures in our School

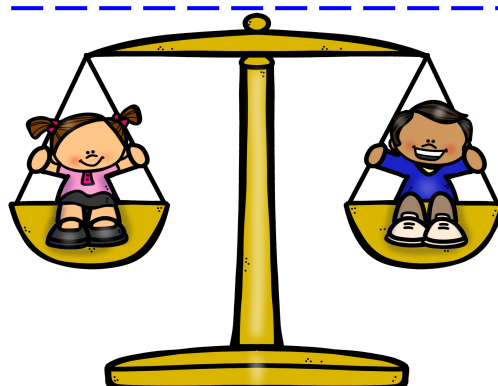
Board of Management:

A board of management is elected every 4 years and is composed of representatives of our Patron, parents & teachers. Our board meets regularly under the guidance of its chairperson Mrs. Mary Brooks.

Parents' Council:

Our school has a very supportive parents' council, which plays an integral role in our school. At the beginning of each academic year there is an AGM of the Parents' Council. This is advertised so look out and come to this if possible. As a member you can play a silent or an active role. If you're not into "committees", you can simply be at the end of a phone line when we need extra help. The Principal, Brian Horan, a member of the school Board of Management and those who have become involved as parents attend the Parent's Council monthly meeting. Our Chairperson for the Parent's Council is Karen Dunne.

Being on the Parents' Council is a great way of getting to know the Principal, the teachers and indeed a bit more about the school, its programmes and projects. Being a member is not just enjoyable, it gives you a reassurance and confidence in the school that's educating your child.



School Council: Every class in our school has two elected representatives to the School Council. Elections are held early in the year and interested candidates are encouraged to make posters, and address their class with speeches.



The goal of our Council is to give the pupils a voice. So far, they have come up with ideas such as Buddy Benches for our yards, a Multicultural Day to help everyone feel included and most recently the Council decided to start a school newsletter, written by the pupils for our school community. It is published online every month and linked on our website.



Green School Committee: In our school we have a Green Schools Committee made up of Children and staff from Junior Infants- 6th class. A new committee is elected yearly. We are delighted to have been awarded our 6th Green School flag. We are currently working towards our 7th Green flag, Global Citizenship: Marine life.



Attendance policy

Your child's attendance in school is vital for both his academic and social development.

It is very important that our school community, parents, staff and students are aware of their responsibilities in relation to school attendance under the **Education Welfare Act**.

Our new school policy on attendance is available on our website www.stpatsbns.ie/handbooks-policies and it clearly sets out these responsibilities.

Our policy points out that parents should:

- Ensure regular and punctual school attendance.
- Refrain, if at all possible, from taking holidays during school time.

Our policy points out that good communication between home and school is vital in relation to attendance. Please ensure that a record is kept for any absences.

A booklet with some practical information from TUSLA (Child and Family Agency) regarding good school attendance can be downloaded at



<https://www.tusla.ie/services/educational-welfare-services/publications/parents-information/>

School Handbook & Policies

Please take some time to read through our [Parent's Handbook](#) and [Code of Behaviour](#) prior to your child starting with us. These can be found on our website www.stpatsbns.ie



St. Patrick's Boys' National School
Serving the parish of Donabate, Portrane & Balheary

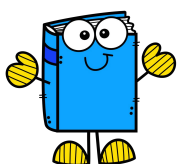
Bulletin
Aistear



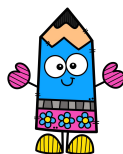
Please complete an **Administrations of Medicine form** if your child is on any medications or has any allergies (i.e. inhalers, epipen etc). Please bring this form with you on your first day.

On our website you will also find a comprehensive list of our parent handbook and all school policies. We ask that you read these at your earliest convenience. Below you will find a useful checklist of our policies. If you have any questions about any of our policies, please contact our school office at info@stpatsbns.ie or by calling (01) 8436168.

<u>Handbook/Policy</u>	✓	<u>Handbook/ Policy</u>	✓
Code of Behaviour		Positive Behaviour for Learning	
Anti Bullying Policy		Enrollment admissions policy	
administration of medicines in school		Stay Safe Policy	
GDPR Data Protection Policy		Healthy Eating Policy	
Acceptable Use Policy		Attendance Policy	
Child Safeguarding statement 2019		Child Protection Annual Review	
CCTV Policy		Assessment Policy	
Whole School Correction Practice		Parents Guide Internet Safety	
Intimate Care & Toileting policy		Protected disclosures in the workplace	
Dignity at Work Policy		Substance Abuse Policy	



Booklists & Uniforms



Book lists:

Booklists can change from year to year. An updated copy of the Junior Infant booklist for 2022/23 will be emailed to you. Please ensure the school has an up to date email address. To view previous years booklists, please access our website www.stpatsbns.ie

Uniform: The school uniform consists of: Grey trousers, grey jumper, white shirt and a red tie.

