



*Knockanean
National School*
Knockanean, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Newsletter

September 25th 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

A big welcome back to school to everyone. A very special welcome to all our new infants and to the new children who started in other classes. We wish them all the best for their time in Knockanean N.S. We wish last year's 6th class all the best as they start their new secondary schools. Welcome back to all the staff and we wish them well for the year ahead.

School Times: We have been advised by our insurer to inform you of the following- The school will open to receive pupils at 8.45 a.m. No responsibility is accepted for pupils arriving before that time. Classes will commence each day at 9.00 a.m. Classes will end each day at 1.40 p.m. for Junior /Senior Infants and at 2.40 p.m. for all other classes. Parents who wish to have their children escorted home should make their own arrangements to have them met at the school gate and the person to escort them should be at the school no later than 1.40 p.m. in the case of infants and 2.40 p.m. for all others, as the school cannot accept responsibility for supervising the children after the official finishing times or investigating any incidents that arise after these times.

CCTV: As you are aware we have CCTV on the school premises. The CCTV system is in operation in the external environs of the premises during both the daylight and night hours each day. CCTV surveillance at the school is intended for the purposes of:

- protecting the school buildings and school assets, both during and after school hours;
- reducing the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour (including theft and vandalism);
- supporting the Gardaí in a bid to deter and detect crime;
- assisting in identifying, apprehending and prosecuting offenders.

Say Yes to Languages: Towards the end of last year we applied to take part in a programme called “Say Yes to Languages”. We were successful in our application and as a result classes 5th & 6th will receive French lessons once per week, for a total of 10 weeks. These lessons have already started.. The lessons are being delivered during the school day by Rachel Frawley. We have received funding for this programme so there is no cost to parents.

Music Club/ Choir: Music Club has started again for another year of music making. We are delighted to have the children from 3rd to 6th class playing music every week with us in preparation for our future outings. We will be looking forward to our visits to nursing homes at Christmas time, playing for the sacramental ceremonies and performing at different occasions during the year. A huge thank you to all our wonderful musicians for giving of your time every Tuesday evening!

Choir has also started again for the children from 3rd to 6th class. We meet every Wednesday evening after school to learn new songs and sing some of the songs we have learned over the years. We look forward to performing for different events during the school year. Thanks again to all the children who give their time to sing and perform with us!

This year we have been offered a music enrichment project from Music Generation. Both fifth classes will receive music tuition from a professional music educator on a weekly basis for a total of 25 weeks. The project will also incorporate a performance in Glór. These workshops are designed to build community spirit, active listening and self-expression for young learners in primary schools. The visiting musician will also help to enrich the musicianship of the school.

We will embark on another music initiative with 4th class this year called Abair Amhrán. It is a school-led project where pupils explore Clare’s song tradition, by choosing a local singer, learning songs from their repertoire and presenting creative research work. Each project will include 4 schools and a 10-week project concluding with an evening, public performance and exhibition event, where all four schools come together in a neutral community space to share their work with families and the wider community.

We have also been selected to participate in the Accordion Scholarship programme with Music Generation Clare. Our visiting tutor Ciara Tighe will begin this 27 week music programme on Wednesday 23rd of Sep. Twenty children from 2nd to 6th class will avail of this incredible opportunity to learn the accordion. A huge thank you to Music Generation Clare for their generous scholarship.

Sport: Boys and girls football competitions will commence shortly. Cross country running took place yesterday.

Homework Club. This is a service run by the teachers in the school. It runs 4 days a week from Monday to Thursday. Homework Club finishing time is 3.50 pm this year. During Homework Club, the children will do their homework and the teachers will assist them with

any part of the work that needs help. If the children are finished their homework, other activities will be provided for the children such as reading, colouring, board games etc. If you are interested in your child doing Homework Club this year, you can reply to the following email address. **knockaneanhomeworkclub@gmail.com**

Morning Club: Morning Club is a service run by teachers in the school and will be based in the school building. It will run 5 days a week from Monday to Friday. During Morning Club, activities will be provided for the children such as reading, art, colouring, board games, jigsaws, lego etc.

