

Marymount National School Ballsgrove, Drogheda.

Information Booklet for Parents

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Mission Statement

Marymount National School was founded in 1969 by the Sisters of Mercy under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath. The Mercy Charism continues to inspire the life of the school and community.

As a Roman Catholic school we aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the pupil; intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual. The school promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our school is part of the local community and has strong links with Holy Family Parish. In Marymount we teach the Primary School curriculum including Religious Education. The essentials of the Christian faith are explored and children are encouraged to think for themselves and to develop a personal faith by which they may later live.

While Marymount has a Catholic ethos we give due recognition to children of other religious faiths and none. We welcome and value diversity. Inclusivity, tolerance and respect are core values in the school.

Our motto is “Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí”, which means “Praise the young and they will blossom”. Marymount is a school which aims to provide a caring, happy, well-ordered and secure learning environment where the physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual needs of its pupils are identified and addressed.

We endeavour to enhance the self-esteem of everyone in the school community and strive to help each individual to achieve their full potential. We aim to prepare our pupils for their place in a modern multi-cultural society by actively promoting equality and by celebrating the diversity within our school community.

We are all working together for a better society. We welcome all children to our school.

General information

Principal	Mrs Bairbre English
Home School Community Liaison Co-Ordinator	Ms Fionnuala Ní Earcáin

School Hours

Monday – Friday (Junior & Senior Infants)	9:00 am – 1:40pm
Monday – Friday (1st – 6th Class)	9:00 am – 1:40pm

School Office Summer Holiday Opening

Monday 29 th June- Friday 3 rd July	9:00 am – 2:40pm
Monday 24 th August onwards	9:00 am – 2:40pm

The school premises will open for pupils at 9:00 am. Children should be dropped off and collected from the school yard. **In the interest of the children’s safety, pupils should not arrive at the school before 8:50 am.** Children should be collected punctually at school finishing time.

Uniform

Uniform	Tracksuit
Blue Blouse/Shirt	Navy Sweatshirt
Navy Tie	Navy Tracksuit Bottoms
Blue Check Pinafore/Skirt	Blue Polo shirt
Navy Trousers	
Navy Cardigan/Jumper	

School uniform and school tracksuit are available in Rock Design, Unit 9, Greenhills Industrial Village and Bestwear, Shop Street. Pupils should wear a tracksuit and runners on PE days. Children should be in school uniform at all times. Jewellery must be kept to a minimum; i.e. one stud in each ear, signet ring and a watch. **Please put names on all jumpers, jackets, coats etc.**

Photographs of our uniform are available to view on www.marymountgns.ie

FAQs

Q Will my child meet his/her Class Teacher before September?

A Generally, children will be able to meet their teacher on the Welcome Day.

Q Will my child have a full day at school from the start?

A No. Week 1: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Week 2: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm
Week 3: 9:00 am – 1:40 pm

Q Where do we come into the school?

A Please use the two side gates or the front gate. **Do not drive into the school grounds. The gate at the rear of the school is for staff access only.**

Q Where do I drop my child in the event of a wet day?

A Children may be dropped to the assembly area from 8:50 am.

Q Where do I collect my child at home time?

A Your child can be collected at the bottom door outside the school. On wet days children will be let out through the assembly area.

Q When are break times?

A Morning break 10:30 am – 10:40 am
Lunch break 12:30 pm – 1:00 pm

Q What happens if my child is sick in school?

A We will contact you at your contact number. Make sure you let us know if your phone number changes.

Q When do the children wear uniform/tracksuit?

A The teacher will let you know when PE days are. These are the only days for tracksuit. Otherwise please send your child in his/her uniform. **Please label jumpers and tracksuit tops with your child's name. It is impossible to sort out clothing with no names!**

Q Will my child need to bring his/he books in each day?

A No. The teacher keeps all books at school. As time goes on your child may have a workbook or copy to take home.

Q Can my child take toys to school?

A Please encourage your child to leave toys at home. Generally, there is no need to take toys in, as often they get lost. There are plenty of toys and games in the class.

Q Will my child need pencils, colours etc. in Junior Infants?

A No. In Junior Infants, all pencils and colours are provided in the classroom.

Q What are the toilet arrangements?

A Infants are taken to the toilet several times as a group each day. If a child needs to go any time he/she just needs to tell the teacher.

Q What if my child wets/soils him/herself?

A Accidents do happen. The teacher will discretely deal with this.

Q Can my child bring birthday invitations into school?

