



Christian Brothers' High School,
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.

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www.cbshighschoolclonmel.ie

June 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Another busy academic year has ended and we are currently planning for 2022/23. We look forward to new ventures and the return of some tried and tested procedures that enable our school to work effectively and efficiently.

Enclosed you will find some documentation that you will need for your son returning in August.

- Book List
- Calendar

Book List (if applicable):

Please find enclosed the book list for your son for the coming year. Some books are available second hand.

Book Scheme: (Junior Cycle only):

The Department of Education issues schools with funding to support families who are struggling financially with the cost of buying school books. Applications must be made directly to the Principal where vouchers will be issued to those who qualify. These vouchers will help towards the cost of books but will not cover the entire cost. The grant is limited and must be spread throughout the entire school community. Senior Cycle students have access to the Book Rental Scheme.

School Calendar:

The 2022-2023 year calendar is included and you are requested to keep it in a safe place. Please note the opening dates and the full list of meetings scheduled for the 2022-2023 school year. It should be noted that all Parent Teacher Meetings take place outside of school time and as a result it is expected that parents/guardians will make every effort to attend these important meetings. Any changes to the calendar will be included on our website www.cbshighschoolclonmel.ie and you will be notified via VSware Mail.

School Journal:

The school journal is mandatory. This helps students to keep an accurate note of homework to be completed and upcoming events. It is also required that it be the central point of communication between parents/guardians and school and vice versa for notes regarding absences, appointments behaviour and homework. We request that you monitor the journal weekly and check for notes etc. Each student is responsible for their own journal and for ensuring that it is used for official purposes only. Students who damage or deface same will have to purchase a replacement. The journal contains a section where students can monitor and assess their academic progress. This is a vital part of modern education. It teaches students to take responsibility for their learning and reflect on their progress. We advise that you monitor your son's progress through their journal.

Texting Service:

The High School operates a texting service for parents and it is essential that you keep us updated with any change of numbers. Please inform the school office if you have changed your number (or address) recently.

VSware:

The school uses a management system called VSware. You should now all be familiar with this. It is used to text parents/guardians, issue reports (they are no longer provided in paper form) and for all school payments. Parents/guardians have all been issued with a username and it is linked to the phone number identified for texting purposes. If you have forgotten your username please contact the school office and they can tell you what it is. If you press 'forgot password' you will receive a text that allows you to create a password which will bring you into your son's account. Here you will be able to view his timetable, school reports and pay any costs required by the school. Please ensure that you can access VSware on a desktop or using the App. If using the App the school name is Árdscóil na mBráithre.

School Uniform:

We expect students to wear their uniform with pride and dignity. Students must come to school every day in full uniform, with a tidy and appropriate haircut (See School Code of Behaviour). Shaved or partially shaved heads are

not permitted and I would ask the students to return to school with an appropriate haircut (suitable for the world of work as this is what we are preparing them for). The school jacket is compulsory. Students are only permitted to wear the school PE half zip to school-related sporting events. It is not a replacement for the compulsory school jacket. School uniforms must be worn every day and at all school related activities and no variation in the uniform will be tolerated. **Black shoes are compulsory and no black canvas shoes or runners are allowed.**

This year following Covid restrictions we noticed that students liked to wear their PE clothes on the day they had PE. It increased participation and many students felt more comfortable not having to use the changing rooms. It is a difficult time in a young person's life so it is important that we try and work with them to find a solution that fits with appropriate presentation in school. Following consultation with staff, students and parents we are introducing a PE uniform in September. In order to keep the costs down for parents there is only one mandatory item of clothing- the school half zip. This is available to buy via the link below. It must be worn with a black tracksuit end. The entire package of half zip, t-shirt and tracksuit bottoms is on sale for €75. **These are only permitted to be worn on the day that your son is doing PE. Full uniform is expected to be worn on the other four days and the school jumper or school jacket cannot be replaced with the PE half zip.**

The school shop is available on the link below:

<https://www.dssports.ie/product-category/my-club/education/high-school-clonmel/>

Personal Accident Insurance:

It is compulsory for all students to be covered under the Personal Accident Insurance Scheme. Students are thereafter covered 24 hours a day for the 12 months. This is compulsory and included in the mandatory cost required at the beginning of the year. This is vital for cover for accidents inside and outside school and many parents/guardians have found this invaluable.

Health

If your son has any health issues that you feel the school should be aware of and you have not previously notified us please can ensure that you notify our Postholder Mrs. Kathleen Deely by email at kdeely@cbshighschoolclonmel.ie and she will notify the relevant staff.

Voluntary Contribution:

The School Authorities are very appreciative of all parents who have supported the school by paying the Voluntary Contribution. We wish that it wasn't necessary to ask for it but without it, state funding does not cover the costs of providing a comprehensive and holistic education for your sons.

This year the voluntary contribution is €90 per student, €170 per family.

Annual Costs:

- €50 mandatory charge: (Locker, Journal, Communications and Insurance) to be paid through VShare prior to return to school
- Voluntary Contribution: (as above)

Summer Report:

You will find your son's summer report on VShare. It is essential that you discuss this with him and that on his return to school he uses this to set targets for the next school term. Testing should be seen as building blocks towards state exams and the desire to improve should be balanced with the increase in demand of a subject as the years progress. We have learned a huge amount in education over the last 3 years about methodologies that help motivate students and the resources available now to students via Google Classroom are unprecedented. Next year the school will be working on the area of blended learning through our Digital Plan mechanism.

