

Scoil Naomh Cholmcille



Dominus illuminatio mea

Tullydonnell
Togher
Drogheda
Co. Louth

Tel : 041 6852301

Email: st.colmcilles1@gmail.com
www.scoilnaomhcholmcille.ie

Dear Parents/Guardians,

A very warm welcome to Scoil Naomh Cholmcille. We hope that your child will be very happy here. Positivity is central to our ethos and practice. Highly skilled and dedicated staff, work very hard as a team to make the school a happy and positive environment where children of all abilities can succeed and reach their full potential. We encourage the children to develop a love of learning through the enjoyment of a wide range of enriching learning experiences within a stimulating environment. We also work towards helping children to develop social skills that will enable them to form good relationships in an atmosphere of mutual respect so that they are all valued and can contribute towards the life of the school.

We believe that education is a joint venture in which staff and parents work in partnership to provide the best atmosphere for each individual child to grow and learn.

We are a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archdiocese of Armagh and the ethos of the school evidently reflects this. We recognise and value every individual as special and unique, caring for one another, fostering love, trust and respect. Central to our aims, is to ensure that we work in a spirit of partnership with you, developing our respective roles and responsibilities - to teach children about respect, mutual understanding, and caring for one another. We do this most successfully when we ensure that the principles of equality, justice and unconditional love underpin our work together.

Dominus illuminatio Mea reflects our Catholic ethos and our understanding that the Lord is our light and our inspiration. Teaching and learning are constantly being evaluated in our school with a view to improvement. We acknowledge the value in education and the importance of promoting a learning environment for all.

At Scoil Naomh Cholmcille it is our objective to provide every opportunity for your child to develop and reach his/ her potential and through the vast curriculum and subjects on offer will be given their chance to shine. We look forward to teaching your child as we learn together.

Anne- Marie Ford (Principal)

Mission Statement

We believe that Scoil Naomh Cholmcille exists to be a vibrant, educational, positive, and welcoming community, based on the gospel values of love, truth and justice. We place great emphasis on educating the whole child where his/her emotional, academic, spiritual and physical development is nurtured. We are a Catholic School under the patronage of the Archdiocese of Armagh. We provide foundations in the Catholic Faith and promote the development of confidence, respect and self-awareness within a caring and active school community. We endeavour to acknowledge the needs of everyone and to encourage each person to achieve their full potential in a safe and happy environment. The staff at Scoil Naomh Cholmcille aim to create learning experiences which are engaging and inspiring, all the while allowing for pupils' individual learning styles. We embrace diversity and strive for inclusivity of all. We recognise the value in reflective practice and the need for a regular evaluative process. We aim to develop and maintain strong links with our parents and the wider community. Our ultimate goal is to provide happy memories of school for pupils, staff, parents and all who pass through it!

Vision

Our vision at Scoil Naomh Cholmcille is one that promotes the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual development of its pupils with an emphasis on its Catholic ethos. We aim to create an excitement for teaching and learning within a positive environment. Scoil Naomh Cholmcille acknowledges the importance of developing a sense of ownership, belonging and pride throughout the whole school community through assemblies, whole school projects (Green Flag, musicals, competitions and sports.) We promote and encourage opportunities for staff development. We wish to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment in which to teach and learn.

Enrolments

The parents of those children, who will have reached the age of 4 by September 30th, will be invited to the school in the second term to register their children. Birth Certificates will be required.

Enrolments for the Early Intervention Class for Children with ASD

Enrolments will be accepted throughout the year providing places are available.

School Hours

School begins officially at 9.05 am, and finishes at 2.45 pm. It would be appreciated if all the children could be in school by 9.00 am. It should be pointed out that our School Insurance does not cover any child on the premises before or after the official opening/ closing times.

Friday Closing

At this moment in time, Friday closings are different to the rest of the week. The reason for this change is bus-related.

School begins at **9.00am** on Fridays. Infants go home at **1.35pm** with the remainder of the school pupils finishing at **2.35pm**.

Board of Management

Our school board is made up of 8 people: 2 parents' representatives, 2 community representatives, 2 patron's nominees, a teachers' representative and the Principal.