Track suit: Navy with red trim and the School Crest. Track suit is worn on P.E. days and is available from Pat O'Farrell School Wear

****Uniform Order Form Please see Last page****



Getting ready for reading!

In Junior and Senior Infants, we use the **Jolly Phonics** programme to teach the sounds and skills needed for reading. This programme has an emphasis on teaching the letter sounds in a fun, interactive way. A Junior Infant Parent Information Meeting will be held in the first term, you will get lots of information about Jolly Phonics at this meeting, with an opportunity to ask questions. We recommend not pre-teaching any letters or sounds before your son starts school, but there are lots of pre-reading activities you can do at home to help develop your sons phonological awareness and prepare him for his exciting journey of learning to read!

Here are some ideas for at home which you may find helpful!

<p>Read to your son regularly at home- books, cereal boxes, menus- the more varied the better!</p>	<p>When reading books, chat and ask your son questions...who, what, when, where?</p>	<p>Say some nursery rhymes and poems together, can you spot the rhyming word?</p>
<p>Sing, Sing, Sing! Lots of Oral language development is helpful!</p>	<p>clap syllables in words e.g. ban-an-a</p>	<p>Listening skills are an important skill, have your son sit and listen to a short story, or have him follow a list of chores at home to complete!</p>
<p>Allow your son to 'read' and explore reading materials independently at home</p>	<p>Play some listening games like Simon Says and I spy</p>	<p>Show them the right way! It is normal for young children to mispronounce words, don't correct them, instead model the word correctly in a sentence for them.</p>



Getting ready for formal writing!

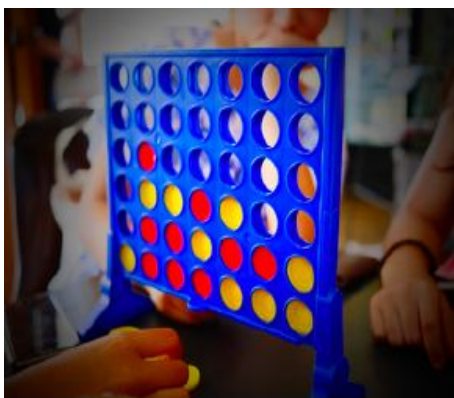


Here in St. Patrick's BNS, we will teach your child to write using a cursive (joined) script from the beginning. Learning **cursive handwriting** from Junior Infants has many benefits including greater fluency in reading, less reversals of letters, as well as making spellings easier to learn. Our Junior Infant Parent meeting in term 1 will explain this further. We recommend that you don't try to teach your son any formal writing at home as cursive fonts can differ which may confuse your son. Instead there are lots of meaningful and beneficial activities you can do at home to prepare your son for his writing journey. By focusing on fine motor skills development, you are giving your son a great start in his handwriting journey!

What are Fine Motor Skills & why are they important?

A child's fine motor skills determines their ability to precisely control smaller muscles in their hands, thumbs and fingers. These skills provide the coordination needed for many daily tasks such as buttoning clothes, eating, cutting, drawing and of course successfully being able to write!

The **next page** contains some useful activities that you could do at home to help your child. In our Parent section on our school website you will find a comprehensive document all about Fine Motor development should it interest you.

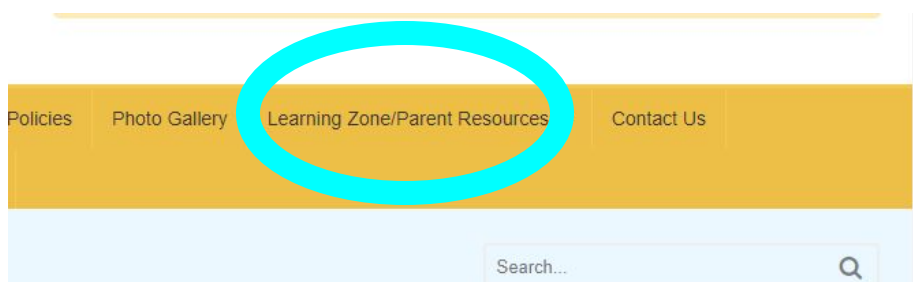


Supporting Fine Motor Development at home

FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES			
Spooning small items e.g. marbles, beads	Working with playdough- kneading, pushing, rolling, pulling.	Scissor practice- cutting straight, curved and zig zag lines.	Using tongs to pick up small items e.g. pom poms, buttons, dry pasta.
Threading beads onto shoe laces, pipe cleaners or spaghetti.	Pegging or clipping items to makeshift clotheslines.	Painting or tracing with water.	Lacing - into templates with holes or working with tying shoe laces.
Working with kinetic sand.	Cutting and pasting activities.	Manipulating and working with paper clips.	Creating things with rubber bands.
Using syringes with coloured water.	Placing toothpicks through small holes.	Hammer and screws or nuts and bolts activities.	Writing numbers or letters in rice, sand or salt.
Pricking holes with pins to make numbers, drawings etc.	Toilet Roll haircuts- draw faces and cut some hair.	Scrunching and gluing tissue paper and crepe paper to make artworks	Sorting small objects into empty egg cartons e.g. beads, pom poms
Picking up small objects with tweezers.	Buttoning and unbuttoning practice.	Paper tearing and creating artworks with the paper scraps.	Tracing activities- variety of dotted lines.