Pastoral Care:

Over the last three years the school has focused resources on the areas of Anti-Bullying Behaviour, Positive Use of Social Media, Positive Mental Health Strategies, Resilience and Substance Use, Diversity and last year, our School of Sanctuary. We would urge you that the need remains to monitor young people's use of social media sites (especially as new ones are emerging regularly) and encourage good online etiquette and open communication between you and your son around these areas. We are happy to do whatever we can to support you in your role as parents/guardians in the challenging job of guiding your son safely into adulthood. We will be in contact early in the next academic year with details of our focus for 2022/23.

Plastic Bottles:

I would also remind students that as of September 2019 we have become a single plastics free zone. Students will be required to have a reusable drinking bottle which can be refilled at the breaks from the water fountains. **Students are not permitted to bring single use plastics to school as part of our Green Schools Plan.** I would like to extend my appreciation and gratitude to Ms. Rowe and our Green Schools Committee and look forward to working towards our next flag. Please note that students will have single use plastics confiscated if they persist in bringing them to school.

Lunchtime:

In response to concerns from parents/guardians and the local community, it has been decided by the Board of Management to keep all Junior students in at lunchtime and not permit them to leave the school grounds. Over

the last year we have purchased a number of picnic tables which allow students to eat their lunches and socialise. This has been decided on Health and Safety grounds and to allow for additional maturity.

Evening Study:

Supervised study will be available for two hours after school each day for 2nd to 6th years. The cost of study for the first term (Sept-Dec) will be 150 euros. Spaces will be allocated to 3rd and 6th years first and payment can be made on VSware from July onward. In order to secure your son's place, payment needs to have been made by the end of August and before he begins study. We will then offer spaces to 2nd and 5th years in September. Parents/guardians of 2nd and 5th years will be notified when payment can be made on VSware for this in September.

There are a number of basic things that support student learning and with which you can assist:

- Being on time for school sets a young person up calmly for the day. A member of management is appointed each morning and afternoon to meet latecomers. Unfortunately it is the same students who arrive late every day and this impacts on their learning. It is our job to ensure learning takes place in an ordered environment and responding to poor punctuality is our responsibility. It not only impacts on the young person who is late but also on the class that it disturbs.
- In September 2022 the school will return to teacher based classrooms. This is accepted best practice in terms of Health and Safety. Students are expected to move from class to class in a timely manner. On occasion, there are students who frequent the bathrooms between every class in order to delay arriving to class. Also, it is necessary on Health and Safety grounds for schools to monitor the toilets so that students can access them comfortably when they need to. We have 720 students and if we were to allow all students to go to the toilets during classes it would be very hard to manage. Therefore, if a student needs to use the bathroom they must give their journal to the teacher and they will be signed out of class. It is best practice for all of us to use the time before school, at break time and lunchtime to ensure we use the bathroom. Teachers are asked to use their judgement in monitoring this. If there is a medical reason why your son needs to be allowed to go to the bathroom without question please inform us and this will be accepted. Otherwise a student may be asked to wait until the end of the lesson or a break in the lesson in order to deter disturbance to that lesson.
- Growing up is hard and we appreciate this. The school has a proud support policy that includes discipline, pastoral care, learning support and counselling where needed. Last year we had 5 Counsellors working with our boys and the reason we can do this is because as a school we prioritise people. We strive to work together with the DES, parents/guardians and the school community to ensure that we continually reflect on our provision and support as well as ways to make the school a better place. Last year our Learner Voice team was extremely valuable to us as teachers in helping us to reflect on what helps them to learn and we look forward to working with them next year through our School Self Evaluation Process.
- Absences: We would ask you to use VSware for all absence explanations. Please understand that we cannot permit your son to leave the premises without your permission. This is a health and safety issue. For the smooth running of the school please ensure that you explain your son's absence (as we are legally required to account for them) on VSware and if he has to leave during the school day for an appointment please request this absence (before he leaves) on VSware also. We have a strict policy that all students must present themselves to the office and sign out, having met with a member of staff before they leave in order that we can account for them. Ultimately we rely on their cooperation in this matter and if they don't cooperate we view it as a breach of our Health and Safety procedures which is dealt with under the discipline system. As I often tell the boys, you cannot leave the workplace mid shift without clocking out or accounting for yourself. We appreciate your support on this matter.
- Finally, schools are about relationships and each and every one of us is human, and therefore flawed. We will all make mistakes and experience consequences and that is part of life and we will also hope through reflective practice and support that we will build resilience to continually grow as people. At the High School this is what we strive towards, building a community where we can learn, grow, make mistakes, forgive and be forgiven as well as to develop ourselves as individuals whilst supporting each other in the process. Please understand that this is what underpins all our school policies and procedures.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire parent/guardian population for your continuing support of the school. We hope to see as many of you as possible at our Parent Council AGM on Thursday 22nd September at 7pm in the school Atrium.

All information for the return to school will also be available on our website, but most importantly, please ensure that you have regular access to your VSware as the Mail system is our primary method of communication.

Finally, it is essential that you keep this information safe over the Summer. The school office will be closed during the month of July but should you require any further information please feel free to contact during June and August.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. K. Steenson

Principal