



OUR LADY OF MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL
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WATERFORD

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Meánscoil Mhuire na Trócaire
Portláirge

August 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and enjoying the final days of our summer school holidays.

Please find enclosed a timetable for your daughter's expected date of return to school for the 2024/2025 academic year.

School charges: The 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 (22nd – 31st August). 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.

Lockers: The cost of locker rental is included in the school charge.

Free books for First Year: These books may be collected in advance on Tuesday 20th August, 2024 between 10.30am & 12.00pm, anyone not available on Tuesday 20th can collect their books on their return to school.

Fifth Year Book Rental: These books may be collected on their Induction day, Tuesday 27th August.

Pupil personal 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 2024/25.

Uniform: I wish to remind you of the importance of your daughter having the full and proper school uniform on her return to school and throughout the year. No variations on this uniform will be accepted. The Mercy regards the uniform as an important requirement for all students and it is expected that this rule will be obeyed. All students are expected to be in full school uniform. The student must present a written note of explanation if she attends school without the full 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. Facial jewellery, eg nose studs, must not 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. Shorts may be worn for PE class but not outside of PE times.

School opening times: The school will open to receive students at 8:15am. No responsibility is accepted for students arriving before that time. First class will begin at 8:45am each day. No students should arrive later than 8:40am. Classes will finish at 3:40pm each day except on Fridays when we will finish at 1:00pm.

Students must vacate the school premises promptly at the end of the school day. Only those students who are involved in a supervised activity after school (e.g. evening study etc.) may remain on the premises after 4:00pm as the school cannot accept responsibility for looking after students after that time.

Attendance, engagement and wellbeing: We know that there is 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 remind you that full attendance each school day is expected from all students and any absence/lateness must be explained by making an absence request using the vsware school app. I ask parents, if at all possible, not to take family holidays during school term time. I ask you to remind your daughter that appropriate behaviour is expected from her at school.

Parents' Council: The parents' council meets about 5 times in the year. It acts as representative body that represents the views of parents, informs parents of developments in education and in the school, fosters co-operation between parents/teachers/school leadership, provides opportunities for parents and the school principal or staff representative to meet and exchange ideas on the education of their children and helps with the provision of extra equipment and fundraising. Parents who wish to become actively involved in the school are welcome and encouraged to join the parents' council. If you are interested in getting involved please contact me through the main office.

School Meals: We will continue to offer a free breakfast and a free lunch to students this year. We ask parents to encourage the practice of healthy eating and, in particular, to discourage the consumption of fast food and fizzy drinks. Please note that all 1st year students must remain on school premises at lunchtime.

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.

General Behaviour: Please remind your daughter that punctuality is necessary for the smooth running of the school. Students should be in class at **8:45am and 1:40pm** for a prompt start to lessons. As we have teacher-based classrooms, it is also extremely important for students to get to class on time throughout the day.

We would also remind all students that it is forbidden to leave the school premises at any time without permission during school hours or at break time.

I would like to acknowledge the excellent behaviour of the vast majority of our students which we recognise during the year in various ways eg at awards ceremonies, assemblies etc. Co-operation from all students is expected at all times in our school and any breach of the school rules will be dealt with according to the school's code of behaviour and where

necessary, sanctions for breach of school rules or lack of co-operation from any student will be imposed.

A lot of activities/events have been organised for students by teachers here at the school to take place over the coming weeks/months and I hope your daughter participates in these extra-curricular activities. Such participation adds to your daughter's personal development here at the Mercy while supporting her to achieve her full potential.

For effective communication between parents and school and good organisation for your daughter, she once again will receive a "daily homework diary/journal". We advise all students and parents to read the code of behavior which is available on the school website. At assemblies, students will be furnished with diaries/journals and their class timetable 2024/2025.

I would like to congratulate teachers and students on the excellent work completed all year. I hope you will encourage your daughter to work towards achieving her full potential at the Mercy. All students are advised to set realistic goals and to construct a workable study/homework timetable.

Once again, all the best for 2024/2025 and I would appreciate if you could take your daughter through the contents of this letter to ensure full co-operation by all students in the provision of an effective and efficient learning environment for your daughter.

Yours sincerely,



Mary Meade
Principal

2024/2025 Return timetable for students (subject to change)

Friday 23 rd August	1st year students: 9.00 – 12.00 Assembly and registration in GPA
Monday 26 th August	TY students: 9.30 – 12.30 Assembly, registration and induction in Hall
Tuesday 27 th August	5th year including 5th LCA students: 9.30 – 10.30 Assembly and registration in GPA 5th year LCA students: 10.30 – 11.30 Induction 2nd year students: 11.00 – 12.00 Assembly and induction in GPA
Wednesday 28 th August	3rd year students: 9.00 – 9.45 Assembly and registration in GPA, followed by classes as per timetable. 6th year students: 10.00 Assembly and registration in GPA, followed by classes as per timetable. Full classes for all other year groups commence at 8.45am

Lockers

Students will be assigned a locker on receipt of the school charge.

Structure of School Day

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
08.45 – 09.45	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1	Lesson 1
09.45 – 10.45	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2	Lesson 2
10.45 – 11.00	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11.00 – 12.00	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3	Lesson 3
12.00 – 13.00	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lesson 4	Lesson 4
13.00 – 13.40	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
13.40 – 14.40	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	Lesson 5	
14.40 – 15.40	Lesson 6	Lesson 6	Lesson 6	Lesson 6	

Communication

The school uses text messaging service and email to notify parents of absences and other general information. If you do not receive a text message and email from us by Friday 30th August please contact the main office to update your contact details.