

Dún Bleisce



Doon Convent National School

School Information Booklet

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www.doonconventns.ie





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Convent National School Doon

Principal's Address: Principal's Address:

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Doon Convent National School welcomes you to our school. We hope this booklet will provide some practical information. Since 1976, we have been educating the young generations of the surrounding area. It is a Catholic, co-educational primary school, catering for 116 pupils currently. We also welcome and are sensitive to all religious beliefs. The boys go to Doon CBS after 1st class and continue their excellent education in our close neighbouring school.

Over the years, Doon Convent N.S. has established a reputation for high standards in education. Our school is continually at the forefront of new and exciting developments for primary schools. Some of these initiatives are Literacy Lift-Off, Building bridges, Aistear, Green Schools Programme, Mathletics, Fun Friends, Friends For Life and the new Religious Curriculum. Doon Convent N.S. has a committed, energetic, approachable and professional staff.

Doon Convent N.S. enjoys great success in football, camogie, swimming, athletics, gymnastics, school quizzes, competitions, sewing needle work and many more activities that cater for all interests which encompass the individual. We strive to be part of the community and nurture the uniqueness of a child by delivering a programme that provides the opportunities to excel socially and educationally therefore developing well-rounded, respectful, keen and happy young adults.

As you read through this prospectus, I hope it delivers a clear insight into our school. In this regard, if you have any queries, you can contact the Principal on 061-380149 or 086-0246390. We hope and expect that your child's experience in our school will be an enriching and rewarding one.

We extend to you a Céad Míle Fáilte.

Derek Walsh
Principal



Mission Statement

Scoil Mháthair Na Trocaire is a co-educational Catholic, primary school which strives to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed.

School Hours:

9:00	School Opens.
9:15 to 2:00	Official class time for Junior/Senior Infants.
9:15 to 3:00	Official class time for 1 st class upwards.
11:00 to 11:15	Break time
12:45 to 1:15	Lunch break each day.

School Uniform:

Uniform: available from generic suppliers.

Girls: V-Neck Jumper - Navy with school crest, available in Fennessy's, William St. Limerick
Navy Skirt or Pinafore
White Blouse, Black Shoes,
Red Tights/Knee, High Red Socks.
Runners with tracksuit
School Tie: Available in Fennessy's, William St.
Tracksuit: Available in Fennessy's, William St



Boys: V-Neck Jumper - Navy with school crest, available in Fennessy's, William St. Limerick
Navy Pants (not jeans)
White Shirt
Black Shoes
Runners with tracksuit
School Tie: Available in Fennessy's, William St.
Tracksuit: Available in Fennessy's, William St.

Tracksuit: School Tracksuit available from Fenessys, William St., Limerick.

Footwear: Black shoes for uniform / runners for tracksuit.

On days that children have PE., the children may wear the school track suit and runners. It is recommended that the younger children wear velcro fastening footwear.

All clothing and belongings should be clearly labelled and the correct school uniform should be worn at all times.

School Books:

Booklists are distributed to pupils in June. All school books are available in O'Mahonys, Eason and Tony Clarke. There is a Book Rental Scheme in operation within the school which greatly reduces the cost of returning to school. Parents are asked to contribute a minimum amount of money towards the rent of these books before summer in order to be ready for new school year. The rental scheme starts in first class.

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Transport:

There is a public bus service which travels to our school. If you wish to avail of this service please contact Bus Éireann, School Transport Section on www.buseireann.ie.

Board of Management:

The Board of Management is the decision making body of the school and is made up of eight members. They hold a four year term of office. It comprises of the chairperson, principal, two parent nominees (a father and a mother), two patron nominees, one teacher and two community nominees elected by the Board of Management. The Board meets regularly each year and the Treasurer provides the board with a statement of accounts at every meeting.



Staff:

There are 7 teaching staff, 5 classroom teachers and a S.E. Teacher. One of these teachers is the Principal who is responsible for the internal organisation of the school and all day to day administration. There are 3 SNA's (Special Needs Assistants) in the school. There is also a secretary and a cleaner.

Parents Association:

There is a long tradition of parental involvement in Doon Convent National School. While fundraising is an essential role of the Parents Association, the emphasis is always on the social aspects of various events to encourage participation from all families. The main fundraising event during the year is our Silver Circle. An AGM for the association is held every September. The officers usually hold office for one year and all parents are eligible for election to the Parents' Committee. Parents Association organises Book Week and help out with Graduation Ceremony, Sports Day and many other events.