Morning Club runs from 7.45am until 8.45am. The children will then go to their respective yards and join their classmates and be supervised as per usual until school begins. If you are interested in your child doing Morning Club this year, you can reply to the following email **knockaneanmorningclub@gmail.com**

Home school communications: All teachers will provide you with their school email. Should you wish to contact them/send in a sick note/explain an absence etc this must be done via email or through Aladdin.

Appointments: Appointments can be made by ringing the school or sending a message directly to the teacher by email.

Pupil Absences: All absences totalling more than 20 days have to be reported to Tusla. **Please note you can update pupil absences yourself on Aladdin Connect.** If you do not use Aladdin Connect to update your child's absence, **Written confirmation by email** to your child's teacher is required, out-lining the commencement date, the return date and the reason for being absent. Please do not send in any written notes. Phone calls to the school or verbal messages to the teacher are not sufficient.

Sick Cert: If you have a sick cert from a doctor/hospital explaining your child's absence please take a photo of this cert and email it to the class teacher.

Complaints Procedures: The Board of Management has adopted the INTO/CPSMA Revised Parental Complaints Procedure which provides a mechanism for dealing fairly with parental complaints. (See attached) Please note that the class teacher is the first point of contact if there is an issue.

Healthy Lunch: Well done to everyone who is making a huge effort with the healthy lunch policy. We would kindly encourage you to provide your child with a healthy, balanced lunch

each day. A nutritious lunch helps children stay focused, energetic, and ready to learn, ultimately supporting your child's health and wellbeing.

Please remember: The following are not allowed in school: Crisps, Fizzy Drinks, Chewing Gum

As there are a number of children in various classes throughout the school who suffer from serious allergies to nuts and kiwi fruit, we ask parents to refrain from putting kiwi fruit, nuts or products containing nuts (such as chocolate spreads of any kind; peanut butter, some cereal bars etc) into their child's lunch box.

For those pupils with EpiPens, could you please send in **two** Epipens to your child's class teacher. Please ensure they are in date

Birthday invitations: Birthday invitations are **not to be given out in the school or school grounds.** The Board of Management has chosen to adopt this policy so that no pupil feels left out when birthday invitations are being handed out.

Birthday treats: As mentioned above due to the high number of children in classes with various allergies we ask that you do not send in cakes/treats etc for your child's birthday

Personal belongings/Clothes: We would ask every parent to make sure that there is a name tag on all jackets/tops, lunch boxes, drinks bottles etc.

School Breaks: Break times are as follows:

Sos: 11.00- 11.10 a.m. All classes

Lunch: 12.20 pm – 12.50 pm Infants- 3rd

12.55p.m. – 1.25.p.m 4th – 6th

On wet days classes stay in their rooms as normal during break and are supervised by the teachers on yard duty. If your child is sick please keep them at home as we cannot facilitate them staying in classrooms during break times.

Mobile Phones/ Internet Enabled Devices: These are **forbidden** in the school. If a pupil is caught using a mobile phone/ internet enabled device in the school then it will be confiscated and will not be returned until a parent comes to collect it. If a parent finds it necessary for their child to have a phone/device for use after school on a given day, then the parent must email the school requesting same. The pupil is then responsible for handing in the phone/device to their teacher in the morning at the start of school and collecting it in the evening at 2.40 pm.

Videos/ Photographs: Please note that if parents/guardians take photographs or videos of school events for private, personal use they **must not** be uploaded to any website to be viewed by others (e.g. Facebook).

Photographs/Website: If anyone does not wish to have their children photographed, **it is your responsibility** to please let us know by email.

Photos of pupils are also posted on our website displaying their work, in sports teams, in school plays etc. If you **do not want** your child's photo posted on the website **it is your responsibility** to let us know by email.

E payments: The E payment system allows you to make secure payments to the school using your credit or debit card. The purpose of the E payment system is to facilitate the easier payment of school money collections for parent/guardians and to reduce the amount of cash and cheques being sent into our school in line with recent central bank directives. E payments are through Aladdin and if you need further information on this system please contact the office. **All money collections this year will be enabled for E payments.**

School Uniform: The uniform consists of a crested sweat shirt top in either Jade Green or Purple and crested polo shirt in the same colours. Children are allowed to choose which colour they would like to wear along with the alternate colour polo shirt i.e. purple sweatshirt with a jade green polo shirt or jade green sweatshirt with a purple polo shirt. The bottom part of the uniform is **navy (not black)** trousers/tracksuit pants/skirt. **Please note that branded tracksuits / shorts are not allowed.**

Initiatives for 2026/2027 school year: The following are the initiatives that will take place in the 2026/2027 school year.