Parents' Association

As a parent you are an automatic member of our Parents' Association. Your ideas and support will be crucial in helping to make the parents' association a continuing success. There are regular meetings, talks, events and fund raisers organised by them during the year. These contribute greatly to the social life of our school and the financing of special projects to assist your child's education. They are also a great means of getting to know new people while at the same time making a real contribution.

School Uniform

To increase pride in our school and reduce competition we expect all our students to wear their **complete** uniform (including tie) and correct footwear **everyday**. The school tracksuit and runners are only to be worn on PE days or when specifically requested by your child's teacher.

Uniform Details: (All available in Best Wear, Shop St Drogheda)

Navy Jumper/cardigan (with crest) and trousers

Navy Jumper/cardigan (with crest) and pinafore/skirt

White Shirt

School Tie

Shoes Black, brown or navy (trainers to worn on PE day only)

Uniform Hints: Velcro is easier than laces for the junior pupils.

Elasticated waistbands are easier for small children to manage than belts or buttons.

Label items especially jumpers during the warm weather as children often take their jumper off during summer break times.

Please ensure that you label all items of clothing and all belongings.

School Transport

The School Transport system is run by Bus Éireann and our company is JF Travel.

If you have any queries in relation to the School Bus please contact Francis Byrne or Jim Dunne. Tel No: 087 2550419

School-Holidays/Closures

It is the practice of this school to always give prior notice of closures. This will be in the form of a written note . Parents of Infants are advised to search their child's schoolbag on a regular basis to ensure notices are received. Infants will be encouraged to put notes in lunch boxes while all other classes bring home notes in homework journals. Parents should ask their children, from time to time, if they have any notices to hand up.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

Parent – Teacher meetings take place in the first term. This is an appropriate time to meet with parents as it gives children sufficient time to settle back into school and yet early enough in the academic year for intervention where required.

School Books

School Books are organised and ordered through the school. A rental scheme is in operation, whereby the school owns the books and the children pay a charge to rent the books for a year. The books are handed back at the end of the school year.

If any parent finds difficulty in respect of payment for books, do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or principal who will endeavour to come to an arrangement acceptable to both parties.

Curriculum Contribution

The curriculum is child centred and active. This requires a high expenditure on materials and equipment for which the capitation grant falls well short. There is therefore an annual charge for Art materials, Photocopying and IT consumables in order to provide an interactive and stimulating environment for your child. The book rental scheme and curriculum contribution amounts are revised on an annual basis.

School Discipline

It is widely accepted that to facilitate the harmonious organisation and running of any group, discipline and control are essential. Applying this belief to the school situation, certain rules and regulations will be necessary to ensure a code of conduct is enforced throughout the school. These rules will be kept to a minimum, but children will be expected to adhere to them. Children will be familiarised with rules and with the consequences, which will ensue if they are broken.

The class teacher is responsible for ensuring that the rules are obeyed. He/She will also deal with any day-to-day problems, which may arise in the classroom or yard. A system of control will be enforced to deal with any serious breach of rules. Parents will be kept in touch of the situation through discussion with the class teacher, and, should it be warranted, by letter.

School Policies

The School Policies are available to view or download from the school website: www.scoilnaomhcholmcille.ie

School-Absences

Under current legislation, schools are required to inform the National Educational Welfare Board of any child who reaches 20 days absence in any school year. All absences must be recorded along with the reason for same. Henceforth, the school will require a **written explanation** (absence notes provided at the back of school journal) as to why a child was absent. **The Education Welfare Act of 2002 makes clear that schools cannot approve of pupils being withdrawn from school for holidays and for non- medical absences during the school year. Pupils who are constantly late must be reported to the NEWB (National Educational Welfare Board.)** When arranging holidays, parents should make every effort to ensure no disruption of the school year. Taking children on holidays during the academic year is proven to be harmful to a child's education.

Mobile Phones For the protection of all, mobile phone are **NOT** permitted in school.

The School Curriculum

The modern school curriculum consists of 6 curriculum areas and these are further divided into 11 subjects.

Language: Gaeilge and English

Mathematics: Mathematics

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE): History, Geography and Science

Arts Education: Music, Visual Arts and Drama

Physical Education (PE): Physical Education

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE): Social, Personal and Health Education

The curriculum aims to ensure that all children are provided with learning opportunities that recognise and celebrate their uniqueness, foster their full potential and prepare them to meet the challenge of the 21st century. The focus is on the child as learner.

