

26th August 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope you are well and like us are looking forward to another successful school year for everyone.

It is a very demanding and also exciting time in education as we work through change in our Junior Cycle Curriculum as well as new arrangements for our Leaving Cert. students. The Leaving Cert students this year had greater access to their exam scripts and the various components of their examinations than ever before including, for the first time, knowing the result of the oral and aural elements of their language subjects. We congratulate our students who did so well in their Leaving Cert and wish them every success for the future and we thank the teachers for their work with them over the past five or six years.

I would like to remind you that here in Loreto Secondary School, Clonmel as part of our Digital and IT Strategy, every student has been issued with a Microsoft Office 365 account. All students have been given Office 365 accounts following their and your acceptance of the Office 365 User Agreements.

This is an online education tool and collaboration platform that will enable students and teachers to collaborate and share notes and other digital content. The many benefits of this system include a school email account and unlimited storage for users. **This is an invaluable resource for students who if absent from the classroom while at school activities or due to illness can communicate with their classmates and teachers in relation to the class work they have missed and/or the assigned homework.**

Furthermore, all users can install Office ProPlus desktop applications on up to 5 devices, so if any members of a student's family plans to upgrade or purchase a laptop or desktop then make the seller aware that you have an Office 365 account to make this saving.

The cost of postage has made it prohibitive to continue communicating by regular mail so it is really important that you use our website (www.loretoclonmel.ie) as regularly as possible in order to keep up to date with school information and events. **There is a tab 'Letters to Families' so please visit the website frequently for information there.** The school app is the best way to see the various activities the students are involved in on a daily or weekly basis. You can access this by going to the website where there is a link to the app.

This year, as in the past we will be sending reports to all parents via VS WARE and over the coming months we will be in contact with you about this.

The School Calendar for 2019-20 is on the school website. You will note some full day closures for the students e.g. 23rd September 2019 which is a full day of staff training as organised by the Department of Education and Skills. All post primary schools in the country will be closing for two of these days during the year but on different dates. Obviously, we will try to stay with all dates/events as listed. If changes occur, we will contact you by text, therefore it is essential that we have your correct number. Details of changes to any activity or event will also be placed on our website and on our school app.

SCHOOL EXPENSES:

We thank all of you who have paid your school expenses. However, a number of people have yet to do so and I urge you to do so as soon as possible. We encourage you to use our online payment system which is to be found on our website. However, as always if you would like to pay the school directly in instalments then that is no problem, please phone us at 052-6121402 to make such arrangements.

SUPERVISION BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL:

Following a Board of Management meeting in May I was asked to remind parents and guardians of the following:

There is no supervision on site before 8.40am and so parents who choose to drop their students to school do so in the knowledge that they are unsupervised, and we accept no responsibility for them until official supervision begins at this time. It has also been brought to our attention that some students are dropped to the school grounds and then leave the school. As parents it is essential that you know what your student is doing before 8.40 if you drop her to the school grounds.

In the evenings after school there is 15minutes supervision provided and after that time all students who are on the grounds **MUST** be in a supervised situation i.e. in Supervised Study or in the presence of a staff member. The school now provides supervised study for all students from 1st year to 6th year and as a result there is no unsupervised area where students may wait or do homework etc.

SAFETY ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS IN PARTICULAR CAR PARKS

We request that you do **NOT** drive into the school grounds in the morning or evening to drop off or collect your students. It is busy at the school from 8am and that is why we have opened the back gate as well to allow for a few options for parents. If, however your student has a particular issue with walking up the avenue either on a temporary or long-term basis please contact us immediately and we will make alternative arrangements for you.

I look forward to meeting you at many of our school events during the year and consequently to extend a very warm invitation to our Mass to mark the Opening of the School Year. It will take place at 3pm in The Friary Church on **Tuesday 17th September 2019**. It is expected that all students would attend as all students of all faiths and no faith are welcome to the first official gathering of the school community. Students may be brought home after the Mass, but Study **WILL** also be available on that evening for those who usually attend.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy school year!

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Anne Mc Grath, Principal.