



OUR LADY OF MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL
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WATERFORD

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Meánscoil Mhuire na Trócaire
Portláirge

August 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians/Students,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits looking forward to returning to school in the coming weeks. This letter is mostly the same as the letter sent in June. Please note the change in the return dates for TY and the dates available for payment of school charges and collection of book rental. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the school.

2023/2024 Return timetable for students (subject to change)

Friday 18 th August	1 st and 5 th years can collect book rental between 10am and 11.30.
Monday 21 st August Tuesday 22 nd August	To avoid large queues school charges can be paid between 9am and 1pm on both of these days
Thursday 24 th August	2 nd year students: 9.45 – 10.45 Assembly and induction in GPA 5 th year students: 12.00 – 13.00 Assembly and registration in Hall
Friday 25 th August	1 st year students: 8.45 – 12.00 Assembly and registration in GPA
Monday 28 th August	3 rd year students: 9.00 Assembly and registration in GPA, followed by classes as per timetable TY students: 8.45 – 3.40 Assembly and registration and activities all day. 6 th year students: 10.00 Assembly and registration in GPA, followed by classes as per timetable
Tuesday 29 th August	Full classes for all year groups commence at 8.45am

Structure of School Day: Following consultations with students, parents and staff we will have a new daily schedule next year. We are moving from a lesson period of 40 minutes to one of 60 minutes. We will have an earlier starting time and finishing time also as outlined below:

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
08.45 – 09.45					
09.45 – 10.45					
10.45 – 11.00	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11.00 – 12.00					
12.00 – 13.00					
13.00 – 13.40	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
13.40 – 14.40					
14.40 – 15.40					

School charges: The board of management has decided that the school charge per student for the year will be **€100**. (Family rates are available). The €100 school charge can be paid at the

school office. Please note that long queues and delays are likely during the student return-to-school period (24th August – 1st September). Students will be assigned a locker on receipt of the school charge. Thank you to all parents/guardians who have already paid the school charge.

Uniform: A reminder that our school uniform consists of: School kilt/trousers or navy pants, school jumper, white shirt, flat black or navy shoes and plain navy tights or socks. Runners are not acceptable instead of shoes at any time. Leggings/tracksuit ends are not acceptable instead of school trousers or pants. A single, small nose stud may be worn in school in 2023/24 on a trial basis. No other facial jewellery may be worn in school. Please note: head scarves, if worn, must be blue, black, navy or white in colour.

PE uniform: The PE uniform consists of an official PE school top which is available to purchase from K-Sport. The students may wear a black tracksuit end with the official top. Students may wear the official PE school top in school for all their classes on the day that they have a scheduled PE class.

Mobile phones: The use of mobile phones on the school premises and grounds is forbidden. Mobile phones may only be used in lessons, for teaching and learning purposes, with the permission of the teacher. Use of mobile phones without permission will be subjected to disciplinary points.

Lunchtime: All first and second years must remain on school premises at lunchtime without exception.

Illness: If any student feels unwell during school hours she should speak to her teacher who will contact you via the school office phonenumber as necessary. If you need to contact your daughter urgently during school hours you should phone the school office. Contacting via mobile phone during school time disrupts the teaching and learning environment and can lead to the student accumulating disciplinary points.

School office opening times: The school office is a very busy work space. Frequent interruptions can lead to a backlog of work building up in the office. To help alleviate this I am asking that you refrain from calling to the office at the following times unless it is an emergency:

Wednesday 2:00 – 3:30pm and Thursday 2:00 – 3:30pm

Your co-operation would be greatly appreciated.

Attendance & Engagement: We know that there is a connection between student school attendance, engagement and wellbeing. Students who attend school regularly feel a sense of belonging to the school community and realise that good attendance at each lesson is important to achieve success in education. As parents you have a major influence on your daughter(s) attitude to attendance and engagement with school. **I ask you to work with us to encourage your daughter(s) to attend school every day, to engage in every lesson to the best of her ability and to participate in extra-curricular activities to help promote her wellbeing.** I ask parents, if at all possible, not to take family holidays during school term time.

Book Rental Scheme: Parents who have paid for the school book rental scheme may collect the books from the school in August. You will be notified of the day and time in August.

School Costs 2023/2024:

The general list of expenses payable to the school in August or by instalment is below. School Payments may be made in-person at the main office or online.

	Amount Due
School Book Rental All Students except TY	€100 per Student
School Charge This covers insurance cover for school activities only, photocopying costs for handouts, consumable material (eg chemicals for science labs, arts and crafts, home economics), toner for computer rooms, locker rental, contribution to text messaging service & communication app, and other on-going costs and facilities	€100 Individual Student €180 For family with 2 students attending €240 For family with 3 students attending
After School Study (optional)	€50 per Half-Term €200 for year
Transition Year Charge All Transition Year Students	€400 Total Includes school charge
Pre-examination Fees: All Junior Cycle & Leaving Certificate Candidates (This fee applies to medical card and non-medical card holders)	JC €110 (external correction) LC €50 (internal correction)

- Book rental fee must be paid in advance
- School charges may be paid before the start of the school year or by paying €50 and the balance in instalments or by electronic banking. Please contact the office if interested in electronic banking.
- After-School Study must be paid in full in advance of each term (August and December). Offered provided costs can be covered.
- Pre-Examination fees: Must be paid by 26 January 2024 (i.e. before pre-exams begin)

All students require their own markers/colouring pencils, pritt stick, sellotape, small envelopes for money collections. These items will no longer be available from the school office.

Personal Accident Insurance: The board of management has decided to pay the personal accident insurance for all students covering school activities only this year. The 24-hour pupil personal accident insurance cover will not be provided in 2023/24.

After-School Study: Times 15.50 – 17.50 Mon to Thurs and 13.40 – 15.40 Fri
Term 1 – September to December €100
Term 2 – January to May €100

Examination Fees: All 3rd and 6th year students must pay a pre-examination fee. (This applies to all medical card and non-medical card holders.)

- (i) Pre-Leaving Cert exam fees €50 payable before 26 January 2024 (marked internally)
- (ii) Pre-Junior Cycle exam fees €110 payable before 26 January 2024 (marked externally)
- (iii) Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle – were payable online directly to the State Examinations Commission in March. In 2019 the fees were LC €116 and JC €109. (Medical Card Holders are exempt from this fee.) No fees have been charged since covid in 2020. No information for 2023/2024 to date.

I would like to congratulate all our teachers and students on their excellent work and thank all our parents for their continued support throughout 2022/2023. With your assistance and input we can continue to develop our school to best meet the needs of all the students in our community.

We look forward to welcoming all of our students and particularly the new first years and other students joining us for 2023/24. If any students have changed address or contact details please inform the school in writing.

We wish all the girls sitting state examinations the best of luck and hope everybody enjoys a lovely summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Meade

Mary Meade
Principal