We aim to develop key skills in communication, problem solving, critical thinking, investigation and interaction. Functional literacy, numeracy and the ability to articulate are stressed in our school and regular testing and assessment is the norm.

Home-Work

The school has a Homework Policy which states that: A child will not get homework which is beyond their ability. The work given on any particular night can be completed within a period of one hour by the older children and in much less time by the younger children. No homework is given at the weekends or when going on extended break. No homework on special occasions or when the teacher wishes to give a special treat. Homework journals are used and should be signed by either parent/guardian when the work has been checked. In the event of a child coming to school without completed homework, a note will be required. It should be noted that no excuse will be accepted without an accompanying note. If a child is having extreme difficulty with homework, it should be brought to the attention of the teacher, who will endeavour to resolve the matter.

The following are general guidelines only.

Junior & Senior Infants 10- 20 mins

First & Second Class 20-30 mins

Third & Fourth Class 30-60 mins

Fifth & Sixth Class 60-90 mins

Bed-Time

You will appreciate how important it is that your child is able to cope in school and concentrate on schoolwork. Our experience shows that late to bed and too much television or computer games has an adverse effect on the child, and they will suffer as a result. We ask you to ensure that your child goes to bed at a reasonable hour, and that some control over television/computer time is exercised.

Neatness & Tidiness

Children are encouraged and requested to be neat and tidy in their presentation both of themselves and their schoolwork. Good habits, attained from an early age will stay with them on their journey through life. Bad habits are much harder to shake-off. Schools are first and foremost places of learning. Children need to concentrate, and whatever reduces distractions is to be recommended. The following will help pupils focus on the job in hand and minimise work disruption and in general, cause less hassle for everyone:

- Ensure books, folders; pencil-cases etc. are packed and ready for school.
- Keep a spare pencil to hand. It would help to have pencils sharpened at home and ready for use.
- Encourage children to do homework in a neat fashion, working in the one area to reduce the chances of books being mislaid.
- Discourage the use of rubbers except when absolutely necessary.

- Minimum amount of jewellery (watch, studs and one ring) to discourage fidgeting.
- Use folders to retain sheets. If necessary, label plastics to help pupils identify the relevant sections.

Healthy Lunches Programme

We encourage our students to bring a healthy lunch with them to school i.e. juice/milk sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, cheese, etc. Our students eat their lunch prior to going to the yard at each break. Please do not give too much. We promote re-usable lunch boxes and bottles as part of our Green Schools Programme.

Fizzy drinks, gum, high salt/sugar snacks are discouraged.

Access to Our School (Visitors)

Access to our school after 9.10 is through Reception only and you must wait and make contact with a member of staff. This avoids interruption of your child's class. In the interest of your child's safety and security we ask you never try to enter the school by asking a pupil to open one of the exit doors for you. They are strictly forbidden to do so and asking them only compromises everyone's safety and security.

Children must be collected by an adult and will not be released into the care of a juvenile. Any change in who collects your child must be communicated to the school.

Lining up

All classes line up at their class marker in the yard when the morning bell rings. Children are asked to line up as they arrive and not to push their way in among those waiting. **Lining up is encouraged in the interest of safety and discipline.**

Punctuality and Attendance

Junior Infants and Senior Infants: 9.05am to 1.45pm

1st Class to 6th Class: 9.05am to 2.45pm

Morning Break at 11.00

Lunch Break at 12.30

Our children are expected to be punctual and to attend school every day. Good regular attendance is crucial to your child's progress.

You should **not** leave your child early to school as they remain your responsibility until the school bell rings. Supervision will be provided on the yard from 8.55am

We ask that you are on time in collecting your child daily. An infants' class is a busy, interactive and hands on environment and your child's teacher has to tidy today's lessons and prepare for tomorrows. There is no facility or staff to babysit children not collected on time.

Emergency Closures

The safety of your child is paramount at all times so should a situation occur that requires the closure of our school e.g. electricity, heating, water etc. then if known in advance a note will issue. If it is an emergency then notice will be provided at the gate so please do not leave your child if you are not satisfied that school is open. We also use the **Text- a - Parent** facility for keeping parents updated.