



ST. PETER'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

Information Booklet

for parents of new pupils



St. Peter's N.S.

Snugboro, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

 (094) 9023079

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 www.stpetersnssnugboro.ie

Congratulations & Welcome

DEAR PARENT(S) / LEGAL GUARDIAN(S)

Welcome to St. Peter's N.S., Snugboro. This booklet contains information for the parent(s) of our new pupils – Infants and other classes. Although some information is aimed at Junior Infant parent(s), we hope that it will be a useful resource to help **all** parent(s) in relation to school matters.

Your child has reached an important milestone as he/she begins school here in St. Peter's N.S. Snugboro. We look forward to providing your child's primary education and we hope that he/she will have happy and productive days with us as we work together to build a solid foundation for his/her future life.

Yours in Education,

Eamonn Shaughnessy, Principal

Edwin Quinn, Chairperson of the Board of Management

OUR SCHOOL MOTTO

“Treat others as you would like them to treat you”

● Our Ethos

St. Peter's National School is a Catholic school which accepts Catholic pupils. We also accept the children of no faith and of other denominations into our school and respect their beliefs / non-belief.

As a staff we aim to create a happy, secure environment for our pupils in order to create:

- ✓ a positive learning ethos in which every pupil can grow and benefit from school;
- ✓ an atmosphere which helps pupils to become more self-disciplined and encourage good standards of behaviour.

This will lead to a sense of good order and a reasonable approach to discipline.



The School Day & Lunches

Arrival Time	08:50 am
Formal Classes Commence	09:00 am
Dismissal — Infants	1.30 pm
Dismissal — 1st-6th class	2.30 pm

These times are subject to change and you will be informed by e-mail / text if these times change.

The Board of Management accepts **NO** responsibility for pupils outside of these times. The school will open to receive pupils at 08:50 a.m. Classes will commence at 9.00 a.m. No pupils should arrive later than 9.00 a.m. The school cannot accept responsibility for children outside of opening hours. No responsibility is accepted for pupils who travel on the bus. The Box junction must be kept clear at all time.

● Lunches

Each pupil has two breaks during the day.

- Children eat their lunches in the classroom, where they are supervised by a teacher.
- The school is also participating in the Hot School Meals Programme, with meals delivered daily by HotSchoolMeals.ie at 12 noon. Orders for hot meals must be placed online, and further information regarding registration and ordering will be distributed separately.
- In order to promote healthy eating habits, in accordance with Department of Health and Education guidelines, the morning snack may consist of fruit, yoghurt, ricecakes, crackers and a non-fizzy drink. Crisps, chocolate bars, sweets and chewing gum are not permitted in the school.

Due to a number of pupils with life-threatening food allergies in the school, we request that parents/guardians do not include nuts, nut products, cereal bars containing nuts or nut traces, foods containing nuts, or food cooked in nut-based oil in their child's lunch.



School uniforms **must** be worn every day, except on P.E. days – which are **Tuesdays and Thursdays** for Infants.

● The school uniform consists of

- ✓ **Grey** – Trousers / Pinafore / Skirt
- ✓ **Light blue** – Shirt / Blouse
- ✓ **Navy** – Jumper / Cardigan
- ✓ A **Navy tie** with a light blue stripe
- ✓ **Navy** Tights
- ✓ **Black** Shoes / Dark-coloured Shoes
- ✓ School Track suit (crested, navy & saffron top & navy bottoms — Fahy's Castlebar) + white aertex t-shirt with collar

Children **must** wear school tracksuits, white T-shirt and runners for P.E. on their designated days (*Tuesdays and Thursdays for Infants*). In fine weather children may wear navy or grey knee-length shorts.

All of the above items may be purchased in any good drapery store in town. The tie & P.E. track suit is available in Fahey's, Main St., Castlebar.

PLEASE REMEMBER

Please provide a labelled change of clothes for your child which will be kept at school.

Please have all items clearly labelled. In the early years, shoes or runners with a Velcro fastener will enable your child to change quickly and independently.



