

Leabhairín Eolais

Information Booklet for Pupils and Parents at Crusheen National School, Crusheen Co. Clare

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Board of Management, teachers and staff extend a warm welcome to your child at Crusheen National School.

The school was officially opened in 1979 and extended both in 1994 and 2001. The opening of the new school completed the amalgamation of the three existing schools in the parish, Ballinruan, Drumbaniff and Crusheen.

OUR MISSION

We seek to create a supportive and friendly atmosphere in our school, where each child has the opportunity to develop spiritually, intellectually, socially and emotionally. Our desire is to provide a happy and secure environment where children can fulfil their potential. We endeavour to enhance each child's self image by building on his/her strengths.

Support from home is a vital factor in providing a secure base for learning. Thus, we look forward to working in partnership with you to provide the best possible education for your child.

We are fortunate in having a supportive Board of Management and a skilled and highly committed staff. They give of their best to ensure that every child will have a positive and happy experience in our school.

Should you have any queries or wish to discuss any aspects of school life, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Therese O'Connell
Principal

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Demographic Information

<i>School:</i>	Crusheen National School
<i>School Roll Number:</i>	19551S
<i>School Address:</i>	Crusheen , Co. Clare
<i>Telephone No:</i>	065 6827183
<i>Fax No:</i>	065 6827183
<i>Email:</i>	crusheen@eircom.net
<i>Website:</i>	www.crusheenns.net
<i>Name of Patron:</i>	Bishop Fintan Monahan
<i>Chair of the BOM:</i>	Maranna Quinlivan
<i>Principal:</i>	Ms. Therese O'Connell
<i>Total No. of Teachers:</i>	5 Class Teachers, 2 Resource Teachers
<i>Number of Pupils:</i>	117 as of January, 2017

Crusheen National School is a five teacher co-educational school under Catholic management, with approximately 117 pupils on roll between the ages of 4 and 12+ years. This booklet is designed to give you, the parent some basic information about our school. If this is your first child to go to primary school then it may be quite a while since you have had any contact with schools. Some things may have changed a lot and probably some may not have changed at all. Either way, we hope that this booklet may answer some of your questions, give you some practical advice on how to help your child as he/she begins school, and give you some information on the Primary Education System.

1. The Primary School System

The primary school system comprises a number of different tiers, all of which work collaboratively to:

- enable each child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as a unique individual
- enable each child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society
- prepare each child for further education and lifelong learning.

a. The Minister for Education and Skills

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) provides a percentage of funding and pays the teachers salaries. The DES Inspectors monitor the implementation of the curriculum in schools. Crusheen NS operates under the Rules for National Schools, The Education Act (1998), The Education Welfare Act (2000), enacted sections of the Education of Persons with Special Education Needs Act (EPSEN, 2004), all applicable equality legislation and DES Circulars.

b. The Patron

The Patron of Crusheen NS is the Bishop of the diocese of Killaloe.

c. The Board of Management

The Board of Management comprises of representatives of the Patron, the parents and the teachers. The Board has 2 representatives from the parents of the school, 2 from the

teaching staff (one of whom is always the Principal of the school), two nominees of the Patron and two further members selected from the wider community by the above 6. The term for a Board of Management extends to 4 years. The current term ends in November, 2015.

Members of the Board of Management:

- Maranna Quinlivan Chairperson
- Therese O’Connell (School Principal & Secretary)
- Joe Gantley (Teachers’ Representative)
- Keith Butler (Treasurer and Patrons nominee)
- Mike McDonagh (Community Representative)
- John O’Malley (Community Representative)
- John Hanrahan (Parent Representative)
- Orlaith Daffy (Parent Representative)

d. Teachers & Ancillary Staff
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- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therese O Connell • Orla Brady • Deirdre Wylde • Joe Gantley • Alma Pyne • Mairead Considine • Dolores O’Connor • Marguerite O’Leary • Olive Harvey • Marie Perrill • Padraic Beirne | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching Principal Deputy Principal Teacher Teacher Teacher Teacher Special Needs Assistant SEN Teacher Secretary Cleaner Caretaker |
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e. Parents

Crusheen NS recognises parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children. Educational research on the involvement of parents in schools shows that children achieve better outcomes when parents and teachers work together. Parents as a group have a wide range of talents, abilities and skills that have the potential to enrich and extend the educational opportunities provided for pupils. The school is fortunate to enjoy the support of the parent body.

