



## **End of Year Letter – June 2013**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we approach the end of yet another school year, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your help, support and interest this year. We have had another very busy and successful year in school and you, as partners in the education of your children, deserve much of the credit for that.

Please read the following letter as it contains important information for next year. Throughout the summer you can also keep checking the website: [www.robertson.ie](http://www.robertson.ie). I hope to keep it updated during the holidays.

### **Dates**

Last day of term	Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> June (School closes at 12.00 noon – <b>Barbecue &amp; Fun Night @ 6 p.m.</b> )
School re-opens	Monday 2nd September
Peace Proms Concert	Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> October (children in Senior Room taking part)
Half-Term	School will be closed for the week beginning Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> October
Christmas Holidays	Last day of term – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December (closing at 12.00 noon)
Term 2	School will open again on Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January

### **Class Arrangements for September**

The classes in school next year will be arranged as follows:

Miss Henderson:	Junior Infants & Senior Infants (15)
Miss Bustard:	First, Second & Third Class (24)
Mrs. Somerville:	Fourth, Fifth & Sixth Class (23)

### **Infant Day**

Until Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September, the Junior Infants will go home at 12.30 p.m. From Monday 10<sup>th</sup> September, the Junior Infant Day ends at 2.00 p.m. Senior Infants will go home at 3.00 p.m. Thank you to all our Junior Infant parents this year for their prompt pick ups at 2.00 p.m. It has made a huge difference to the other children in the room and I know that their Senior Infants will benefit greatly from that extra hour of attention next year.

### **Book Money**

Thank you to everyone who has already paid their book money. It would be much appreciated if all book money was paid before the end of term. We have tried very hard this year to ensure that the book rental costs have not increased. Thank you also to the children who have taken such good care of their books this year.

## **Volunteers**

We were fortunate to have many volunteers in the past year who gave of their time to help with activities in school. In particular, I would like to thank Charlene Perry for her regular help in school.

I would also like to thank Mrs Esther Russell for her help with R.E. in the Senior Room and also for the many other activities she has supported us with in school this year.

For the new school year, we are again looking for people who would like to help. In particular, those who would like to do some reading activities/craft work/cooking etc. would be very welcome.

As mentioned at the End of Year Show, the school no longer receives a maintenance grant for the school grounds or building. This grant (which amounted to approximately 40% of our budget) was abolished by the government last year. Thank you to all those who helped with maintenance issues this year and those who responded when we needed urgent help. I would particularly like to thank Alan Mahon for his help in locating and solving our water leak.

## **Uniform**

Please ensure the children have navy trousers or skirts and black shoes to wear with their burgundy jumpers. Thank you for your support of this during the year.

On P.E. days, the children should wear their navy P.E. sweatshirts and plain navy tracksuit bottoms **(no stripes or logos please)**.

Please make sure all uniform items are clearly labelled. There are several jumpers and sweatshirts at school which have not been claimed by anyone.

We are also asking that, for Health and Safety reasons, jewellery is not worn at school. (Exceptions to this rule are tasteful stud earrings and wristwatches).

## **Attendance/Absences**

The average attendance in school this year was 97%. Your help in ensuring that appointments etc. are arranged outside of school hours when possible and bringing children into school before and after appointments is much appreciated.

If a child is not coming to school, please ring or send a note with a sibling. It is school policy to contact parents if we have an unexplained absence.

Please note that parents are legally obliged to provide a written explanation for children's absences.

**As Principal, I have a legal obligation to report all children who are absent for more than 20 days in a school year and also those children whose attendance is erratic or giving the school cause for concern, whether they have missed 20 days or not.**

## **End of Year Show**

Thank you for your support of the End of Year Show – you were a great audience. We hope you enjoyed the evening.

## **Thank you**

We are very fortunate to have a number of people who work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that our school is able to do its best for your children. All of these people give their time, energy and enthusiasm, often working unseen, unnoticed, above and beyond what is asked of them and to them we say thank you:

The teaching staff, not only for their dedication to teaching, but also for the care they give the children and their own individual contributions to creating a warm, welcoming and vibrant school community;

Mrs. Cathrena Duncan, for the support she has given the staff this year and for all the work she has done in the school office;

Mrs. Muriel Mitchell not only for her outstanding work in keeping our school clean but also for the many little things which she has helped with this year;

Mr. Ezra Mitchell for all the many things he has volunteered and helped with throughout this year;

Mr. John Barnett for his continued help in the garden and for all the support he gives us in school;

Mr. Noel Given for his work in the school grounds this year;

The P.T.A. for the efforts they have made on behalf of all the children this year;

The members of our Board of Management for their help and support.

We are very grateful for all you do for us. Thank you!

## **Congratulations & Best Wishes**

Congratulations to all those who have had new additions to their families this year.

Congratulations and best wishes to Miss Bustard who will be getting married to Richard on July 6<sup>th</sup>. I know that you will join with me in wishing them a long and happy future together. Miss Bustard will be using her married name, Mrs Patterson, when she returns in September.

## **Education Cuts**

You may be aware that the Special Needs Budget has been reduced yet again in the last few days. Children allocated Resource Teaching Hours have now had their hours cut by 25% in the past few years. This impacts not only on those children receiving Resource Hours but also on the rest of the children as their own class teachers have to try to make up for this reduction in teaching time as well as meet the needs of all the other children in their classes.

Restructuring the provision of Special Needs teachers in schools may mean that next year, Mrs McMahon will be unable to continue in her current role. We hope that this is not the case and look forward to seeing her return in September.

## **Head Lice**

We have had very few outbreaks of head lice this year and we would love to keep it that way so can I please ask that every child is checked and treated over the holidays? The chemists have a range of shampoos that will successfully clear up any infestation.

**Please do not send your child to school if you suspect they may have head lice and please bear in mind that it is very frustrating for everyone if untreated heads are re-infecting other children on a regular basis.**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Class

Good luck to all of our 6<sup>th</sup> Class pupils as they leave to start at their new schools.

So, to...

**Grace, Zara, Rachel, Jack and Katherine**

who are starting Coláiste Cholmchille,  
Ballyshannon and

**Victor Joe** who is starting the Abbey Vocational  
School, Donegal

...we send our very best wishes and will look  
forward to hearing how you are getting on.



Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy, safe and enjoyable summer holiday. Enjoy the following poem and please use this holiday to enjoy time with your children. They will be all grown up before you know it!

*If I had my child to raise all over again,  
I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later.  
I'd finger-paint more, and point the finger less.  
I would do less correcting and more connecting.  
I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes.  
I'd take more hikes and fly more kites.  
I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play.  
I would run through more fields and gaze at more stars.  
I'd do more hugging and less tugging.  
-- Diane Loomans*

I look forward to seeing you all in September.

Yours sincerely,

Dawn Somerville  
Principal