

Gorey Central School



Information Booklet

September 2017

**Gorey Central School,
Charlotte Row,
Gorey,
Co. Wexford.
Y25 XH11
(053) 9421745**

Web: www.goreycentral.com

E-mail: goreycentralschool@gmail.com

Principal: Mrs. Horan

Chairperson, B.O.M.: Canon MJJ Hayden

ETHOS

Gorey Central School is a co- educational school under Church of Ireland management. It seeks to provide a climate in which all pupils find encouragement to develop spiritual and moral values, along with personal and social skills and the highest standard of excellence of which they are capable in all aspects of their school activities. The school's aim is to educate its pupils in accordance with the Christian principles of love and respect for God and for other people.

The School's patron is the Church of Ireland Bishop of Ferns. The school's chaplain is the rector of Gorey, Canon Mark Hayden. He is assisted by Archdeacon Gray, rector of Ardamine Group.

Welcome

We are very happy to welcome your child to our school and we hope that his/her stay with us will be happy, successful and beneficial.

The staff will endeavour to help your child reach his/her full potential, to develop his/her self-confidence and to prepare him/her to avail of further education appropriate to him/her. This we hope will be done in a friendly, safe and happy environment.

Meet & Greet:

This year on **Tuesday 27th June** there will be a "Meet & Greet" afternoon from 1.30pm – 2.30pm where all incoming Junior Infants and their parents may come to Gorey Central School to meet their class teacher and see their new classroom.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Family Contributions for the year 2017-2018 are as follows:

1 child	€100.00
2 children	€125.00
3 children or more	€150.00

The above amounts go towards the running costs of the school.

This money can be paid over the three terms. Alternatively if you wish to pay by Direct Debit through your bank account, monthly or yearly this can be arranged.

ART & PHOTOCOPYING/Pupil Insurance: €40.00 per child –which should be given to the class teacher in a named and sealed envelope on the first day of term in the new school year.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Gorey Central School uniform is available in Funges, Main Street, Gorey and in Leddy's Uniforms over Sally West. The uniform consists of a green track suit with school crest and a white polo shirt with collar. Only shoes or runners with laces or Velcro strips are permitted.

Name Tapes:

All items of clothing must be clearly named. Indelible marker can be used. All lunch boxes to be named. Valuable time can be lost sorting out unnamed articles.

LUNCHES

The children bring packed lunches to school.

They need balanced, healthy lunches each day. (Look out for the overall sugar and fat levels!). They need to be able to open, close and/or peel the lunch by themselves. (Please choose suitable containers and practise at home). They need to provide their own spoon or fork.

The children are asked not to share their lunches, and to take uneaten lunch home with them. (so that parents are kept informed of their child's eating). They also take all food packaging home with them each day.

Chewing gum, sweets, fizzy drinks, high-sugar drinks, crisps and popcorn are not allowed. One small treat is allowed on **Fridays only**, please choose one of the following: scone, plain bun/cake, brack, plain biscuits or one small bar.

A daily carton of milk is available at a price which is subsidized. You will receive information about this at the beginning of the year. Do not send drinks in any glass containers to school.

A complete ban on nuts, nut extracts/ingredients is requested of all the pupils and staff attending Gorey Central School. We ask you to check the list of ingredients on products carefully as it is not always obvious whether nuts/nut traces are included.

There are two breaks for food. The children eat their lunch in the classroom.

Teachers cannot **make** children eat all their lunch. We can just encourage them to do so.

On rainy days the children remain in the classroom for the duration of the lunch break. Various games and toys are provided for their use. Books are available from the classroom library. We do not encourage toys or games to be brought into school as they often lead to disagreements and breakages, especially at Junior level. The school or staff will not be responsible for any items brought in. Money, other than for bills, is also strongly discouraged.

JUNIOR INFANTS TIMETABLE, ROUTINE AND REQUIREMENTS

Time of arrival at school:

Children should not arrive in school prior to the time when “Duty of Care” starts. This “Duty of Care” or Supervision begins 20 minutes prior to the commencement of formal instruction at 9.00 a.m. Therefore “Time of Arrival” is between 8.40 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. Arriving to school on time is very important. The time before formal instruction is a time when children get to mix with peers, build peer relationships, chat to teacher and get organised for their day ahead.

If children arrive before this time, any injury, loss or damage sustained by the child shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian and not of the Board of Management. Children should be collected promptly when school finishes at 1.30pm for Junior & Senior Infants and 2.30 p.m for the rest of the school.

School starts: Friday 1st September 2017.