The school welcomes involvement from parents who may have a particular interest or skill that they wish to share with the children during school hours e.g. sport, drama, art, computers, nature, or give a talk on a particular topic. Interested people should contact the principal.

f. Children

All parties work together to support the mission statement of the school which seeks to promote the spiritual, intellectual, social and emotional development of each child.

2. School Schedule

9:20am	School Commences
11:00am-11:10am	Morning Break (Sos)
12:30pm- 1:00pm	Lunch (Lón)
2:00pm	Infant Day Concludes
3:00pm	First-Sixth Classes Concludes

Procedures for Morning Arrivals

All pupils must be in their lines in the yard by 9.20am. Parents are responsible for the welfare of their children until the school's duty of care begins at 9:10 am. There is no supervision provided to children who arrive at school earlier than 9.10am. We ask that your child arrive by 9:20am so that classes can start punctually. Children who arrive late (after 9:20am) may be marked absent. **Once the DES roll has been called it cannot be altered.** If you are late dropping your child to Junior & Senior infant classroom, please ensure that you walk your child to the classroom door and hand him/her over to the care of the class teacher.

Breaks

There is a supervised morning break from 11a.m to 11.10am and lunch is from 12.30p.m to 1:00p.m. Children are supervised by teachers. Weather permitting children play outside. It is not permitted for some children to play inside while others play outside. If it is wet during play time children remain in their classrooms supervised by teachers.

Procedure for collection at 2:00pm/3:00pm

Infants

The infant class teacher hands over all infant children to the care of an adult at home time. She should be informed in writing of any changes to the collection arrangements. It is important to remind your child to give the note to the class teacher.

First to Sixth Classes

There are two collection options for children from first class up:

- (1) You and your child may choose a meeting point anywhere on the school grounds or
- (2) Children may make their own way to/from school.

If you choose Option 2, please put a note to this effect in your child's school journal at the start of each school year.

- (3) First class must be met at the school gate unless going on the bus.

The school's duty of care ends at 3.10pm. However, please instruct your child to return to the school office if:

- He/she is in any doubt about collection arrangements
- The collector is late
- There is nobody to meet him/her at the designated meeting point.

If any of the above arises, the school will contact a parent/guardian. Your child will remain in the school until such time as he/she is collected. Please ensure that your child's

teacher has an up-to-date address and phone number which can be written in the homework journal. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school in writing of any changes in address or telephone. Two further contact numbers are required for emergencies in order to contact you immediately if necessary.

Any person collecting a child on behalf of the parent/guardian will be permitted to take the child only if the parent/guardian contacts the school beforehand and indicates that he/she has expressly authorised the person to collect the child on his/her behalf. In the absence of a custody arrangement, both parents will be regarded as equal partners and the school cannot be asked to withhold a child from either parent. All Court Orders affecting the guardianship/custody of a child must be given immediately to the Principal.

School Discipline

The aim of our school discipline policy is to ensure that an orderly environment conducive to effective learning exists. Learning can only take place when there is an appropriate balance between an individual's right and respect for the rights of others. To facilitate this balance, pupils' awareness of the school rules and regulations is essential. Pupils will be treated fairly and consistently and need to be aware of the consequences of misbehaving. School rules are kept to a minimum, and are advised with regard health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

General School Rules

1. School Bell rings at 9:20 am. Lunch is from 12:30 pm until 1:00 pm. Infants finish at 2:00 pm. All other classes finish at 3:00 pm.
 2. Children may not leave the grounds at any time without permission. Children who wish to leave before 3:00 pm must furnish to their class teacher a note from a parent/guardian. Their parent must also sign the signing out book in school office.
 3. On returning after a period of absence the parent/guardian must produce a note stating the reason for that absence.
 4. Children should wear the complete school uniform every day.
 5. Children should show respect for their school, their belongings and be aware of their personal cleanliness.
 6. Orderly lines are required entering and leaving class and pupils should always walk while in the school building.
 7. Children may enter or leave the grounds only by the school gates. Climbing, walking or sitting on school walls, trees, fences, building or basketball stands is not allowed. Cycling, skateboarding or rollerblading on school grounds is forbidden at any time.
 8. Buildings and grounds are to be kept tidy and free of litter.
 9. Pupils should be respectful and honest to teachers and fellow pupils by being mannerly and polite, by taking turns and by being well behaved in the class line.
 10. Children should always bring a nutritious lunch to school. Chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not permitted. Children are allowed 1 treat on Friday.
 11. Children are not allowed to have mobile phones or any other electrical devices e.g. iPods, cameras etc.
 12. Each teacher will negotiate a set of class rules with his/her class.
- A copy of the general school rules are included in the School Journal.