Home/School Communication:

Frequent communication is of vital importance in developing and nurturing good co-operation between home and school. In our school, communication between parents and teachers may take one of the following forms:

1. Individual Consultation:

- This is where a parent has asked to meet with a teacher or has been invited to visit the school to exchange information or to discuss matters of concern. A note to the class teacher or a phone call to the office requesting such an appointment is always essential.
- It is also necessary that the purpose of the visit be stated so that the teachers may undertake whatever preparation is necessary with regard to information and records.

2. Appointment with Principal:

Parents should contact the secretary at 061-380149 if they wish to meet the principal. Secretary office hours from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. daily.

3. Parent/Teacher Meetings

Parent/Teacher Meetings for pupils are held during the months of Nov/Dec. Ample notification will be given by class teachers.

In addition to the above forms home/school links, the following means of communication are also utilised:

- Notes in the pupil's homework journal.
- Emails and hard copy letters are sent home regularly during the year.
- School information and other news is available to view on the school website.
- Annual Newsletter.
- 'Text a parent' text messages are sent to parents' mobile phone.
- School reports are issued prior to the end of the school year.

Health/Safety:

We advise that children who are unwell be kept at home. From time to time a child may have a minor accident or may become sick at school. In such instances parents are contacted immediately and advised of the illness or accident and may be asked to collect their child. It is most important that the telephone number both at home and at work, are supplied to the school. Likewise the telephone number of a neighbour or relative can be of great assistance should the parent be unavailable. All such telephone numbers are treated with confidentiality.



- Parents are asked that teachers be made aware of any physical disability, medical condition, allergies or condition which may affect progress in school.
- If your child suffers from a long term recurring health problem please check our school policy on administration of medication in school. This is available from the Principal.
- Please check your child's hair regularly for outbreaks of head lice. If you detect head lice on your child please inform the school immediately and all parents will be informed by note/text, and asked to take immediate action to treat infestation.
- Parking is available in the bus park opposite the graveyard. We ask that parents refrain from parking directly outside the school gates as access is required at all times.
- Please note that supervision of children is from 9:00am onwards in the yard every morning.
- Collection times for Juniors and Senior Infants is 2:00pm & 3:00pm for all other classes.

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Complaints Procedure

It is in the interest of pupils, parents and teachers, good relations should exist between home and school. Teachers are willing to discuss any problems which may arise from time to time. With mutual respect and goodwill, most problems can be resolved readily.

A parent who wishes to discuss a concern should meet with the class teacher at an appointed time with view to resolving the concern. If the matter is not resolved at this stage, the issue will be brought to the attention of the Principal. Appointments can be made through the school office or a note in your child's journal.

School Attendance:

School attendance is very important. Students who have full attendance receive a certificate from TUSLA – The Child and Family Agency. If pupils are absent for 20 days or more we are obliged under the Education Welfare Act to notify TUSLA.

Parents are requested to inform the school in writing of any absences.

Insurance

The insurance held by the Board of Management is for pupils' liability and pupils are only awarded compensation when negligence can be proven. It can happen that accidents occur and negligence is not a contributory factor. In such cases compensation will not be paid and because of this a Personal Insurance Scheme to cover such accidents is available through the school. Information about this is distributed to parents each September.



Religious Formation

Doon Convent Primary School is a Catholic school and also welcomes children with other religious beliefs. Religious Education is taught in all classes every day.

First Penance and First Holy Communion

Pupils in 2nd class are prepared for First Penance and First Holy Communion usually in the month of May.

Confirmation

Pupils from 5th and 6th class receive the the Sacrament of Confirmation every second year. It is a joint celebration with the Christian Brothers School and takes place in Doon Parish Church.



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School Policies:

The school has many policies dealing with school subjects & protocols. These policies are reviewed and updated regularly. This happens in consultation with staff and BOM members.

Homework

The objective of homework is:

- To reinforce the learning that has already taken place in the class.
- To help children to learn on their own initiative.

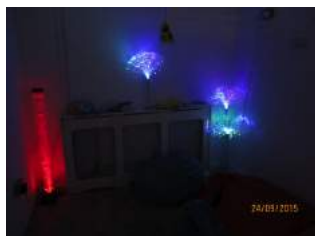
How can parents help with homework?