9.00am	Classes begin
1.30pm	Junior Infants go home. It is not possible for Junior Infants to be kept past this time.

An ‘After School’ Service is offered by Giant Steps in the Old School adjacent to our school. Please contact the proprietor, Mrs. Sheila Kinsella on 087-7479383 if interested.

*** For the first 2 weeks of September, your child will finish at 12 noon instead of the normal time of 1.30p.m. (For the school year 2017/2018 this applies from Friday 1st September to Friday 15th September).**

Pencils, rubbers, sharpeners and coloured pencils get lost all the time in the infant classroom. Hunting for them, or borrowing them from others, wastes a lot of time and often prevents a child from completing (or even starting!) his work. ***Please ensure that everything in your child’s pencil case is named and that the pencils are sharpened and ready for use every day.***

Following this, could you please check that your child has a supply of pencils, rubbers etc. on a regular basis.

Homework:

There is no formal homework for Junior Infants until after October. When homework does start your child will have a homework folder with the following:

1. Library book. In Junior Infants your child will bring home a library book. These are changed twice weekly. It is important to read this book to your child and sign the reading record daily. These books contain high frequency words and CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant words, for example bed, cat) which your child will quickly learn to blend or recognise.
2. Maths or English Workbook. The page to be completed for homework will be written inside the front cover.
3. Word wall/Sound wall. Sounds to be practised daily. Words to be blended.

Homework in Junior Infants should be completed in 10/15 minutes. Please see teacher if you are unsure how to help your child with their homework.

Homework provides an important link between home and school and reinforces what the pupil has learned during the day. It is important that parents take an interest in their children’s homework. By helping the child with homework and examining copybooks and spelling books, parents can familiarize themselves with the work that is being done in the classroom and assess their child’s progress. However, in senior

classes independence is encouraged. Neatness in handwriting and good presentation of work cannot be over emphasized. Parents are asked to sign the Homework Journal on a daily basis.

Continuous problems with homework or spending too much time at it might indicate a problem and parents are encouraged to contact the school in such cases.

Please check your child's school bag on a regular **daily** basis for neatness, notes and newsletters.

There is no homework at weekends for any class.

Jolly Phonics:

Children are taught to read using the Jolly Phonics programme. This is a systematic phonics programme .

The aim of Jolly Phonics is to teach children to read and write through an early systematic phonics programme. This means that the children are taught the main 42 sounds of English, not just the alphabet sounds. With this knowledge they are taken through stages of blending sounds to form words and then to reading.

At the same time they are taught to write by identifying the sounds in words and relating the letters to those sounds.

Birthday Invitations:

Under general anti-bullying guidelines we request that all invitations to pupils for birthday parties are delivered outside of school. Unintentionally, problems arise, when all pupils in a class are not invited. We thank you for your understanding in this.

A class list will be given to parents in September so parents can text/phone each other.

Birthday cakes or treats are also not allowed as we operate a healthy eating policy.

Buses:

Bus transport is available if you live 3.2km or more from the school. We have different routes. If you are not on any of these routes you may still be entitled to travel on them and there may even be a grant available towards getting to the nearest route.

It is the parent's responsibility to register their child, initially, for transport. If you did not register please contact Bus Éireann, School Transport Section, in Waterford as soon as possible on 051-873401 or www.buseireann.ie

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL CLASSES

Attendance & Punctuality:

New rules for attendance have been introduced by the Dept. of Education & Skills from this September onwards.

- a) School teaching time starts at 9am sharp. Roll will be called at 9.20am in all classrooms.
- b) If a child is not in school by 9.20am they will be marked absent.
- c) If they arrive in after this time they will be entered on the roll as a late arrival and the time of arrival will also be noted. This is a Dept. of Education & Skills requirement.
- d) If a pupil leaves early (e.g. for an appointment, sick etc.) parents are required to sign the pupil out and the leaving time will be noted on the attendance roll by the teacher.

Education is important. Please arrange all doctor, dental etc. appointments outside of school hours. Be proud of a good attendance and punctuality record.

If a pupil is absent parents should always write to the teacher explaining the reason for a child's absence.

Please remember to write a note even if you have spoken to a teacher/phoned in about the absence. The reason for your child's absence will be filed. (Parents can also email the note to goreycentralschool@gmail.com and include the child's full name and class)

Parents and pupils are reminded to be punctual. Lateness (after 9am) significantly disrupts the classes and late collection (after 1.30pm and 2.30pm) can upset the child and interrupt the work of the staff.

School Absences in excess of 20 days

Schools are required by law to report to The National Education Welfare Board all absences of pupils in excess of 20 days.