The School Calendar

The school year for all Primary Schools is 183 days. The DES in agreement with the Teacher Unions has standardised most of the main breaks for holidays i.e. October Mid-Term, Christmas, February Mid-Term and Easter. The agreement allows each school some limited flexibility. A school calendar will be sent home before end of term in June each year listing closures for holidays and teacher meetings. There may be further closings for teacher in-service and school-based planning days and voting days as the school is occasionally used as a polling station. You will be informed as soon as the school is notified about these days.

Pupil Registration

Enrolment forms for younger siblings and new entrants are available from the school office. An introduction meeting is held each year, usually in June for new parents. This occasion acquaints parents with the routine of the school and gives advice on how they can prepare their children for the transition into primary school.

Partners in Education

A child's parent is the most effective teacher he/she will ever have. The home environment determines to a great extent the child's progress in school. It is for this reason that teachers depend more and more on the support of parents. To achieve a high standard of behaviour, a high level of co-operation between teachers, parents and children is needed.

Parents are asked to:-

- ensure that their child attends to homework each night
- encourage their child to co-operate fully in school
- take appropriate action if they discover that their child has been involved in misbehaviour in school
- discuss any problems that may arise with the teacher or Principal

Frequent communication is of vital importance in developing and nurturing co-operation between home and school. Good communication between parents and the school is essential to the environment we work to create.

- The Infant teacher and Principal meet with the parents of new Junior Infant pupils for an introductory meeting in term prior to their enrolment at the school.
- Individual parent/teacher meetings are held in November each year.
- From Senior Infants to sixth classes, school journals are used as a daily means of communication between school and home.
- Teachers are happy to meet with parents/guardians by appointment outside school hours to discuss a specific problem or concern. Parents are asked not to request meetings with teachers while they are engaged in teaching or pupil supervision.
- Meetings are held in connection with preparation for the Sacraments of Penance, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

- A written report on each pupil is provided at the end of each school year.
- Newsletters are issued regularly. They include updates on school, BOM and PA news as well as notices of forthcoming events. Parents are asked to check school bags regularly; otherwise they may not be fully informed about what is happening in the school. Copies of newsletters can also be accessed on www.crusheenns.net
- The school has a 'text a parent' system in operation.
- The school's website displays a range of photos, children's work samples and information for parents.

It is important that the school is informed if a child's parents don't reside together. It is assumed that when the school wishes to communicate with parents regarding their child, the parent with whom the child normally resides will inform the other parent of meetings, arrangements, school notes etc. If this is not the practice please let the Principal know. Special requests for separate communication can be accommodated by arrangement with the class teacher. (Please discuss with the new class teacher at the beginning of each school year). When a child spends time in more than one home, we would request that the school be provided with both sets of emergency/contact numbers. The class teacher should be informed of collection arrangements and of any changes to the usual routine. Separate parent teacher meetings can be arranged on request.

Complaints Procedure

From time to time a parent may wish to make a complaint regarding a particular issue. This Complaint Procedure has been drawn up by the education partners; Catholic Primary School Management Association (CPSMA), National Parents' Council (NPC), Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO) and Department of Education and Skills (DES).

1. A parent/guardian who wishes to make a class related complaint should approach the class teacher with a view to resolving the complaint/issue.
2. Where the parent/guardian is unable to resolve the complaint with the class teacher she/he should approach the Principal with a view to resolving it.
3. If the complaint is still unresolved the parent/guardian should raise the matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Management with a view to resolving it.
4. If the complaint is still unresolved and the parent/guardian wishes to pursue the matter further she/he should lodge the complaint in writing with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.
5. The Chairperson will bring the precise nature of the written complaint to the notice of the teacher and seek to resolve the matter between the parties within 5 days of receipt of the written complaint.

