

DIOCESE OF KERRY

PARISH OF ANNASCAUL

*Scoil Bhreac Chluain,
Annascaul,
Co. Kerry.*



Information Booklet for Parents

SCOIL BHREAC CHLUAIN

Introduction

The aim of Scoil Bhreac Chluain, Annascaul is to provide a Christian, caring, learning environment, which facilitates the nurturing of each pupil's full educational potential. The achievement of this aim informs all of the planning processes and activities which occur in our school. Teachers and parents are partners in the children's education, with co-operation and communication between home and school being vital ingredients in the educational process. We share the same aim i.e. the well being of the children in our care. This prospectus has been produced with the express purpose of sharing information with parents concerning school policies, rules and routines. Scoil Bhreac Chluain operates in accordance with the Education Act 1998 and the Rules for National Schools as determined by the Department of Education and Science.

We, the Board of Management of Scoil Bhreac Chluain, hope that each child will have a very enjoyable time in this school and that the information provided will prove to be of major benefit.

School Charter

Scoil Bhreac Chluain is a Roman Catholic School established with the Minister for Education and aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Catholic School provides Religious education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Catholic Church and promotes the formation of pupils in the Catholic Faith.

Mission Statement

Scoil Bhreac Chluain promotes Gospel values in a Christian learning community, where children can grow in knowledge and understanding and in the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values. We are fully committed to offering excellence in education by: promoting the highest possible achievement for our pupils; encouraging children to grow within the Catholic faith; establishing the foundations for lifelong learning; welcoming input from parents to complement the skills and experience of our professional teaching staff; ensuring that our school is central to the parish, reaching out to embrace the wider community; uniting all staff, parents and B.O.M. in our aim to be a leading school in the Diocese of Kerry. Our aim is that all children should leave Scoil Bhreac Chluain with the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy, an enthusiasm for learning, a thirst for knowledge, an appreciation of their religion and the world they live and, above all, many happy memories.

Information about the School

The School Address: Annascaul, Co. Kerry
Telephone Number: 066-9157436
E-mail: breacchluainias@eircom.net

Board of Management (2007-2011):

Chairperson: Mr. Michael O'Rourke
Secretary: Mrs. Siobhán Griffin
Principal: Mr. Pat Clifford
Treasurer: Mrs. Marie Kenny
Teachers Representative: Mrs Philomena Curran
Parents Representative: Mr. Paudie Moriarty and Mrs. Siobhán Griffin
Community Representatives: Mr. Seán Moriarty and Mrs. Marie Kenny
Bishop's Nominee: Fr. John Buckley

Parents Committee:

Chairperson: Breda McGovern
Treasurers: Áine Moriarty and Julia Lyne
Secretary: Kathleen Moriarty
Members: Nora McKenna, Eileen Ashe, Bernadette O'Connor and Donna O'Brien.

Staffing and Organisation:

The school is currently organised into eight mainstream classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. The school teaching staff includes five mainstream teachers and two set teachers, one full time Special Needs Assistants and one part-time Special Needs Assistant working in the School. In all subjects the Curriculum is matched to cater for children of different abilities, including children with special educational needs.

Enrolment/Admission Policy

The Enrolment Policy of Scoil Bhreac Chluain has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1998 in order to assist Parents in relation to enrolment matters. The Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Principal will be happy to clarify any further matters arising from the policy.

Parents seeking to enroll their child(ren) in Scoil Bhreac Chluain are requested to return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the office) with an original Birth / Adoption Certificate to the school by 31st May each year. A Certificate of Baptism should also be provided where the child has been baptised. The names of children for whom Enrolment Application forms and Birth/ Adoption Certificates have been returned, will be placed on a class list. Under the Rules of the Department of Education and Science pupils may only be enrolled from the age of 4 years and upward.

Equality of access is the key value that determines the enrolment of children to our school. No child residing within the parish is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language/accents, gender, traveller status, asylum-seeker/refugee status, religious or political beliefs & values, family or social circumstances.

While recognising the right of parents to enroll their child in the school of their choice, the Board of Management of Scoil Bhreac Chluain is also responsible to respect the rights of the existing school community and in particular, the children already enrolled.