Literacy:

- Literacy Power Hour: 1st Class/2nd Class/4th Class/6th Class
- Accelerated Reading: 2nd – 6th Classes
- In-Class Literacy Support - Stations/Guided Reading: - Junior infants – 6th (as needed)
- Reading Buddies (6th Classes and Infant Classes)

Spellings: The following programme continues to be rolled out this year

- In-Class Spelling Intervention (Words Their Way) – 3rd-6th Class as needed
- UFLI Literacy Programme: 1st/2nd /3rd Class

- Jolly Grammar- 4th, 5th and 6th class

Numeracy:

- Ready, Set, Go Maths –Stations in classrooms for Junior and Senior Infants
- In-Class station Teaching: In class or small group withdrawal. 1st -6th classes as needed

Bi Cineálta: This policy is in operation since last year. Pupils are taught this in class and a student friendly policy is now displayed in all classrooms.

Agree to Agree Project: As we have established our Agree to Agree Internet Acceptable Use policy, we will be keeping the conversation going around internet enabled devices this school year.

For those families who may be new to our school this year, the Agree to Agree project was run in conjunction with the Clare Education Centre and Dr. Maureen Griffin (forensic psychologist). It was a collaborative process aimed at implementing positive change to establish a new norm for children's use of internet enabled devices. Last year, we developed our Agree to Agree Internet Acceptable Use policy, in consultation with staff, students, parents, guardians and the Board of Management. Resources have been shared on the school website in the tab School Programmes and Events- Agree to Agree project. You will also see a copy of our current agreement and brochure in this section.

We will continue the discussion about positive digital habits both in school and at home this year. We appreciate your support in reinforcing a safe and supportive digital environment for everyone.

Climate Action Erasmus Project: Knockanean NS along with Ennis NS and Clarecastle NS teamed up last year with partner schools in Norway, Portugal, Greece, Croatia and Serbia. The aim of this project which will continue for the next two years is to support a European fight against adverse climate effects by providing training and resources for school leaders, teachers and teacher trainers.

Children's Well-Being: We will continue to place a strong focus on supporting our pupils' social, emotional and mental well-being. Alongside our existing Weaving Well-Being programme, we will also be introducing the Lust for Life programme, while younger classes will participate in Zippy's Friends and Fun Friends.

Weaving Well-Being Weaving Well-Being is an Irish-designed positive mental health programme which supports children in developing practical skills for well-being. Through

age-appropriate activities, pupils explore areas such as positive emotions, relationships, resilience, mindfulness and recognising their personal strengths.

Weaving Well-Being will continue to be taught in 2nd–6th **classes** as part of the S.P.H.E. curriculum.

Lust for Life This year, we will introduce the Lust for Life programme. Lust for Life is an Irish youth well-being programme designed to help children and young people develop the skills and confidence they need to look after their mental health and well-being.

The programme focuses on practical, age-appropriate strategies around topics such as emotional awareness, self-esteem, resilience, relationships, managing challenges and developing healthy habits. It encourages children to understand their emotions, recognise when they may need support and develop positive strategies that they can use in everyday life.

The programme is delivered through engaging activities and discussions, with the aim of making conversations about mental health and well-being open, positive and accessible for children.

Zippy's Friends In our younger classes, we will be using Zippy's Friends, an internationally recognised programme which helps young children develop emotional and coping skills.

Through stories, discussion, games and activities, children learn about feelings, friendship, communication, dealing with change, resolving conflict and coping with difficult situations. The programme gives children practical strategies for managing everyday challenges and encourages them to talk about their feelings and seek help when needed.

Together, these programmes will provide a whole-school approach to supporting children's social and emotional development, with content that is appropriate to the age and developmental stage of our pupils.

Fun Friends: A play-based programme helping young children build confidence, emotional literacy, and social skills through games, creative play, and nature-based activities. Relaxation techniques and positive outdoor experiences support a smooth transition into school, boosting communication, reducing fears, and enhancing self-esteem.