6. If the complaint is not resolved informally, the Chairperson will, subject to the general authorisation of the Board and except in those cases where the Chairperson deems the particular authorisation of the board to be required
 - (a) supply the teacher with a copy of the written complaint;
 - (b) arrange a meeting within ten days of receipt of the written complaint with the principal and the teacher with a view to solving the complaint.
7. If the complaint cannot be resolved at this meeting, the chairperson will make a formal report to the Board within ten days of the meeting referred to in 6(b)
8. If the Board considers that the complaint is not substantiated, it will inform the teacher and the complainant within three days of the Board meeting.
9. If the Board considers that the complaint is valid or that it warrants further investigation, it will:
 - a) Inform the teacher that the investigation is proceeding to the next stage
 - b) Supply the teacher with any written evidence in support of the complaint
 - c) Request that the teacher supply a written response to the complaint.
 - d) Afford the teacher an opportunity to present his/ her case and inform the teacher that he/ she is entitled to have an associate attend the meeting to assist with this presentation.
 - e) Arrange for the Board to meet with the complainant if it considers that this is necessary and inform him/her that he/ she is entitled to have an associate attend the meeting.
 - f) Arrange to hold this/these meetings within 10 days of the meeting referred to in 6(b)
10. When the Board has completed its investigation, the Chairperson will convey the decision in writing to the teacher and to the complainant within 5 days of the Board reaching its decision.
11. The decision of the Board is final.

Note: 'days' means school days. *Please note that if the complaint refers to whole school policies or procedures the first approach in such instances is to the School Principal (step two of the above.)*

The school and/or the Board of Management may not be in a position to respond to complaints unless these procedures are followed.

Attendance

The Education Welfare Act (2000) requires children to be in school every school day unless there is a reasonable explanation for not attending. The Act states that the relevant authorities will be informed of pupils who have been absent for **twenty school days or more** (this includes illness, holidays outside school holidays etc.).

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should adhere to the following procedures when notifying the school of a pupil's absence;

- Parents must ring the school by 9.30am to inform school of absence.
- The school should be given written notification of the absence on the first day the pupil returns to school
- The reason for the absence should be notified to the class teacher

- Details pertaining to the absence, such as duration and reason, should be provided
- Significant absences caused by ill health (i.e. absences longer than 10 school days) should be certified.
- The school should be informed immediately of confirmed infectious diseases.

A pupil who shows signs of illness should be kept at home. Requests from parents to allow their child to stay inside during break times cannot be accepted. The school is unable to provide adequate supervision inside the school during break times. The school needs to be notified in writing, if a child needs to leave school early. No child may leave school without a parent or guardian during school times. A child who has to leave early should be collected from the classroom. When planning holidays, parents are asked to avoid breaking into term time if at all possible, as children miss a lot of valuable teaching time, which may affect their progress and undermine their confidence.

Under the Education Act (2000) the school is obliged to inform the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) in writing:

- Where the child has missed 20 or more days in a school year,
- Where attendance is irregular and when the pupil is removed from the school register
- Where a child is suspended or expelled for 6 days or more,

Homework

The purpose of homework is:

- To encourage and develop the habit of independent study and self-discipline.
- To consolidate daily schoolwork.
- To learn how to organise and use free time
- To include parents in their child's education
- To facilitate completion of work done in class.

This should become a routine of the child's day. It is a habit if acquired at a young age, will be of some immense value to him/her at a later stage. We ask you to ensure that what is given is well done and then sign the homework journal.

Suggested times for Homework:

Infant Classes: –	5-10 minutes
First / Second Classes:	15 minutes approx
Third / Fourth Classes:	20 minutes approx
Fifth / Sixth Classes:	30-40 minutes approx

The recommended times are only guidelines because too much emphasis on “time spent” may cause a habit of “clock watching” to develop. If your child regularly exceeds the recommended times, and this is not due to poor work habits, you are advised to make an appointment to discuss the matter with the class teacher.

We include the following tips from the Irish National Teachers Organisation's (INTO) booklet "Your Child in the Primary School".

- Establish a homework routine

- The child should be sitting comfortably at a table
- Homework time should include oral as well as written work.
- If your child is working independently be available to help and show an interest in what is being done.
- Praise your child's efforts at every opportunity.
- If you feel yourself becoming impatient with your child, stop.
- If your child is persistently having problems with homework talk to the class teacher
- Encourage your child to keep their books and copies clean and tidy.