This requires balanced judgements, which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interest of all children. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the Board of Management, with due regard for the Patron's wishes, reserves the right to determine the maximum number of children in each separate classroom bearing in mind:

- Size of / available space in classrooms.
- Availability of grants and teacher resources provided by the Department of Education and Science.
- Educational needs of children of a particular age.
- Multi-grade classes.
- Presence of children with special educational/ behavioural needs.
- Department of Education and Science maximum class average directives.

In the event of the number of children seeking enrolment in any given class/ standard exceeding the number of places available preceding or during the school year (due to the Board of Management being unable to provide suitable accommodation, or recruit the required teaching staff) the following criteria will be used to prioritise children for enrolment:

- i. Catholic children of the parish or the traditional catchment area served by the school, including children of Travelling Community resident within parish or this traditional catchment area.
- ii. Brothers and sisters of children in the school. These children must have resided in the area when first enrolled in Scoil Bhreac Chluain.
- iii. The children of teachers who are working in a full time capacity in the school.
- iv. Catholic children who live outside the parish and do not have a Catholic school in their parish.
- v. All children who live within the parish boundaries but are not Catholic applying for a placement are entitled to a place if there are vacancies after the groups from (i) to (iii) have been allocated places.
- vi. All children who apply to the school and are not Catholics and not residents within the parish boundaries are entitled to a place in the school if there are vacancies in the school after the groups from (i) to (iv) have been allocated places.

In order to accommodate groups (i) and (ii) Boards may have to operate a cut off in age of applicants to give places to groups (i) and (ii) if there is pressure for places in the school. Schools within the parish co-operate with one another in this area taking into account the wider needs of the parish community and its apostolic mission.

Pupils wishing to transfer from other schools are enrolled subject to the Rules governing National Schools, as well as our own school's enrolment policy and local agreements with other schools. Under the terms of The Education Welfare Act (2000) information concerning attendance and the child's educational progress are to be provided by the school from which the child is transferring.

Prospective parents are encouraged to visit the school by appointment prior to the enrolment of their child(ren).

New Junior Infants spend one/ two informal periods in school at the end of June to familiarise themselves with their new environment. Children with special needs will be resourced in accordance with the level of resources provided by the Department of Education and Science to the Board of Management.

Notwithstanding the availability of such resources, parents of children who are unsatisfied with the level of educational provision in our school, are advised to consider a special school which is designed and resourced to specifically cater for the needs of children with special educational needs.

Children enrolled in our school are required to co-operate with and support the School/ Board of Management's Code of Behaviour as well as all other policies on curriculum, organisation, & management. The Board of Management places Parents/ Guardians as responsible for ensuring that their child(ren) co-operate with said policies in an age-appropriate way. In accordance with the Department of Education and Science's rules for National Schools, a child may be suspended.

These policies may be added to and revised from time-to-time.

Parental Involvement

As a Catholic school, we believe that the school is not an isolated unit but a union of many people who come together to give it its life and meaning.

The triple partnership of home, school and parish is essential if the school is to live up to its Mission Statement. We aim to establish this relationship through:

- encouraging a shared commitment to the success of each individual child;
- encouraging an ethos of understanding and openness in home-school-parish relationships;
- Helping parents to develop a positive role in complementing and supporting the work of the school in educating their children.

Parental involvement in the life of the school is encouraged in many ways:

- through parent/partnership groups working in school;
- fund raising parent helpers;
- involvement in assemblies, celebrations, concerts and school Masses;
- involvement in sacramental preparation;
- school fetes, sport and gala days.

We are committed to methods of evaluating and improving channels of communication between school and parents. Our evaluation shall be ongoing and continuous, as we make every effort to make parents feel welcome and valued at all times.