A Birthday invitations are not allowed at school. Please do not bring invitations to school as they can cause distress to some of our children and create pressure on families.

Q Do the infants go out to play in the yard?

A Yes.

Q Are parents allowed to take photographs during school plays etc?

A Parents are free to take photographs **but we ask you not to post any photographs taken in school on social media.**

Starting School

The following information may help answer some of your queries regarding our school; also outlined are some general recommendations for parents of Junior Infants. If, however, you need any further information the class teacher or principal will be delighted to help out at any time.

- Talk to your child over the summer holidays about going to school and all the exciting things he/she will be doing there. This chatting helps to prepare your child for the break with you and removes many fears they might have. If it is possible, introduce your child to another Junior Infant and let them play together over the summer. It helps to see a familiar face on the first day. If this is not possible, talk to him/her about all the new friends he/she will meet at school.

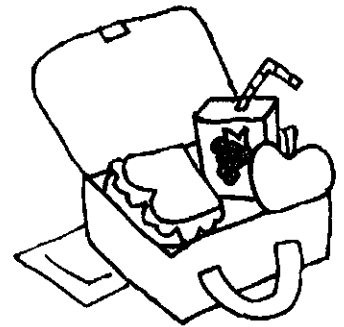
Help them to

- Say their own name – First Name and Surname.
- Say their teacher’s name
- Put on/take off their coat **by her/himself** and hang it up.
- Recognise their belongings coat, school bag, lunch box etc.
- Open and close lunch box, drinks container **by him/ herself** (no glass bottles).
- Blow and wipe own nose.
- Use toilet correctly e.g.
 - Ask clearly to go to the toilet
 - Use Toilet Paper correctly
 - Flush the toilet after use

- Wash and dry hands after using the toilet

Reassure your child that he/she can go when he/she needs to but always to let Teacher know.

- Tidy up their own things.
- Share with others.
- Speak clearly without shouting
- Ask questions
- Take turns
- Describe experiences
- Say Nursery Rhymes and Sing Songs
- Listen (read short stories for your child).



Lunch

Your child will have a snack at 10.30 a.m. each day. A piece of fruit is provided for each child daily. Main lunch is at 12.30 pm. We encourage children to have a healthy lunch. We recommend a sandwich and fruit for big lunch and water/milk. Talk to the teacher if your child needs a special diet.

NO SWEETS, CRISPS, CHOCOLATE, BARS OR FIZZY DRINKS. NO GLASS BOTTLES

There are pupils in the school with an allergy to nuts. It is important that these children do not come into contact with any nuts, nut products or nut traces.

You are therefore asked not to give your child nuts, peanut butter, Nutella or any other food containing nuts in his/her lunch box. In the interest of following through in our healthy eating policy we would ask you not to bring birthday cakes etc. to the classroom on the occasion of your child's birthday.

Check out www.flyingstart.ie for more ideas and support regarding Starting School.

Absence

When children are absent a note explaining the absence must be given to the teacher. You will receive a list of school holidays at the beginning of the school year. Please do not take your child on a family holiday during school term, as he/she will lose out on important school work.

Collecting Early

Please try to avoid collecting your child early from school as it is disruptive to everyone’s learning. If you really need to collect a child early we ask that you:

- Let us know in advance
- Check in at the office and sign your child out before going to the classroom to collect.

Art & Craft

Your child will need a plastic apron or an old blouse/shirt to cover his/her school uniform during Art & Craft activities. Your child will be provided with all necessary pencils/crayons etc. in September.

Bus Operators

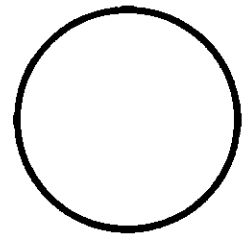
Tony’s Coach Hire: Stephen 087 6873982 (*Marley’s Lane, Rathmullen Rd, Beamore Road*)

Kierans Bus: 041 9844602 / 087 2628793 (*Dublin Road area*)

Religion

Children’s religions workbooks have a dual purpose, as a teaching aid, for the children, and an opportunity for discussion in the home. Your child will bring his/her religion book home occasionally. Try to pray with your child each day. Short simple prayers are best.

Medical



If you have any particular worry regarding your child's general health, vision, hearing or speech, you should contact your Public Health Nurse or Family Doctor. Poor vision/hearing/speech etc. will affect your child's progress at school.

School-going children may get hair lice, so please check your child's hair regularly. **Please tie long hair up.** Children may also be infected with threadworms and will need to be treated.

