



Brannockstown Community National School
Brannockstown, Co. Kildare, W91 NY67.
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Friday, August 23rd, 2019

Welcome to the new school year at Brannockstown CNS!

Dear Parents,

I hope this finds you very well and you had a lovely summer break. Special welcome to new parents of Brannockstown CNS. This letter is to update you on some developments and improvements at our school over the summer holiday as we prepare for a wonderful new school year at Brannockstown Community National School. On behalf of all our school staff, I wish you and your children a wonderful new year at our school and every joy and happiness as we continue our learning journey together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sarah FitzPatrick, Principal

New teaching staff: We had a significant level of interest in the teaching positions advertised for our school in June. Following a full-day of interviews, two teachers were appointed:

- Múinteoir Dawn (Heffernan): Room 2 (Junior Room)
- Múinteoir Anne Marie (Roche): Room 3 (Middle classes Room)

I am delighted to welcome Múinteoir Dawn back to our school and to welcome our new teacher, Múinteoir Anne Marie. Both teachers bring a wealth of education experience and expertise to our school as well as a deep love of learning and commitment to nurturing and supporting children.

In a separate competition earlier in June, Múinteoir Dawn was appointed Assistant Principal of Brannockstown CNS. On behalf of us all, I wish to congratulate Dawn and wish her well in her new management role.

A fourth teacher, Múinteoir Clair Farley, will join our team on alternate Wednesdays for a full-day to support children in all classes. Clair is based at Scoil Mhuire, Ballymore Eustace. More information about our staff is available on our website.

New school secretary: We are currently finalising arrangements for the appointment of our new school secretary, following advertisement by the KWETB in recent weeks. Again, there was significant interest in the position. Our school secretary will initially work from Room 4 (upstairs in the new building) on:

- Tuesdays: 8:45am-1:45pm
- Thursdays: 10am-3pm

Pending completion of the appointment process, we expect the successful candidate to begin work on Tuesday, October 10th and I will circulate an update with contact information, etc. to parents.

New children: At the time of writing, 21 children are enrolled in our school for the 2019/2020 school year. We currently have seven children enrolled in each of Rooms 1, 2 and 3. At Brannockstown CNS, our doors are always open to new families looking for a school like ours. Thank you to parents for continuing to promote our school and encouraging families who may be interested, to get in touch with us. For now, I know that our 21 children will have a wonderful year ahead and will benefit greatly from the personalised care and education they will have at our school.

New Junior Infants: Our new Junior Infant children follow a different, transition schedule until Friday, 13th September (as per the school calendar):

Friday August 30 th	8:50 to 11:00 (Snack only)
Monday 2 nd to 13 th September	8:50 to 12:00 (Snack and lunch)
Monday 16 th September onwards (normal schedule)	8:50 to 1:30 (Snack and lunch)



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Children will be very excited and perhaps a little apprehensive on their first day and this is to be expected. We invite parents to come in to the Junior Infant Classroom with children on the first day of school and for up to two weeks thereafter (to Friday, September 13th). We ask if you can work toward saying goodbye to your son/daughter in the school yard by mid-September (Monday 16th). This is to help children to develop their independence and especially their confidence and competence entering their school and feeling that this is their school community. Early next week, our seven Junior Infant children will receive a little surprise by post – a Welcome card from Múinteoir Dawn!

New school set-down area: For children travelling to school by car, our drop-off and collection point is the new school set-down area in Grangemore Manor. The set-down area provides access to the school via a gate to the new school building. We ask parents to drive slowly and to be vigilant for children who are alighting from cars in the set-down area. During school drop-off and collection times: 8:50am, 1:30pm and 2:30pm, we ask parents not to use the set-down for parking.

The set-down area became a condition of planning permission for Grangemore Manor, arising from concerns for children's safety on the busy road (R413) in front of the original school. For this reason, the double-gate in front of the original school will remain closed. This will enable us to use the front yard as a space for children, e.g., to develop our new raised beds, etc. The pedestrian gate in front of the original school will continue to provide pedestrian access to the school.

New supervision schedule: When school is in session, we welcome children from 8:40am. A member of the teaching staff will be on yard duty from 8:40am until school begins at 8:50am. We will also provide supervision duty for 10 minutes after school to see children safely to cars at 1:30pm and 2:30pm.

New after-school care and preschool: I am delighted to confirm that Busy Fingers Creche (Corbally, Newbridge) will provide an Afterschool Care /Homework Club on-site at our school from January 2020. We had planned for this to be available from the start of the year, however Tusla's new registration process for school-age services has incurred significant delays since it was introduced in May 2019 and we expect the registration process for '*Busy Fingers @Brannockstown CNS*' to take several more weeks. In the meantime, if you have a requirement for Afterschool Care/Homework Club for your child up to 4:30pm, during the month of September, please email me your dates and I will respond with details of how we may be able to provide this service in the interim. Busy Fingers Creche has also begun the process of planning pre-school provision (ECCE) at our school. This will be available from September 2020.

New Board of Management and Parents Association: When convened this Autumn, the new Board for the KWETB (our patron) will make their nomination to the Board of Management of Brannockstown CNS and then we can begin to seek nominees to our school's new Board of Management. Along with the nominee of the KWETB and the principal, our Board will include two parent nominees, two community representatives and one teacher representative. Our school's board will provide direction and oversight while ensuring the rights of all members of the school community are upheld and the school is accountable for and supported in its work. This Autumn, we will also begin the process of inviting parents to discuss the role you wish to have in our school (Parents' Association) and the type of committee/structure and processes needed and I look forward to working with you in this regard.

New crested jumpers and sweatshirts: Lastly, we are very excited to see children wear their Brannockstown CNS uniform next Friday with the crest designed by our children last year! For parents who left jumpers and sweatshirts with me before the summer with pre-payment, these crested items are available for collection from my classroom (Room 1) during the following times next week:

- Monday 26th, and Tuesday 27th, 11am to 1pm
- Wednesday 28th and Thursday 29th, 12:30 to 2pm
- Friday 30th, 8:40 – 3pm