Routines and General Information

1. Assembly is at 9.15 am. It is important that the children develop the habit of being punctual for school. Children who are in the yard prior to official assembly time are not the responsibility of any member of staff. No pupil should arrive later than 9.20 am. Any child, who arrives continuously later than the official opening time, may be noted in class records by the class teacher and an explanation from the parents will be requested.
2. There is a short break at 11.00am. Lunch break is from 1.00pm. until 1.30pm.. The children should have a small snack at 11.00am. and something more substantial at lunchtime. No child will be allowed home during lunchtime without a written letter, signed by both parents, giving their child permission to leave the school and that they accept all responsibility for the child once he/she leaves the school.
3. If a child forgets any item, or one has to be delivered, please leave the item with the secretary and it will be delivered at break time.
4. As part of our Healthy Eating Policy, fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolate or any "junk foods" are not allowed on the school premises.
5. Scoil Bhreac Chluain has achieved Green Flag Status and consequently every effort should be made to make the school and it's environs a litter free area. Children and staff are encouraged to reduce, re-use and recycle.
6. Junior and Senior Infants are dismissed at 2.00pm. Infants are not allowed to go home unaccompanied. All other pupils are dismissed at 3.00pm.
7. At 3.00pm. pupils are expected to leave the schools grounds in an orderly fashion and report home promptly. The school cannot accept responsibility for looking after any children after this time, this includes children attending after school activities.
8. All children should enter the school through the main gates. No child is allowed to cross or walk along the front walls of the school
9. In the event of a pupil being absent through illness or for any other reason, the class teacher should be informed by note on the pupil's return to school. If it is anticipated that the absence will be of lengthy duration, the class teacher or Principal should be informed by note or telephone as soon as possible.
10. When it is necessary for a pupil to leave school early, a note must be sent to the class teacher. Parents/guardians are asked to call personally to the classroom to collect the child. Any person collecting a child on behalf of the parent will only be permitted to take the child if the parent has contacted the school beforehand. Please accept that it is only in the interest of the safety of your child that these procedures are in force.
11. If sending money into the school, for any reason, would you please place it in an envelope and put the child's name, class and the date on the cover.

As the need arises, parents will receive notices with regard to school matters and events. Please ensure that the children keep a special plastic folder or pencil case in their school bags into which such notices can be placed.

Religious Formation

The pupils in fifth and sixth class receive the Sacrament of Confirmation every second year.

The pupils receive Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion when they are in Second Class.

Parents are asked to follow the Religious Programme from the child's book, and help with the Religion work when it is sent home.

On certain occasions throughout the school year, the children may participate in prayer services or a class Mass.



Scoil Bhreac Chluain Dress Code

The highest standard of personal appearance is expected at all times. Hair should be neat and tidy.

We encourage all pupils to wear the standard school uniform for Scoil Bhreac Chluain which comprises of :

- Navy trousers/pinafore.
- Grey jumper/cardigan.
- White shirt.
- School Tie.
- Dark shoes.

Children are required to wear the school tracksuit to school on PE days.

It is very important that each child makes a major effort to wear the complete uniform. Please try to have the uniform washed at the weekends so that the children are not without their uniforms during the week. We will be very strict that the uniform is worn properly as it represents the standards set by our school.

Children should have their names on their uniforms, coats and other personal belongings.

School uniform and tracksuit can be purchased in McKenna's in Dingle.

School Books

We are very conscious of the cost of schoolbooks and for this reason we will make every effort to ensure that the different book series in use in the school are changed as rarely as possible .

A limited amount of money is made available to the school for the purchase of books for children when circumstances merit this assistance being given. Please contact the Principal if there is a problem with regard to the purchase of books.

All children will be issued with a new booklist at the end of the year. All books from the list can be purchased in the School during the week prior to the summer holidays.



Health and Safety

Scoil Bhreac Chluain wishes to promote a healthy lifestyle in the development of the children in the school. Accordingly, the following points are to be noted.

- Children who are ill should not be asked to go school.
- Parents are asked that teachers be made aware of any physical disability, allergy, etc, that their child may have.
- Please check your child's hair regularly for outbreaks of head lice. If there is an outbreak of head lice in a class, all parents of pupils in that class are informed by note, and asked to take immediate action to treat infestation.
- Written notification to the class teacher is necessary if a child is to remain inside at break times.
- Please do not give your child any "junk food' for lunch.
- Chewing gum is not allowed in school.
- Scoil Bhreac Chluain and its grounds is a designated non-smoking area.
- Teachers are not insured to administer medication to children. If vital medication is needed, throughout the school day, this must be brought to the attention of the Principal so that administration arrangements can be discussed.

(A HEALTH AND SAFETY STATEMENT applies to all employees of Scoil Bhreac Chluain. The statement is available from the School Principal.)

Accident Procedures

Accidents occur despite supervision. Minor accidents are treated at school. Slight cuts and grazes are normally treated by cleaning with cold water and applying a plaster to the wound. When a dressing has been put on a wound parents are requested to inspect the wound when the child comes home from school.

In the event of a more serious accident/ child becoming ill, every possible effort will be made to contact the pupil's parents or the persons delegated to take responsibility for the pupil.