- Ensure peace and quiet free from distraction of games and television.
- By displaying an interest in the child's work.
- By encouraging neatness and tidiness.
- By ensuring that students have all the necessary materials- pens, pencils, copies etc.
- By signing the child's homework journal each night.

Special Educational Needs

Our school has a holistic, inclusive approach towards the needs and education of children with special needs. Our special education teachers have great expertise in this area and our sensory room provides an added facility for children with those needs.

BubbleSkool software is used in school. BubbleSkool is web based software for condensing information and presenting it in a more memorable and easy to understand manner. We have ramps and a wheelchair accessible toilet in the school. In the School we work closely with occupational therapists, educational psychologists and speech therapists to ensure all children get the best education possible.



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- 5 mainstream classrooms
- 2 learning support/resource rooms
- School garden
- School office & staffroom
- Sensory room, sensory garden and polytunnel
- Large tarmacadamed play area with yard games
- Basketball court
- Substantial astroturf area to the rear of the school
- Soft play area for the younger children
- Range of outdoor toys/activities
- Interactive white boards in each classroom
- Full Internet WiFi access throughout the school
- Large school hall suitable for gymnastics, exhibitions and other gatherings
- Extensive range of library books in each classroom



Curriculum and extracurricular activities:

The curricular subjects as required by the Department of Education and Skills are:

- Irish
- English
- Mathematics,
- Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (S.E.S.E.) (History, Geography, Science)
- Arts Education (Visual Arts, Music, Drama),
- Social, Personal and Health Education, (S.P.H.E.)
- Physical Education
- Religious Education

We also offer several activities such as:

- Green Schools Programme
- Active School Flag
- Athletics
- G.A.A.
- Swimming Lessons
- Basketball League
- Soccer League
- After school G.A.A. sports training
- Polytunnel and gardening



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Extra Curricular Activities and School Projects:

Curriculum Activities:

Health Promoting School:

The school operates a healthy eating policy for all classes. Children are encouraged to bring a nutritious lunch (sandwich, a piece of fruit /vegetables and a healthy drink). Sweets, fizzy drinks, Capri Suns, chewing gum, chocolates, crisps etc are not allowed.

We took part in 'The Food Dudes' programme. This was funded by An Bord Bia. It is designed to enable children to enjoy eating healthy food and to create a healthy eating culture within the school. It was very successful and introduced the children to foods they may not have tasted before.



As part of our new Care Programme, we have we have worked on the theme of 'friendship' and have had a 'care day' where we all introduced at least one act of kindness towards each other. We plan to continue with these themes along with introducing the importance of mental health, hygiene and good manners.

Mathematics:

Mathematics is a crucial part of life and Doon Convent N.S. has an extensive array of resources for the teaching of mathematics. Mathletics is a computer programme that the school takes part in and pupils can play at home. Each October the whole school takes part in 'Maths Week'. During the week maths are taught in a fun way. Children participate in variety of maths related activities, e.g. maths trails, quizzes, competitions on the internet, maths activities through art etc...

Literacy:

As part of our whole school plan we have many initiatives running in the school to increase pupil literacy levels. These include:

- Shared Reading & Buddy Reading
- Literacy Lift Off
- Building Bridges

These initiatives have been in place for many years now and have been proven to increase children's literacy and competency by giving more individual attention and zoning in on problem areas within any particular class.

Seachtain na Gaeilge:

Bionn Seachtain na Gaeilge againn timpeall Lá Fhéile Pádraig agus bionn a lán spórt ag na daltaí ag glacadh páirt sna gníomhíochtaí éagsúla. Gach aon bhliain bionn tráth na gceist, biongó, filíocht, buzz litriú, ceilí, ceolchoirm, dramaíocht againn agus baineann na daltaí a lán tneamh as an seachtain.



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Green Schools

Green-Schools is an international environmental education programme offering schools a way to take environmental issues from the curriculum and apply them to the day-to-day running of the school. It aims to make environmental awareness and action, an intrinsic part of the life and ethos of our school. It extends the learning beyond the classroom and develops responsibility, attitude and commitment, both at home and in the wider community. A Green Flag is awarded when the school completes all essential elements of the programme. This award requires renewal every two years. As the Green-Schools programme evolves, new themes are introduced.