Sometimes at the discretion of the class teacher or the principal, children are given *homework off* as a treat or as acknowledgment of some special occasion.

If homework is a stressful experience between parent and child, something is wrong. This leads to poor learning and defeats the whole purpose. Should this happen on a regular basis, please contact the class teacher.

Special Educational Needs

There has been a major shift in policy in the DES in recent years with regard children with special educational needs (SEN). The emphasis now is on the integration of all children into mainstream classes in the primary school. The DES may provide extra staffing resources for pupils who have special educational needs. Entitlement to such resources is not automatic even where a child has already been diagnosed as having special needs. The application process for sanction of resources to address the special care and/or educational needs of children with SEN is a long and arduous one. It is essential therefore, for your child's sake that you inform us of his/her special needs when you are accepting an offer of a school place, so that together, we can initiate contact with the Special Education Needs Officer (SENO) in order to seek extra resources on your child's behalf. If your child has not actually been diagnosed as having special educational needs but you have cause for concern regarding any aspect of his/her development, it is in the best interest of the child that you inform the school when you are accepting an offer of a place.

Moreover, in relation to applications for the enrolment of children with special needs, it is open to the Board of Management to request a copy of the child's medical and/or psychological report or where such report is not available, to request that the child be assessed immediately. The purpose of the assessment report is to assist the school in establishing the educational needs of the child relevant to his/her special needs and to profile the support services required. Following receipt of the report, the Board will assess how the school could meet the needs specified in the report/s. Where the Board deems that further resources are required, it will, prior to enrolment, request the DES to provide the resources required to meet the needs of the child as outlined in the report/s.

If during their time at the school, parents have any worries about their child's progress they are asked to discuss them with the class teacher and the learning support teacher /resource who will assess the child and will make further recommendations towards

supporting the child in his/her difficulties. Learning support, both within class and withdrawal, is available for children who are experiencing significant difficulties in literacy and/or numeracy. The teachers, after consultation with the class teachers, LS/RT & parents will support individuals and groups in the area of literacy and numeracy. Particular emphasis is now placed on early intervention. Pupils will normally attend for a set period and their attendance will be reviewed at the end of this period. All aspects of learning support are dealt with in the school Learning Support/ Special Needs Policy.

Health and Safety

- Pupils who are ill should stay at home until they are fit enough to attend school.
- Parents/Guardians should inform the school of any allergies or medical conditions at the beginning of the school year.
- The school should be notified of infectious illnesses and the child kept at home until they have fully recovered.
- Medication will not be administered to pupils during school hours, however in exceptional circumstances consideration will be given to the administration of certain medications. The Board of Management needs to be informed. Please talk to the Principal about this.
- The Mid-Western Health Board routinely visits the school to carry out health checks.
- Fire drills are carried out termly.
- A full copy of the school's Health and Safety statement can be viewed at various locations around the school.
- If your child has a particular health condition such as asthma, diabetes, allergy etc. please put this in writing to the school and talk to the class teacher. As your child moves through the school you will need to update each teacher.
- If your child has an infectious illness please notify the school immediately.
- Head lice are a common problem in primary schools. Please check your child's head regularly and if you discover any "little visitors" don't be embarrassed to let the school know. When we are aware of an outbreak we inform parents immediately.
- Your child is sharing toilet facilities with other children. Please discuss the importance of personal hygiene, particularly flushing and hand washing, with her/him.

Accident Procedures

Accidents occur despite supervision. Minor accidents are treated at school. Slight cuts and grazes are normally treated by cleaning with cold water and applying a plaster to the wound. When a dressing has been put on a wound parents are requested to inspect the wound when the child comes home from school. In the event of a more serious accident/ child becoming ill, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents or the persons delegated to take responsibility for the pupil. Parents should ensure that the school has up to date contact numbers for home and any other mobile or contact numbers which would facilitate contact in an emergency.

Insurance Scheme.

At the start of the school year, pupils will be given an opportunity to join a personal insurance scheme. Full details of same will be available in September.

School Safety

Parents should park along the road at the front and side of the school. School buses drop and collect pupils daily from the front of the school. Parents are asked to walk younger children to their class line. We ask that pupils in 1st and 2nd classes be collected from the side gate each afternoon. We also ask parents to drive with great caution and to allow for the unexpected errors that children of school-age can make. Please pass on this information to any person who drops or collects children on your behalf.