Scoil Bhreac Chluain Code of Discipline

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop to their full potential, it is necessary to provide a framework, which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to an education in a relatively disruption free environment. The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions, and the ideal is that pupils will acquire self-discipline.

Aims of our Code of Discipline

1. To help create a positive, stimulating, learning environment in which every pupil can benefit from the school.
2. To help pupils become more self-disciplined, and to encourage good standards of behaviour at home, at school and locally based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.
3. The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.

Scoil Bhreac Chluain School Rules

Our School Rules are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. If a school is to function properly and efficiently, it is necessary that the rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely.

1. Pupils must show respect for teachers, parents and fellow pupils at all times.
2. School property and the property of others must be treated with respect. Interfering or damaging school property, i.e. writing on walls, tables, etc. will be regarded as a serious offense.
3. Aggressive behaviour or foul language will not be tolerated in the school.
4. Running indoors, pushing, jostling and any sort of rough play is not permitted.
5. No child is allowed leave the school grounds without permission.
6. High standards of hygiene should be required at all times throughout the school. Children are encouraged to use the litterbins to keep the school and the grounds tidy.
7. Children are expected to wear the complete school uniform each day.
8. All absences shall be explained by written notification.
9. Punctuality is encouraged at all times. Children should arrive in school no later than 9.20am.
10. The use of mobile phones is strictly forbidden within the school grounds. If found to do so, the phone will be confiscated until 3.00pm.
11. While your child is in school he/she will be known by the names (Christian name and Surname) that is on his/her Birth & Baptismal Certificate. The school will only change the name if evidence of changing name by deed poll is made available to the Principal of the school. Slang name-calling, surnames or nicknames is discouraged, as we would like all children to be treated with respect.
12. The following are not permitted on the school premises:
 - (a) Eating during class time.
 - (b) Dangerous articles, i.e. knives, sharp objects, aerosols, matches, lighters or any object that is considered a danger to any pupil or others.
 - (c) Fizzy drinks, sweets, biscuits, bars, chewing gum or any other junk food.
 - (d) A most serious view will be taken by the Board of Management of the introduction of abusive substances to the school.

Examples of Misbehaviour

In Class: Continuously talking / Disrupting out of turn / Cheeky behaviour
/ Distracting others / Untidy work.

In Playground: Fighting / Kicking / Rough play / Foul language / Name-calling / Spitting / Littering.

Serious Misbehaviour: Bullying / Mithcing / Stealing / Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards a teacher or pupil / deliberate damage to school property / Leaving school grounds without permission.

Procedures to Deal with Misbehaviour

1. The class teacher deals with it and may impose a sanction on the child.
2. If the problem persists the teacher shall consult the Principal or parents, in the hope of solving and helping the child.
3. In the case of serious misbehaviour the Principal, the teacher and the parents may need to have ongoing discussions to monitor the situation.

Sanctions

The following strategies may be used to show disapproval of unacceptable behaviour:

- Reasoning with pupil.
- Verbal reprimand, including advice on how to improve.
- Temporary separation from peers, friends and others.
- Prescribed additional work signed by parents.
- Recording of incident of misbehaviour in the incident book.
- Detention during breaks.
- Referral to Principal.

Pupils who misbehave frequently and who have no remorse for their actions will not be allowed to participate in school outings for their own safety and that of others. Although incidents of misbehaviour are recorded, the emphasis is on encouraging children to behave well and praise is given for commendable behaviour. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where a crisis has arisen. At times, it has been suggested by some parents that the matters to which their attention is being drawn are of a trivial nature, and that there was no necessity to have informed them that their child had misbehaved. The response to this is that while the misbehaviour may appear to be of a trivial nature, it is the cumulative effect of such breaches of the rules, which is important as it undermines the ethos of the school.

For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour, suspension will be seriously considered by the Board of Management.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is repeated aggression which is either verbal, psychological or physical. Bullying is conducted by an individual or group against others. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, which should not be condoned, cannot be described as bullying. It may manifest itself in many forms such as physical aggression, damage to property, extortion, intimidation, isolation, name-calling and "slagging". At the centre of our school's response to bullying is the continued development of a positive school climate, which focuses on respect for the individual. It is an important element of school policy to raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting an Incident of Bullying Behaviour

- All incidents of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be investigated and dealt with by the teachers.
- Serious cases of bullying behaviour by pupils are to be referred immediately to the Principal.
- Those involved will be interviewed individually and then collectively.