If there is concern about your child's attendance at school or about the reasons given, you may be visited by an Educational Welfare Officer who will discuss your child's education with you. The Officer will work with you and take full account of the circumstances of the child and the family before deciding what further action is necessary to ensure that the child receives his/her entitlement to an education.

A letter will be sent to parents when a child's absences reach 15. A further letter will be sent when the National Education Welfare Board maximum of 20 has been reached. At this stage a report will also be sent to the National Education Welfare Board.

MEETINGS

Teachers are available for consultations with parents after school **by appointment only.**

To arrange these please ring the Secretary (9am – 3pm), one week in advance, if possible. Please avoid ringing between 10.30-10.45am and 12.55-1.30pm as the office is not staffed at these times.

Parent/Teacher meetings:

Every year during autumn term, one or two days are taken over with parent/teacher meetings which provide an opportunity for discussing each child's needs.

Specialist Teachers:

- We are very fortunate to have Special Education Teachers (S.E.T.) in our school who provide additional learning support to pupils when necessary.
- We also have Visiting Teachers who teach music, sport and hip-hop dance with the children.
- Swimming takes place during the school year and is usually for 2nd to 6th class children.
- We currently have three Special Needs Assistants but this changes from year to year.

NOTES FROM PARENTS TO TEACHERS

Notes are required:-

1. Following a child's absence from school. Absences of 20 days or more during the school year must be reported, to comply with The Education & Welfare Act.
2. If the parents / guardians wish the child to stay indoors at break.
3. If the child has to leave the school during school hours.
4. To explain why a child has not got his/her homework done.
5. If someone other than the normal parent or guardian is collecting a child from school.
6. The school must be notified immediately of head lice or any infectious illness such as chicken pox, impetigo, conjunctivitis etc.

BULLYING

Bullying is a problem which children may encounter and one which is of great concern to parents and teachers. It is a problem which requires co-operation between school and parents in seeking solutions. It can be physical, verbal or emotional and may be carried out by groups or by an individual. The following is an extract from the Dept. of Education and Science guidelines in relation to bullying:

“Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical contact by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, are not considered bullying. However when the behaviour is systematic and ongoing, it is bullying.”

The “Stay Safe Programme” (see page 9 for details) is taught here in our school and this gives children the confidence to say “NO” if they are approached. They are taught that they have a right to tell an adult about a problem.

If your child is being bullied do come and let us know so that we can attempt to solve the problem.

The school’s Anti Bullying Policy is sent to all parents each September.

SUPERVISION

The teachers keep a watchful eye on everyone. Strict rules apply at all times in order to make sure that no one is harmed or hurt. Several adults supervise the playground at all times. Certain areas of the playground which are difficult to patrol are “out of bounds”.

Your child is expected to obey our School Rules and you as a parent are responsible to see that he/she does.

All forms of anti-social behaviour are recorded and kept in the school files. The Board of Management are informed when necessary.

DISCIPLINE

School Rules & Discipline procedures: (taken from School Behaviour Policy)

1. School doors open at 8.40am. All children must be at school at 9.00am at the latest.
2. The school cannot be responsible for children except between the times of 8.40am and 2.30pm.
3. Repeated lateness for school will be reported to the Attendance Officer.
4. Junior Infants and Senior Infants will finish school at 1.30pm and from 1st – 6th at 2.30pm.
5. Children must attend school every day unless there is a very valid excuse. Under the Welfare Act 2002 all pupils absent for more than 20 days must be reported to Welfare Attendance Officer SEHB.
6. SCHOOL UNIFORM MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES.
7. Jewellery may not be worn at school. A watch, stud form earrings only.
8. Healthy lunches are strongly encouraged. (Chewing gum, fizzy drinks, crisps, popcorn, chocolate etc. are not allowed in the school.)
9. Mobile phones or any electronic equipment may not be brought to school.
10. Pupils must show courtesy for themselves, other pupils, teachers and all visitors to the school.
11. Homework must be completed in full every night and signed by parent(s).
12. Parents must make an appointment through the Secretary to see individual teachers.
13. Pupils are asked to refrain from using coarse language in the school.
14. Pupils must be truthful and strictly honest.
15. Pupils must never leave the school during school hours without the permission of the Principal. A written request will be required unless a parent or other adult is calling to collect the pupil.
16. Pupils must show respect for all school property by using waste bins and by not interfering with or damaging in any way the buildings, furniture and equipment.
17. Pupils must abide by classroom and playground rules.

Ways used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour, approved by the Board of Management.