Procedures for Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse

The Board of Management of Crusheen N.S follows the procedures as outlined in the *Children's First Guidelines (1999) & 2011* as issued by the Department of Health and the guidelines issued by the DES. These procedures are listed in our School Plan. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) appointed by the Board of Management is Ms. Therese O' Connell. The deputy DLP is Ms. Orla Brady. If any parent is concerned about a pupil in the school they should in the first instance contact the DLP.

Garda Vetting

Since 2009 the Teaching Council of Ireland arranges teacher vetting for newly qualified teachers. Newly appointed staff and any external educational visitors will be asked for copies of their vetting forms and these will be kept on file in the principal's office.

Visitors to the School

So as to ensure the minimum of interruption to class work, the school office should always be the first 'port of call' for all visitors. If the office is closed, please call to the principal's classroom.

The Curriculum

The current school curriculum was introduced in National Schools in September 1999. There are 6 curriculum areas that are further divided into 11 subjects. These are

- **Language:** Gaeilge & English
- **Mathematics**
- **Social, Environmental and Scientific Education:** History, Geography, Science
- **Arts Education:** Music, Visual Arts, Drama
- **Physical Education**
- **Social, Personal and Health Education**

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a DVD entitled *The What, Why and How of Children's Learning in Primary School*. The DVD provides parents with insights into children's experiences with the Primary School Curriculum. The DVD shows how parents can support their child's learning at home

before going to school, during primary school, and in getting ready for post-primary school. The DVD is available to view in 5 different languages. This can be viewed as an online broadband video on www.ncca.ie

In Crusheen N.S efforts are made to ensure children taste success regularly. There is a focus on quality learning for all. High standards are achieved in literacy and numeracy. Emphasis is placed on identifying children with learning difficulties early and putting an effective intervention programme in place, in consultation with parents. As a school, we are now being asked to increase time devoted to literary & numeracy. Approaches include integrating literacy and numeracy with other curriculum areas.

Information Technology

Each classroom is equipped with an Interactive Whiteboard, visualiser, laptop with broadband access. Furthermore, all classrooms are equipped with computers to enhance the children's learning and the quality of the teaching. We also have two Ipads which are shared among the classes.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and is taught in this context. The curriculum is spiral in nature (i.e. similar content is revisited at different stages throughout the child's time at school) and is delivered at an age appropriate level. Core RSE education is covered in the strand units Taking Care of my Body and Growing and Changing and Safety and Protection. 4th class girls are facilitated in the school with a 'Growing & Changing' talk each April. Outside professional help is sought for sixth classe in the final term. It is the primary responsibility of parents to educate their children with regard to relationships and sexuality. Any questions, which arise during classroom teaching and/or delivery of a programme by an outside professional and which are outside of the content objectives, are referred to parents.

Exemption from the Study of Irish

Exemption from the study of the Irish language is granted in line with DES policy (Circular 12/96). Exemptions are not granted to pupils who do not speak English as a first language unless they come to live in Ireland after their 11th birthday and/or present with learning difficulties. Pupils who have been granted an exemption remain in the class during the Irish lesson so that they may have an opportunity to gain knowledge of spoken Irish and to participate in the learning activities.

Pupil Assessment

Informal observation by class teachers on an ongoing basis is the chief method of monitoring pupil progress at Crusheen NS. We also use:

- Incidental Class Tests
- Diagnostic Tests (Middle Infant Screening Test- Senior Infants)
- Standardised Tests in English(Micra T) and Mathematics(Sigma T) for First to Sixth Classes

- In cases where a more detailed assessment is required, with parental permission, the National Educational Psychological Service and other relevant services are consulted.

Access to Records

Parents are entitled to an account of their child's progress in school. A written school report is issued at the end of the school year. The report covers curricular areas, behaviour, attendance, personal and social development as well as other pertinent areas deemed relevant by teachers. First to sixth classes participate in a National Standardised Assessment (English and Maths) every year. Parents are informed by the class teacher of results of all tests at the annual Parent/Teacher meetings. Parents who wish to access their child's school records must do so in writing to Ms. O'Connell (Principal). The Principal will then collate all available records and an appointment time will be confirmed with the parents. Records provided include Attendance, Standardised Tests results, Diagnostic tests results (if applicable), Discipline, Medical/ Psychological (if applicable) and End of Year Reports. All records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988) and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act (2003).