Child Safeguarding Statement: Please find attached our draft Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment in line with the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025. If you wish to comment on this or the primary school survey sent out at the end of last year please do so by Sept 30th

Primary Language Curriculum: We will continue to implement the PLC

Revised Maths Curriculum. We will continue to implement the new Maths Curriculum and after our great success over the last two years with “Maths Eyes “ we will be entering this again in this school year. Please have a look at haveyougotmathseyes.com, when you get a chance please

Building Update: As of last week the OPW and the builders in Knockanean are on track for us to be back there in Sept 2027

Swimming: Swimming will take place this year for all classes from 1st – 6th in Shannon. You will be notified in advance of when your child's class will be going. Swimming has already started for 5th classes

Forest School: Both 3rd classes will attend 6 weeks of this programme starting on Tuesday Oct 6th The Forest School allows pupils to engage in fun and motivating activities beneath the trees, designed to instil a sense of achievement and to foster a deeper connection to the natural world.

Green Schools: We begin the new year looking forward to the 2nd year of our Creative Cluster with the Ennis National and Clarecastle National Schools. Last year we worked as a school to learn about the effects of climate change and to investigate how our children can make a difference for the future. We embarked on a number of projects including looking at our native trees, investigating the effects of taking the bus to school versus the car, looking at rainfall over a period of time, investigating air pollution close to the school, fast fashion and developing awareness of fast fashion brands, creating a vertical garden and having our first Farmers Market ,and conducting experiments that gave us a better understanding of the effects of climate change. Year 2 will continue to build on the knowledge we have gained this year and develop ideas and projects further. We worked with TY students last year from St Flannan's School and hope to continue this collaboration this year.

Accelerated Reading: Accelerated Reader (AR) is a whole-group reading management and monitoring programme that aims to foster the habit of independent reading among primary age pupils. The internet-based software initially screens pupils according to their reading levels, and suggests books that match their reading age and reading interest. Pupils take computerised quizzes on the books they have read and earn AR points related to difficulty. This initiative will continue this year in classes 2nd - 6th .To log in to Accelerated Reading go to the school website knockaneannationalschool.com and select the AR icon.

Personal Insurance: The school offers the facility of a Pupil Personal Accident Insurance Scheme. This offers 24 hour cover including social, domestic and leisure cover as well as school activities. Full pupil participation in the scheme is recommended. The cost of the scheme is €5 per pupil, which represents excellent value for money. E payments has been enabled for payment of same

Administration /Art and Crafts Charges

The Board of Management have decided to continue with the reduced prices for this coming year due to the on-going increases in the cost of living and the possible family financial circumstances related to this

The following are the Art & Craft and Administration costs for the year 2026/2027.

One child €30

Two children €45

Three or more children: €60

This helps to cover items such as art & craft materials, photocopying, texting to parents and other administration expenses for the year.

E payments has been enabled for payment of same

Cheques should be made payable to Knockanean National School.

If any family find themselves under financial pressure for any school related activity , please do not hesitate to contact the Principal. Confidentiality is guaranteed.

School closures: A full list of school closures for the coming academic year was issued in June. These dates are available on the home page of our website. They are also listed below for your convenience.

School calendar for 2026/2027

School opens on Thurs August 27th 2026.

Midterm break- School closes on Oct. 23rd - reopens on Nov 2nd.

Christmas Holidays: school closes on Dec.22nd - reopens on Jan 6th.

Feb Bank Holiday: School closed Fri Jan 29th & Mon Feb 1st.

Mid Term Break Feb: School closed Thurs Feb 18th & Fri Feb 19th.

St Patrick's Day: School closed Wed March 17th.

Easter Holidays: school closes on March 19th - reopens on April 5th.

May Bank Holiday: School closed Mon May 3rd – Fri May 7th (Week).

June Bank Holiday: School closed Mon June 7th & Tue June 8th.

Summer Holidays: School closes on Wed June 30th 2027.

In addition to the above, we will also be closed for the following training days:

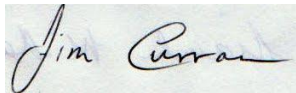
24/11/26 Language Awareness

8/1/2027 STEM

4/6/2027 STEM

School Website: Don't forget to visit the school website at
www.knockaneannationalschool.com.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Jim Curran".

Jim Curran.