The themes in sequence are:

1. Litter & Waste
2. Energy
3. Water
4. Travel
5. Biodiversity
6. Global Citizenship - Litter & Waste
7. Global Citizenship - Energy
- 8.



Active Flag:

This initiative highlights the importance of physical activity and sport in the school and community. We are involved in competitive and non-competitive sporting activities.

Football and Camogie:

Our school has a proud sporting tradition. Training is every Thursday evening after school. We compete in Cumann na mBunscoil football competitions every year. We have won numerous East Finals in ladies football. We were victorious in a County Final and went on to represent Limerick in the Munster Final. Many of our past pupils have represented Limerick and Tipperary in hurling and camogie.



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Junior Cycle

Aistear

Aistear is a curriculum framework for children from birth to six years. It shows how important play is for young children's early learning and development. Play not only provides natural opportunities for oral language development but also for the development of literacy and numeracy.

WHY play? Play is often described as children's 'work'. Playing helps your child to

- Build relationships – by playing with others, sharing and taking turns; solving problems and negotiating etc.
- Be creative – when he/she has to create an outfit from old clothes, build a house out of junk material etc.
- Read and write – when he/she reads or retells a story
- Learn about numbers – when he/she pays for things in a pretend shop etc
- Think – when a plan has to be made, for example – deciding what materials to use to build a den.
- Use language – to explain the rules of the game, playing a role in pretend play etc.
- Use small and large muscles – when he/she builds with Lego, cuts with scissors, draws or writes etc.

The various categories of play include:

- Creative play – junk art, play doh, painting
- Games with rules - Board games, yard games
- Language play – puppets, reading books
- Physical - sand/water play, jigsaws
- Pretend play – role play, small world (cars, doll's house, garage, train set), construction

Aistear takes place in the infant classes daily for approximately 30 minutes.

We have a series of four/ five play stations and we divide the children into four/five groups.

This means that during the course of a week, each child has an opportunity to play at each of the five stations.



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Literacy Lift Off

"Literacy Lift-Off" is an intensive programme of reading and writing, which gives the pupils lots of opportunities to read books at their own level of competency. It gradually lifts the complexity of what they can do in both reading and writing by equipping them with the necessary problem-solving skills.

The aim of Literacy Lift-Off is to make pupils constructive learners. It teaches them 'how' to problem-solve independently

It is implemented in blocks of 4-6 weeks in seniors and first class. The pupils work in 'stations' to carry out a number of activities in reading and writing, under the guidance of teachers.

Our Stations are as follows:

Station 1: Familiar Reading

Pupils read previously seen PM+ Readers.

Purpose: Development of enjoyment, fluency, comprehension and speed.

Station 2: Word Work

Magnetic letters are used on the whiteboard to make and break words.

Purpose: To show children how words work, so that they can make a fast visual analysis of their reading.

Station 3: Writing

Pupils write sentences based on their own experiences, using words that they encounter in their readers.

Purpose: That they will learn how they can write their own messages by hearing and recording sounds in words, using analogy and learning unusual words.

Station 4: New Reading

Encountering new texts each day challenges the pupils to discover new ways to go beyond their current operating ability and lift their literacy processing.

Purpose: Pupils learn to use strategic activities to read new texts

Station 5: Independent writing/Literacy Games

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Building Bridges

Building Bridges of Understanding is a whole school approach to the teaching of comprehension devised for effective comprehension instruction. Its primary focus is the teaching of comprehension, with the ultimate aim of enabling children to become self-regulated strategic readers.

The comprehension strategies include:

1. Prediction; enable pupils to predict.
2. Visualisation; enhancing abilities to visualise.
3. Making Connections; relating to their own experiences.
4. Questioning; developing the pupils' abilities to question.
5. Monitoring Comprehension – Clarifying; equipping readers to make sense of the text and monitor their understanding.
6. Monitoring Comprehension – Declunking; teaching decoding skills to overcome difficult words 'clunks'. The process is called 'declunking'.
7. Determining Importance: pupils need to learn to become better at choosing important information.
8. Inference: assists pupils to learn to read between the lines and understand things that the author has not written.
9. Synthesis: teaches the pupils to use

Doon Convent N.S. implements this as a continuation of the Literacy Lift programme is in place for graded readers in 2nd and 3rd classes. It is based on class novels. We also have an SRA reading laboratory, which focuses on attaining comprehension specific to the individual reading-age of pupils. The aim is to improve comprehension at the level of the pupils' ability.