- Communication with parents will be necessary if behaviour continues.
- Teachers will keep a written record of all serious incidents of misbehaviour.

Anti-bullying Code in Scoil Bhreac Chluain.

Every pupil has the right to enjoy his/her time in Scoil Bhreac Chluain, free from bullying, both in school and on their journey to and from school.

Our school will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, even if these were not meant to hurt.

Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.

Bullying is regarded as a very serious matter; no child has a right to strike another, even in "self-defence".

It is made clear to pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not telling tales but are behaving responsibly. It is important to counteract a culture which may associate "telling" with "informing". Encouraging a child to strike back is mistaken because it does not address the reasons for the bullying behaviour and it could also result in a child being seriously hurt if the bully is more adept at fighting.

Home / School Liaison

Frequent communication is of vital importance in developing and nurturing co-operation between home and school.

In our school, communication between parents and teachers may take one of the following forms:

- **Individual Consultation:**
This occurs where a parent has asked to meet a teacher or has been invited to visit the school to exchange information or to discuss matters of concern.
(A note to the class teacher, or phone call, requesting such an appointment is always necessary).
- **Appointment with Principal:**
Parents wishing to meet with the Principal should make an appointment by contacting/telephoning the school.
- **Parent/ Teacher meetings for pupils** will be held annually in the month of October.
- **Meetings are held in connection with preparation for the Sacraments of Penance, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.**

A child's parent is the most effective teacher he/she will ever have. The home environment determines to a great extent the child's progress in school. It is for this reason that teachers depend more and more on the support of parents. To achieve a high standard of behaviour, a high level of co-operation between teachers, parents and children is needed.

Parents are asked to:-

- (a) insist that their child attends to homework each night;
- (b) encourage their child to co-operate fully in school;
- (c) take appropriate action if they discover that their child has been guilty of misbehaviour in school;
- (d) discuss any problems that may arise with the teacher or Principal.

Often, problems in school are caused by misunderstandings and teachers lack of awareness of certain relevant facts.

Attendance Policy

Each child to whom the School Attendance Act applies, (i.e. those between the ages of 6 and 15) is obliged by law to attend school every day, on which the school is in operation unless there is a reasonable explanation for not attending. The school authorities are obliged to notify the school attendance officer when a child is absent regularly (i.e. a period of 20 school days in any academic year) or if a reasonable explanation has not been provided for an absence by the child's parents.

Homework Policy

As a general rule, every child from Infants to Sixth class inclusive is given homework each night. Parents are asked to ensure that their children complete their homework. In the event of the homework not being attempted or not completed, teachers may insist that the homework is completed by the children during break time or at the weekend.

The recommended average time for homework ranges from ten minutes in Infants to one hour in Senior Class. The recommended times are only guidelines because too much emphasis of "time spent" may cause a habit of "clock watching" to develop. The best criterion is if the child regularly exceeds the recommended times, and this is not due to poor work habits, you are welcome to visit the school to discuss the matter with the class teacher.

At the start of each school year it takes the teacher time to adjust the amount of homework given to the standard of each class. So please have patience over this "settling in" period.

Homework must be done unless there is satisfactory explanation, either written or oral, from a parent or guardian.

Do not do the child's homework for him/her. Work set for homework will generally have been prepared in class. Please check your child's homework for neatness and point out mistakes.

Oral work is as important as written work. Please listen to your child read, and examine spellings and tables.

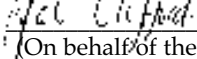
Parents should sign their children's homework or homework journal each night, if requested by the class teacher.

As a general rule, homework is not given at the weekends, unless pupil or class misbehaves.

Some Final Words

It is our intention that every child attending Scoil Bhreac Chluain benefits from the distinctive traditions and ethos of this village school. This ethos is guided by a desire to develop the academic potential and spiritual dimensions of all pupils. It involves the cultivation of artistic capabilities, sporting interests and creativity among the children. We hope that every child enjoys his/her time in Annascaul and leaves with happy memories of friendship, personal achievements and an awareness of his/her social responsibilities. In aspiring to meet these objectives this school will be fulfilling the twin guiding principles of primary education as set out in the Primary School Curriculum (1999);

- (i) Celebrating the uniqueness of the child.
- (ii) Ensuring the development of the child's full potential.

Signed: 
(On behalf of the Board of Management.)