If your child has a medical concern, please let us know in school.

School Property

Pupils must respect school property and treat books and equipment with care. The children at Marymount National School are very fortunate that they can avail of a rental book scheme. It is most important that these books are treated with care i.e. returned in the same condition as when your child received them; failing this your child will be asked to replace the book.

Homework

Homework is an excellent way of reinforcing what has been learned during the day's lessons. From the beginning of September children should get into the habit of setting aside a certain amount of time for homework.

Remember, peace and quiet will help homework greatly. Encourage your child to keep her homework diary tidy and take care when writing down her homework.

It is important that you sit with your child to help/observe/guide and encourage good practice. Homework should take ten minutes. Children should always present homework on time.

Events, Activities and Community Links

Each year the children take part in celebrations and events in the school such as Book Week, Maths Week, Science Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Sports Day etc.

Our school choir sings during school time, at First Holy Communion, Confirmation, and other masses and special occasions.

Our Parents Council are very active in supporting events such as coffee mornings, end of term fun at Halloween, Christmas and Easter etc.

Regular in school activities include: Basketball, Music Generation, choir, soccer, GAA, science projects.

Some after school activities include: Literacy & Numeracy Club, computers, basketball, cookery. These activities can change from year to year.

We have strong links with local community organisations and regularly arrange local history tours, library visits and visits to our local art gallery.

Code of Discipline

The Board of Management in co-operation with the Teaching Staff and the Parents Association set out below the rules, regulations and procedures which have been drawn up to ensure the smooth operation of the school's disciplinary system.

The code of discipline aims to achieve two things.

1. To foster an atmosphere of love, kindness, security, firmness and trust in the school.
2. The development of self-discipline in pupils and training in good behaviour based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.

Courtesy

All pupils are expected to treat staff and their fellow pupils with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of any form of bad language is totally unacceptable.

Punctuality



The official opening time of the school is **9.00 a.m.** The Board of Management can give no undertaking that children will be supervised before that time and accepts no responsibility for pupils left on the premises before this. Classes for Junior and Senior Infants finish at 1.40 p.m.; children should be collected punctually after school. 1st - 6th classes finish at 2.40 p.m. No responsibility can be taken for children who are not collected at this time.

Respect for all is a very strong belief with us here in Marymount School. Good discipline is built on respect i.e. respect of teachers for pupils, pupils for teachers and pupils for pupils. Following on from this bullying will not be tolerated in the school.

Bullying can take many forms: Intimidation, Name calling (of pupils or members of her family), exclusion, interfering with personal property and

physical actions i.e. treading on toes, elbowing, tripping, thumping or kicking.

When an incident is noticed, or brought to our attention the strategy for dealing with it is as follows:

- a) The class teacher or teacher on yard duty is usually the first person to deal with incidents of bullying. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid public humiliation of those involved.
- b) If the teacher finds that it is not a simple incident the matter is referred to the Kiva Team who interview both bully and victim. If there is a group involved, children are interviewed individually to clarify the root of the problem. The Kiva team will work with the children to solve the problem.
- c) If it persists the Principal will be informed and in these cases will inform parents of victims and bullies and invite them to the school to discuss the problem and possible solutions.
- d) If this procedure fails it is brought to the attention of the Board of Management.

If there are any difficulties of any kind we are always ready to listen.

Behaviour

1. Pupils are to show consideration and respect for their classmates and follow their teacher's instruction.
2. Any form of disruption or interference with the rights of other children is not acceptable.

The following is a list of simple class rules that your child's teacher may use:

1. Quiet hands up in class.
2. Kind hands, kind feet, kind words.
3. Walking feet in school.
4. Use an inside voice.

Parental Involvement

All parents are welcome to join the Parents Council and participate in activities and fundraising. Being involved is a great way of meeting other parents and teachers and knowing what is available to your child in the school. There is a school insurance scheme for pupils available; you will get details of this scheme early in September.

Core Group of Parents

We welcome parents and Grandparents to help in the school. Some activities they support include:

- Story Reading
- Maths Games
- Helping at the School Sports Day.
- Making costumes and props for Christmas Plays.
- Organising the Annual Coffee Morning.
- Organising Books for the School Library.
- Organising school raffles.
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New parents are always welcome so that there can be more parental involvement in the school. Please approach the HSCL coordinator, Fionnuala Ní Earcáin if you are interested.