1. Reasoning with the pupil.
2. Reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
3. Temporary separation from peers, friends or others. Child may be sent to another classroom with prescribed work to be done.
4. Detention during a break.
5. Prescribed additional work.
6. Child not allowed to participate in certain school activities, e.g. school tours, trips, games, etc.
7. Communication with parents.
8. Short-term suspension.
9. Longer term suspension.
10. Re-admission to class possibly for a shortened day.
11. Expulsion

School Policy on Mobile Phones/Ipods/MP3 players etc.:

The school has a phone which is always available to children, on request, when there is an emergency.

If mobile phones are produced in class or seen in the playground during school hours they will be confiscated immediately and will be returned only when collected by the child's parent/guardian. Ipods, MP3 devices etc are strictly prohibited in school or during school related activities (e.g. tours, swimming etc) and the same confiscation procedures apply.

CHILD PROTECTION:

In recent years, as a society, we have become very aware of the problem of child abuse through neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

Each one of us has a duty to protect children and *Children First*, the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children noted that teachers, who are the main care givers to children outside the family, are particularly well placed to observe and monitor children for signs of abuse.

In response to this, the Department of Education & Science published Guidelines and Procedures for all schools in relation to child protection and welfare. These guidelines promote the safety and welfare of all children and are to be welcomed.

The Board of Management of Gorey Central School has adopted these guidelines as school policy. Consequently, if school staff suspect or are alerted to possible child abuse they are obliged to refer this matter to the Health Service Executive (HSE). The HSE will then assess the situation and provide support for the child concerned. Please note: Child Abuse is defined as Neglect, Emotional abuse, Physical abuse and Sexual abuse.

Children First, the National Guidelines for the Protection of Children may be accessed on the website of the Department of Health and Children (www.dohc.ie) and the Department of Education & Science Child Protection Guidelines can be read on the Department's website (www.education.ie). Parents/Guardians are also welcome to look through the guidelines here at the school.

STAY SAFE PROGRAMME

The Stay Safe Programme is a National Teaching Package designed for primary schools. It aims to prevent child abuse by equipping parents and teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect the children in their care. Children are taught safety skills in the normal classroom context and these skills are reinforced through discussion with their parents. This approach increases community awareness and makes children less vulnerable to abuse of all kinds.

Children are taught personal safety skills just as they are taught road safety and water safety. Self-protective techniques are taught as part of a broad safety curriculum which aims to prevent various types of victimization and enhance self esteem. This can only be done effectively in the context of informing parents and teachers so that they are aware of the problems that children can encounter and are certain of how to respond.

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy Statement.

School Philosophy:

Gorey Central School is a school in which all pupils are equally valued and respected, irrespective of sex, social background, family circumstances, educational achievement, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning. Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging. They are treated fairly. Their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development.

RSE Aims and Objectives:

Relationships and Sexuality Education encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships, sexual identity and intimacy. RSE seeks to provide children with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of relationships and human sexuality, through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework.

Organisation:

The RSE Programme will be taught during school hours throughout the academic year to all classes, acknowledging that the children receive information that is appropriate to their age and level of development.

However, if further information is sought by the child that is not within the scope of the Programme parents will be so advised. If such information is relayed by parents to an individual child, it should be emphasised that his/her level of knowledge may not be appropriate for the general group.

Specific Issues:

1. Policy on outside visitors

It is the policy of the school that the RSE Programme will be delivered by the teachers. In certain instances it may be considered appropriate to invite specialists to participate in the Programme. However, the class teacher will supervise all aspects of the Programme in the class. The combined skills and talents of the teaching staff will be fully utilised in the implementation of the Programme.

2. Policy on withdrawal of children from the Programme

Our Policy will make provision for the rights of parents or guardians who feel that they hold objections to the inclusion of such a Programme in the curriculum. Should a parent/guardian wish to withdraw his/her child from the Programme, he/she must inform the child's class teacher in writing.

3. Sharing of Information

We share information (names, addresses, dates of birth, PPS numbers, telephone numbers) with the Department of Education & Skills, the National Education Welfare Board, the Health Service Executive and Bus Éireann. Such sharing of information enables the organization of a number of programmes, including the school transport scheme and various health screening and vaccination schemes. (Parental consent is required regarding the delivery of health and vaccination schemes).

4. Photography

The staff often use photography within the classrooms and to record school events such as trips, projects, sports (except swimming) etc. On occasions, group photos are uploaded to the school's website. In all cases, the children's full names will not be included with their photographs. The local newspapers also cover some school events, (and may use the children's full names). Parents who do not want their children photographed are asked to send a note to the Principal.