Withdrawal from Class

Children are withdrawn from class for various reasons such as:

- Attending support classes.
- Assisting with out of class learning tasks such as art projects, decoration of corridors, school hall etc.
- Partaking in drama, music, art, workshops etc.
- Preparing for school events.
- Working on a particular project or topic with their class teacher or a support teacher.
- Taking a test for which a child was absent.

Parental permission is sought in advance where the withdrawal is regular and sustained e.g. for learning support. We do not seek written permission for occasional withdrawal. However, if you do not want your child withdrawn from class in order to participate in alternative learning activities please inform the principal. Such a request would not apply to withdrawal by way of sanction for misbehaviour.

Money Collection

If money is to be sent to the school for whatever purpose please put it in an envelope with the child's name, class and indication of what the payment is for on the front of the envelope. We request that if paying by cash you send in the exact amount. Cheques are to be made payable to 'Crusheen N.S'.

School Transport

The conditions for the 'Primary School Transport Scheme' are outlined by the DES (see www.education.ie) and the bus service is run by Bus Eireann. Parents can apply directly on www.buseireann.ie or by post to :
 Bus Eireann School Transport Office
 Roxboro Rd

Limerick
Phone – 061 217484

School Book Rental

The school has currently a school book rental programme in operation.

School Uniforms

All children are required to attend school in their full Crusheen N.S uniform. This includes the full school P.E uniform when required to do so. Please view policy on the website.

School uniforms can be ordered and purchased from Make Your Mark, 45 Parnell Street Car Park, Ennis. Phone number: (065) 6891441

Non crested items of uniform such as shirts, trousers, pinafores, tracksuit bottoms, polo shirts can be purchased elsewhere.

School Bags

We recommend that your child has a strong decent size school bag that will hold their lunch and materials. The "novelty" bag while desirable may not always be practical. Children should have a bag that they can carry comfortably on their backs. We are conscious of minimising the weight of children's bags. This concern applies particularly to pupils in the more senior classes. Pupils may leave books not needed for homework at their places in school, but the school cannot guarantee the safety of books left overnight in this manner. The care of all materials, personal and those belonging to the school and others is stressed and encouraged on an ongoing basis.

Lost Property

There is a lost property box in the school staff room, please check on a regular basis. All personal belongings, e.g. coats, jumpers, bags, lunch boxes etc, should be clearly marked with your child's name. Valuable personal property should NOT be brought to school.

Assembly

Assembly takes place once a fortnight. The school gathering is an opportunity for school announcements, positive reinforcements (in the form of certificates) and class performances (poems, songs, music, story-telling, class news etc.).

Liturgical Celebrations

The school is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Killaloe and the major occasions and feasts of the Catholic Church year are observed, as are prayer times at the start and end of the school day. Josephine Kearney, School Chaplin visits on a regular basis. The pupils receive the Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion when they are in second class and Confirmation in sixth class. Parents are asked to keep up to date with their child's religion programme (*Alive O and Grow In Love*) and to help with assigned religion homework. On certain occasions during the school year, prayer services or class/school Masses will be organised.

We enrol pupils of other faiths or no faith in the school and respect their beliefs and practices. Parents are welcome to view the Catholic religion programme taught: at its core is *'Love God and love your neighbour'*. If you wish that your child not participate in any of the Catholic or Christian rituals you should discuss this with the school principal at the earliest possible date. Every effort will be made to respect your wishes but it will not always be possible to separate your child during these events.

Charitable Collections

Collections for charity are central to our school ethos and are facilitated through our SPHE and RE Programmes. Sacramental classes are encouraged to donate money towards a charity of their choice. The school community also participates in Christmas collections, such as the shoebox appeal, collections for Trocaire etc.

Christmas Concert/Carol Service

At Christmas time the school holds Christmas concerts/Carol services. Each class presents a play and the school children give lively renditions of many songs and tunes. The Carol Services are held in the local church where the Christmas story is told.

Healthy Lunches

Our school supports a Healthy Eating Policy. Please do not give your child sweets, chocolate, fizzy drinks or crisps for lunch. Chewing gum is not permitted. We would like your support in ensuring that your child has a healthy lunch which can include one food from each of the food groups:

- one piece of fruit/vegetable
- milk/yoghurt
- bread/roll/pitta bread/wrap
- meat/poultry/cheese.