1. Parents are encouraged to keep in regular contact with class teacher and to keep informed about their child's progress and discuss any concerns they may feel. **Please make an appointment if you would like to discuss something with the teacher.**
2. Formal Parent/Teacher meetings are held during the school year.
3. If any parent wishes to have information sent to an alternative address other than where the child resides please inform us in writing.
4. The Home School Community Liaison coordinator (HSCL) is available to support parents and you can speak to her in school or in your home.

Home School Community Liaison

What is the HSCL Scheme?

The H.S.C.L. Scheme was set up in Marymount School in 1998. The aim of this scheme is to promote partnership between home, school and the community to ensure that every child participates fully in the school system. The co-ordinator of the scheme in Marymount is a teacher. As H.S.C.L co-ordinator, she doesn't teach a class but is free instead to meet parents.

You can meet with the H.S.C.L. Co-ordinator, Fionnuala Ní Earcáin any day in school or call her at 089 4694093.

Why do we need a HSCL Scheme?

When children start school the parents' role as educator doesn't stop. Marymount School welcomes parents to work with their children in school and works with parents to help them develop the skills necessary to support their child's learning. Parents play a major role in supporting the work of the teachers.

How does the HSCL Scheme Work?

The Scheme recognises parents as the primary educators of their children and is here to support parents in this important role.

Firstly. The co-ordinator visits parents in their homes. Home visits are a great way of getting to know parents and a chance to listen to their views and concerns.

Secondly. The co-ordinator organises talks/courses for parents in the school during school time. These usually take place in the morning from 9.30 a.m. - 12noon. They are FREE.

Classes include Beginners Computers, Flower Arranging, Hair and Makeup and Maths, etc. These courses help parents to learn new skills and give parents important time to themselves. We are always open to new ideas.

Where are the HSCL facilities based in Marymount?

The H.S.C.L. facilities are located behind the infants' classrooms. The Parents' Room is open all day. You can drop in for a cup of tea/coffee and a chat.

Preparing for Reading

Children learn from listening to you. The better developed their language the easier it is to learn to read. Choose what you watch on television, and listen to on the radio. Turn them off when you are not listening so that there is not always background noise.



Give a running commentary on what you are doing as you do things around the house, walk your child in his / her buggy etc.

Use lots of tune in your voice.

Encourage 'pretend' play - using dolls, tea-set, cars, garage, animals etc. Remember boys love tea-sets too!

Develop your child's confidence by being supportive. Use lots of praise. Avoid teasing.

Help your child express his / her feelings safely, it is normal to be angry, sad, fearful, jealous and important to feel and express these emotions.

Other pre-reading activities include jigsaws, colouring, cutting-out, drawing, play dough, matching pictures.

When looking at pictures and books get physically close and interact with your child.

Background noise affects children's listening. Turn off the T.V. when you are not watching it.

Listening

Listening is half of communication. When you help a child learn to listen effectively you are providing the foundation for successful communication.

You can help children's listening skills by:

1. Getting physically close, down at the child's level.
2. Using shorter sentences.
3. Speaking a little slower.

4. Having a lot of tune in your voice.
5. Pointing and using gesture to show him / her what you mean, this helps the child to look and co-ordinate looking and listening.
6. Repeating words back to him / her using correct pronunciation.
7. Say what you mean and mean what you say. The child is more likely to listen and understand your message.

The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000

THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD EDUCATION

As you know, a good education gives your child the best possible start in life. A good education helps young people to obtain secure employment and develop into mature and responsible citizens. The purpose of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 is to encourage regular school attendance and participation in education and training for as long as possible. It is desirable that every child stays in school and completes the leaving Certificate.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICES

Under the Act, every child must attend school regularly up to sixteen years of age or complete at least three years education in a post primary school, whichever comes later. The National Educational Welfare Services was established to support school attendance and follow up on children who are not attending school regularly.

As a parent, you must let the school know if your child is absent and the reason why. It is school policy that reasons must be given in writing. The school will notify the National Educational Welfare Services if a child is absent for 20 days or more or where the absence gives rise to concern.

If your child is sick or is absent for other good reasons, no action will be taken by the National Educational Welfare Services. However, 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 her entitlement to an education.

Further information concerning the service and about school attendance matters generally can be obtained from Tusla Education Support (tess) or the National Lo-Call Education helpline (Telephone 1890 36 36 66) which is staffed by an Educational Welfare Officer or online at www.tusla.ie.

Children Learn What They Live

If a child lives with criticism

He learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility

He learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule

He learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame

He learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance

He learns to be patient.