You will find lots more ideas in our Parent Zone on our school website

www.stpatsbns.ie





Aistear is a word you can expect your son to begin using when he starts school. He may already be familiar with it from his pre school setting, expect to hear this word lots over the next two years!

So what is Aistear?

Aistear is the curriculum framework for children from birth to six years. It provides information for adults to help them plan for and provide enjoyable and challenging learning experiences, so that all children can grow and develop as competent and confident learners. Aistear describes the types of learning that is important for children in their early years, and offers ideas and suggestions as to how this learning might be nurtured.



How is aistear implemented in St. Patrick's Boys School?

The aistear framework is implemented in both Junior and Senior Infants.

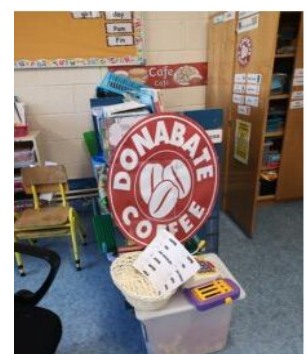
We use a thematic approach to our teaching. A new theme is explored each month which links to many curricular areas. Children also explore the current theme through explicit 'play' stations each day. The stations used are socio-dramatic play, creative play, constructive play, small world play and sensory play.

How can Aistear help me as a parent?

There are lots of great examples, exciting ideas, and practical suggestions in Aistear to help you as a parent. For example, the Framework suggests lots of things you can do to help your child learn through everyday activities and routines, such as getting food ready for meals, going to the shops, and checking the post. Aistear shows how important play is for your child's learning and development, and gives ideas for ways you and your child can play and learn together.

Where can I find more information?

The aistear framework, with many tips and ideas can be found here:
<https://curriculumonline.ie/Early-Childhood/>





Preparing for school

Parents and guardians can do a lot to help prepare their son for their first day of 'big school'. It is such an exciting time and it can be beneficial for children to have time to practice some of the following things before the big day arrives!

Recognise their name:

We recommend that you label your son's belongings (coat, scarf, jumper etc), these things can be easily mixed up! It would be helpful if your son can recognise his own first name for this reason, it will give him a sense of independence too!

Getting dressed:

Try on the school uniform/ tracksuit in advance. Your son may need some practice putting on/ off his jumper and coat for yard. Velcro shoes rather than laces are preferable. School trousers sometimes have tricky clasps for small hands! Practice opening and closing these at home for toileting purposes. Encourage your son to begin doing this for himself at home in preparation for school.

Lunch Time:

Starting Junior Infants is very exciting and is a chance for your son to become more independent and confident. Encourage him to become familiar with opening and closing his school bag, lunchbox and bottle.



Effective hand washing is a continued priority in our school. Show your son steps to washing his hands independently and chat about why it is important.



Preparing for School

Become familiar with the school:

Drive past the school with your son, look at photos in this pack and on our website www.stpatsbns.ie to help your son become familiar with the school.

We have a really helpful parent document on our website in our **parent zone**. It gives some excellent tips for preparing for school, the first few weeks, what to expect and how to develop good routines. Look for 'Preparing Young Children For Primary School' in the parent zone

Morning Routine


- Snuggle
- Use toilet
- Put on clothes
- Eat food
- Put away
- Brush teeth
- Get bag
- Go to school

Use everyday routines:
Children can learn a lot from talking about everyday events. For example, let your child help you unpack the groceries, put laundry in the washing machine or use a plastic knife to cut up fruit. Encourage conversation by talking about what you are doing and why. Mealtimes are also a great time to chat!

Preparing Young Children for Primary School
A Resource for Parents, Early Learning and Care Settings and Schools

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Tionscadal Léirithe um Thoirge ar Scoil agus Tacaíocht na hOideacháin
Demonstration Project on In-school and Early Years Therapy Support



When Your Child Starts School

On the first day:

- Have everything ready the night before to reduce last minute panic (e.g. school bag packed, uniform out, plan for breakfast).
- Leave plenty of time so you arrive a few minutes before the bell rings. This will help you and your child arrive to school relaxed.
- Reassure your child and talk about the fun they will have in school.
- Try not to let your child see if you are upset and don't hang around for too long on the first morning as this could unsettle your child.
- Make sure your child knows who will be collecting them and where.