A strong lunch box (not a zipped lunch bag) that will fit into a school bag and can be opened easily, is recommended as food lying in school bags can be squashed. It is also more hygienic and less messy if children eat food directly from the box. Please give your child lunch and drink containers that they can open themselves and use without spilling. Some of the novelty containers while attractive looking are not very practical. Forks, knives, cocktail sticks or any other sharp implements should not be included in your child's lunchbox. One treat on Friday is permitted. There are children in the school with a severe nut allergy; therefore we ask that children do not bring any foods containing nut or nut extract. In order to cultivate good habits in our pupils, and to reduce disposal costs, children bring home food waste and leftovers in their lunchboxes. This policy is part of our Green Schools Initiative and also allows parents to be aware of how much a child is actually eating.

Green Schools

Crusheen NS is a member of the Green Schools Programme run by An Taisce and Clare County Council. The Green Schools programme is a European project to bring environmental thinking into the day-to-day running of the schools.

Previously, the school has been awarded Green Flags for its work in the areas of Litter and Waste Management, Energy, Water, Travel and Biodiversity.

Mobile phones / Electronic Games

It is recognised that mobile phones can be intrusive and distracting in situations and particularly in schools. Therefore, mobile phones and other personal electronic devices are not permitted in school.

Jewellery/Make-up

Wearing jewellery poses a safety risk at school because of the active nature of the school day. It is therefore necessary for us to request that children do not wear earrings (other than studs), necklaces, bracelets and rings in school. Watches are acceptable but we would ask that they be removed during PE classes. Wearing Make-up is not allowed.

Toys

We do not encourage children to bring toys to school. On occasions class teachers may allow children to bring in a toy for a special occasion/activity.

Birthdays / Occasions

We have learned from experience that it is not good practice for invitations to be given out on the school premises. It can be a cause of great upset, especially for younger children. We ask parents/guardians that party invitations should **not** be given out within the school grounds.

Write a Book

The pupils are always developing their creative writing skills and are encouraged to participate in the Clare Education Centre, Write a Book Project. This project enables students to write their own stories by taking inspiration from the world around them. It provides enjoyment and a great sense of pride.

Book Week

During the week the pupils partake in a variety of book related activities which seek to promote a love of books and literature. Activities promoted include: visit from storytellers, visits to libraries, write-a-book/poem, making story bags, Book Fair and a Book Character Parade.

Facilities / Activities

Within the school grounds we have a basketball court and 3 other hard court areas in which the children can play games. We are very fortunate to have easy access to Crusheen GAA grounds across the road from the school. We hold some of our PE classes and sports day there. The local community centre is also utilised when the weather is unsuitable for outside play.

Physical Education and Sport

Physical Education and Sport are regarded as very important areas of the curriculum in the school. Each class has at least one hour of Physical Education per week. It is the

policy of the school to promote all sports. We also occasionally bring in outside experts on various sports to provide coaching courses. The school works in conjunction with the local GAA club in developing the children's hurling, camogie and football skills. Weekly swimming lessons are provided for pupils from first to sixth class each year over an eight week period.

Sports Day (Sport for All)

An Annual Sports Day is held each June at the school and at the local GAA pitch. Parents are invited to attend. The emphasis for all the sports day is on fun and participation. We are very grateful to the parents for their support and involvement in the organisation of this day in the final term.

Credit Union

Pupils can save with St. Francis' Credit Union on a weekly basis. Application forms are distributed at the beginning of the school year by members of the Credit Union who kindly oversee the collection of monies each week.

Educational Tours

Taking into account the age and interest of the children and the curriculum being covered, School Tours may be arranged by class teachers to enhance the educational experience of the children. Parents are notified of the following:

- Itinerary and timetable
- Cost
- Special clothing necessary
- Lunch

External Educational Visitors

Artists, writers, musicians, storytellers etc. are frequently invited to work in school with our pupils and teachers.

Parting Thoughts

We value the partnership approach to Education and welcome your child and family to Crusheen NS. If you have worries or concerns, ideas or recommendations, feel free to contact the class teacher or any member of staff.

Please keep the school booklet in a safe place for future reference. It may well answer questions in the future.

“Mol an óige, agus tiocfaidh sí”

(Encourage the young to inspire their full development)