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Soccer:

First class pupils take part in soccer blitzes in school and against local schools every year.

Basketball:

Basketball training takes place after school on Monday evenings. Pupils compete in basketball tournaments both in school leagues and in local tournaments.

Swimming:

Swimming lessons are organised for pupils from 2nd class to 6th class. These lessons run in 8 weeks blocks.

Athletics:

The pupils in the senior classes take part in local athletic competitions during the year. We hope to form an athletics club to encourage pupils become more active.

Orienteering:

This involves pupils working out tracks and trails to solve problems and read maps.

Dance:

We have a visiting dance teacher who teaches the children hip hop dance for eight weeks. At the end of the eight weeks the children put on a performance and family members are welcome to attend.

Music:

Singing is taught as part of a vibrant music curriculum.



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Craft Classes:

Arts and crafts are an integral part of school life in Doon Convent N.S. Knitting, felting, sewing, appliqué, clay sculpture, and much more are all part of the programme in older classes.

Educational Visits/Trips

Every effort is made to immerse children in stimulating learning situations. Field trips to local sites take place annually. All classes go on a school tour every year. These provide pupils with much stimulation in relating the curriculum to their everyday lives. Other trips include Scientist Exhibition, pantomimes, National Tree Day, fishery trips, Albert's Walk and Animal Magic.



Information and Communication Technologies:

We are fortunate in our school to be very well equipped with I.T. Each classroom has an interactive white board along with laptops, printers, visualizers and a wireless network. We also have iPads and digital cameras that the children can access.

Quizzes:

Pupils are encouraged to enter a large range of quizzes and competitions during the school year. These include:

- Texaco Young Artists Competition
- An Post Handwriting Competition
- Mathematics Challenge
- Moo Crew
- Poetry Competitions
- And many more.....



World Book Day:

Our school takes part in world book day each year. Every child is invited to dress up as their favourite character from a book or comic. The children take part in many fun filled activities throughout the day. We also host a book fair for a week annually and each classroom has an extensive library.

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Soft Play Area:

Doon Convent N.S. has a large soft play area with games, a tunnel and many resources to make the playground a safe, fun and enjoyable experience at younger years. It reduces the risks of injuries and facilitates play and running both which aid in the crucial development of the skeleton, motor control and social interaction.

Horticulture:

Growing and planting are an enjoyable experience for children. Doon Convent N.S. has a garden and polytunnel to allow children to grow plants and learn about horticulture. Not only as being part of the Green Schools Programme, but pupils themselves learning about horticulture nestles the ability, enthusiasm and knowledge of providing food, flowers and growing strategies for complementing plot sets to achieve healthy growing.



School Hall

We have a hall with gymnastics equipment: mats, benches, two horses and correct dimensions to provide excellent opportunities for exploring the sequencing of gymnastic movements. The Hall is also used for talks to parents and parents association.

Astroturf:

Following on from the soft play area, we have an extensive astroturf area. This allows for games, running and high activity play to occur.

Tarmac:

Doon Convent N.S. has a large tarmac area that consists of a full size basket ball court marked out, two pairs of soccer goals and playground markings on the yard. This yard is used for basketball, rounders and many other games.

G.A.A. Field:

Having close ties and working in conjunction with the local G.A.A., the club affords us the unrestricted use of our local G.A.A. field, a very valuable and nearby asset.

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School Website

The school website, www.doonconventns.ie, provides an important link between the school, parents and the wider community. Information on upcoming events posted on the site. Pictures of school activities can be accessed on the website, as well as children's work, such as art and project work. This is updated on a regular basis.

Doon Convent N.S.

Doon Convent N.S. is there to promote the education of the pupils and to work with the community. Classes are mixed up to 1st class. Then the boys progress to the C.B.S. and it is an all girls school from 2nd class to 6th class. Our aim is to provide a high standard of education in a school where the atmosphere is happy, cheerful and respectful. From getting the local representatives on the Doon Historical Society to assist in drawing up a Doon Historical Booklet for a field trip, to participating in the competitions, pupils should feel happy and content with parents alike in good working relationships. Potential is the essence of attainment and opportunities, so Doon Convent N.S. aims to offer the best for your child.



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