School-A positive start

Starting Junior Infants is a big step in your life and the life of your son. As exciting as it can be, it can be an anxious time too. Here are some suggestions which may help the transition to school be a calm, enjoyable experience.



Routine:

Discuss the routines to be expected with your son. A predictable, familiar routine is a great start to the day! Talk about who will drop them to school/ collect them? How will you travel to/ from school? What is their teachers name? Explain that you will have to leave, and what they can do if they feel a little sad, you will find some tips to help with this below:

Stay connected during the school day:

A note/ picture in their lunchbox, a morning joke, a special drop off routine, matching bracelets!

Hug Button:

Draw a heart on your hand and a heart on your sons hand. This way, throughout the day, when you miss each other 'press' your heart to send a hug to each other using your hug button!



Worry Stone

This can be a small pebble from the garden! Your son can rub this stone and 'rub' his worries away!

Breathing techniques:

'Bubble Breathing' and 'Rainbow breathing' are super techniques to help with anxiety. Youtube provides lots of guided breathing videos for children. Perhaps practice some of these at home in advance of the big day!





Keeping connected with us



Here in St. Patricks BNS we are welcoming and home-school links are important to us. Albeit, in the current climate connecting with parents is more challenging, there are still ways to keep connected with the school.

Aladdin Connect:



Aladdin Connect is a fantastic tool we use to enhance communication between parents and the school. It enables you to stay connected with the school & informed about your child's education. You will be given instructions on how to connect with us via this application at a later date. You can read more about Aladdin Connect on our website, we have a comprehensive FAQ section. Aladdin connect helps create a strong & meaningful home/ school partnership.



School website:

Our school website is a great way of keeping up to date with events and news in our school. Our website is a great way to see what is happening school wide, not just in your son's class. We feature artists of the month, star writers, upcoming events like mad hair day, Seachtain Na Gaeilge and much much more! Our website is www.stpatsbns.ie. See our social media links.



www.stpatsbns.ie



St.Patrick's BNS



@stpatsbns



@stpatsboysns

Seesaw:



Seesaw is a learning application used in our Junior classes. Seesaw connects your son, his teacher and his parents and provides meaningful home-school communication and learning opportunities. You will hear more about this fantastic platform at the Junior Infant Parent meeting.

In Summary

- Our Principal is Mr. Horan
- Our Deputy Principal is Mr. Manning
- Our school secretaries are Claire & Denise, you can contact them via our school email: info@stpatsbns.ie or by calling our school office on (01) 8436168.
- Our school day starts at 8.55 and ends at 1.40pm for infant classes. This day will be shorter to begin with as your son transitions to school, we will send on these times to you.
- Uniform and tracksuit days are different for each class. Your son's teacher will communicate with you about this in September.
- We will send you your sons booklist via email when finalised.
- Place your orders for school uniforms with O'Farrell School Wear
- Aladdin connect is an important communication tool we use. You will be further instructed on its setup at a later date.
- Our school website is www.stpatsbns.ie. Things to check out here are:

Parent Handbook & School Policies

Parent Zone for useful information like Fine Motor development and preparing for school

Aladdin Connect FAQ

We are here to help. Please do not hesitate to contact us via our email or by calling the school office.

St. Patricks Boys National School has a long tradition of educating boys in Donabate, Portrane and Balheary. We look forward to carrying on this tradition with your family.



O'Farrell SCHOOLWEAR

St. Patrick's Boys N.S. School Tracksuit Order Form 2022/23

Tracksuits are supplied by: **Pat O'Farrell Schoolwear**

Unit 2, N1 Business Park, Swords, Co. Dublin, K67 HX60, Tel: 813-9714

For your convenience O'Farrell Schoolwear will be in the school on **Wednesday June 22nd** to sell uniform tracksuits and polo shirts.

If you require new tracksuits and are unable to attend, please complete the form below a return to

the school on, or before, this date.

Please circle/tick as required

Tracksuit with School Crest (Top and Pants)

Age/Size:

							<u>Price</u>	<u>QTY</u>
4/5	5/6	6/7	7/8	8/9	9/10	10/11	€34.95	_____
11/12							€37.95	_____
13/14	Small Adult						€39.95	_____

Pants Only:

Age/Size:

4/5	5/6	6/7	7/8	8/9	9/10	10/11	€16.95	_____
11/12							€18.95	_____
13/14	Small Adult						€20.95	_____

Red Polo Shirt:

24"	26"	28"	30"	32"	€ 7.95	_____
34"	36"				€ 9.95	_____

Red Ties:

Elastic	€2.95	_____
Full Length	€4.50	_____

Child's Name: _____ **Telephone:** _____

Teacher's Name: _____ **Amt Encl:** _____