5. Substitute staff and trainees

The school employs substitute teachers and special needs assistants to cover illness and other staff absences, such as in-service training. These substitutes work under the direction of the Principal and follow our plans and routines as closely as possible. The Department of Education does not sanction substitute cover for every absence. In such cases, the children spend their school day with another class.

Our school also facilitates a limited number of trainee teachers and special needs assistants. All trainees work under the supervision of school staff.

6. Medicine

Please request a copy of our Administration of Medicines policy for details regarding inhalers, prescription medicines and life-threatening medical conditions.

In general, the children may not carry non-prescription medicines to school (including cold remedies, pain relief tablets, cough syrup, etc). Parents can visit their child during the school day to administer these or other medicines.

Please remember to update your child's medical record yearly.

FIRST AID POLICY

In school we only administer the primary first aid, it is up to the parent to remove the dressing we have put on, reclean the wound and to put on a clean dressing if necessary.

If the injury is other than a minor one, the Class Teacher or First Aider shall attempt to contact the parent/guardians of the child by telephone so that they may collect the child and bring him/her to a physician of their choice. Teachers or other staff are only available to take children to the doctor if injury is serious and needs urgent treatment.

In a very serious event, parents will be contacted. If contact with parents is not possible, then the school will contact a local doctor.

HEALTH-HYGIENE

Head Lice

Head Lice is an on-going problem in all schools. There is no shame in finding head lice. If your child gets head lice inform us immediately. It will be confidential. It is our policy to inform individual parents if we see or know that their child has lice. Please do not be offended by this.

If you want any information on the subject visit your chemist.

Hearing & Vision Tests

These tests take place in Junior Infants every year. A form will be given to you today. Please fill in and return the forms to the school today or within one week.

Educational Tours

Most classes have outings during the year of an educational value when the need arises or when it is appropriate to what is being taught. These are an extension and a re-enforcement of what is going on in the classroom.

Church Services

The school takes part in the following:

- (a) The Children's Harvest Festival - Christ Church, Gorey
- (b) The Children's Carol Service - Christ Church, Gorey
- (c) The Diocesan Children's Choral Festival - Venue changes each year
- (d) Weekly Service – Every **Thursday at 12.30pm** all the children go to the hall where assembly is held.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS INSPECTIONS

The school follows the curriculum set down by the Department of Education and Skills.

It receives visits from Department Inspectors - both District and Divisional - to ensure standards are being maintained and to give advice to teachers on teaching methods.

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

1. On joining Gorey Central School a Registration form is completed for each child by parents.
2. A detailed report is sent to parents at the end of June.
3. Newsletters to parents are sent to each family by email to inform them of forth-coming events. A text message is also sent to alert parents of this email.
4. A list of school closures is given to each family in September.

This should be kept in a safe place and it is your responsibility to know when there is a school closure.

Further notices will be sent only for unscheduled closures which did not appear on the September list.

Most communication with parents is written in the child's Homework Journal and parents should check this book each night.

5. Learning Support is provided to those children following internal teacher assessments and consultations with parents.
6. Tests and Assessments take place throughout the year. Formal standardized tests take place during the 3rd term.

School Website: The school has its own dedicated website at www.goreycentral.com. A copy of this booklet is on the website for you to read it in full. There are also many other sections of interest such as a photo gallery, pupil corner, parent corner, booklists and an education section.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Board of Management is responsible for the direct government of the school in accordance with:

- The Rules for National Schools
- The Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure
- Circulars issued from time to time by the Minister.

The Board of Management is made up as follows:

- 2 direct nominees of the Patron (Bishop)
- 2 parents of children enrolled in the school (elected by the general body of parents)
- A teacher elected by the teachers
- The Principal
- 2 extra members proposed by the above 6 people.

The term of office for the Board is 4 years.

A new Board of Management was appointed in November 2015.

PARENT / TEACHER ASSOCIATION

This Association has an active committee, which provides support for the Board of Management and for the teachers. It assists in organizing many events and is always ready to help the teachers when they make a request.

GIFTS TO CHARITIES

At times during the year we organise collections which are given to various charities. To date we have supported Temple St. Children's Hospital, Crumlin Children's Hospital, the local ISPCA and NWSPCA and Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Finally - Please keep this Information Booklet in a safe place so that it can be referred to when necessary. We hope that it has given you some insight into school routine. If you have any worries or problems at any time please contact us.

We are always ready to try to help

Thanking you,

Mrs. S. Horan.
Principal