Preparing for the First Day

Tell your child about school beforehand, casually, and talk about it as a happy place where there will be a big welcome for him/her. There he/she will meet new friends.

● A word of advice

- ✓ **Trust the teacher.** She/he is experienced and resourceful and is used to coping with all kinds of starting-off problems.
- ✓ **Try not to show outward signs of your own distress.** Sometimes parent's own feelings may cause anxiety in his/her/their children.
- ✓ When you have reassured your child, leave as quickly as possible. The teacher can distract and humour him/her more easily when you are not around.

● It would help to practise these

- ✓ Button and unbutton, zip and unzip his/her coat
- ✓ Put on and take off his/her own shoes
- ✓ Use the toilet without help (it is preferable that all pupils are toilet trained)
- ✓ Tidy up and put away his/her playthings

These skills help to develop manual dexterity and co-ordination which are pre-requisites to develop the fine motor control, e.g. writing skills, etc.

REMEMBER — VERY IMPORTANT

Please label **all** belongings and **all** clothing (including jackets/coats etc.) with the name and class of your child. Please note that the school will be running a Vinted account from May 2026 to sell unclaimed lost property and lost-and-found items. We encourage all parents/guardians to ensure that items are clearly labelled to help them be returned to their owner.



LEARNING TOGETHER

Books, Contributions & Insurance

For September, you will need to purchase a school bag, lunch-box and pencil case, as well as the school uniform and tracksuit.

The Department of Education provides funding for schoolbooks and copies. However, this does not cover stationery, photocopying, Arts & Crafts materials or Pupil Personal Insurance.

● Voluntary Contribution

A voluntary contribution of **€60 per pupil** can be paid via Aladdin ePayments from September 2026. This helps to cover: 24-hr Pupil Personal Insurance, Photocopying, Art & Craft, Digital Licenses, etc.

● Pupil Personal Insurance

This is a benefits policy which covers medical and dental expenses following an accident at school or elsewhere.

● Homework

- Homework for infants will consist mostly of oral work and reading. Handouts / sheets for homework will be clearly dated – and in your child's folder / schoolbag. Homework for Infants should take no longer than 10 minutes.
- Every pupil from First Class upwards will have a homework note-book, into which they write their homework for the coming night. Upon checking the homework, the parents must then sign the notebook, stating that the work has been done. The homework notebook acts as a means of home-school communication alongside the Aladdin Connect App.

● Reading in Infants

- After many months of pre-reading activities your child will also be introduced to tricky / sight words which aren't sounded phonetically.
- It is important that you reinforce the reading of these words each night with your child as this will boost your child's reading ability.
- **Jolly Phonics** — as the term progresses, your child will be given new words to read; you will be asked to read these words with your child and practise them. Your child will learn to blend sounds, such as e.g. s-a-t = sat.
- We would encourage you to read to your child on a daily basis and to discuss pictures, characters and story. It would be advisable to enrol your child as a member of Mayo County Council Library.



Helping Your Child to Learn

● Learning through Play

At our school, we are proud to embrace the new Primary Curriculum Framework, which places children's wellbeing, learning, and development at the heart of school life. In the infant classroom, play is recognised as a vital part of how young children learn, helping them to develop confidence, creativity, communication skills, independence, and positive relationships.

Through carefully planned play-based activities such as role play, storytelling, construction, art, music, sensory play, and outdoor learning, children actively explore and make sense of the world around them while developing important skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Our classrooms provide a safe, engaging, and inclusive environment where children are encouraged to investigate, make choices, solve problems, and take an active role in their own learning. Teachers support and extend learning through interaction, observation, and guided play, while valuing each child's voice and individuality. We also value the strong partnership between home and school in supporting every child's development.

Through playful and meaningful learning experiences, we aim to nurture happy, confident, and motivated learners who enjoy coming to school each day.

● Early Intervention

Emphasis is placed on identifying children who have learning difficulties as early as possible and putting an effective intervention programme in place.

● Resources

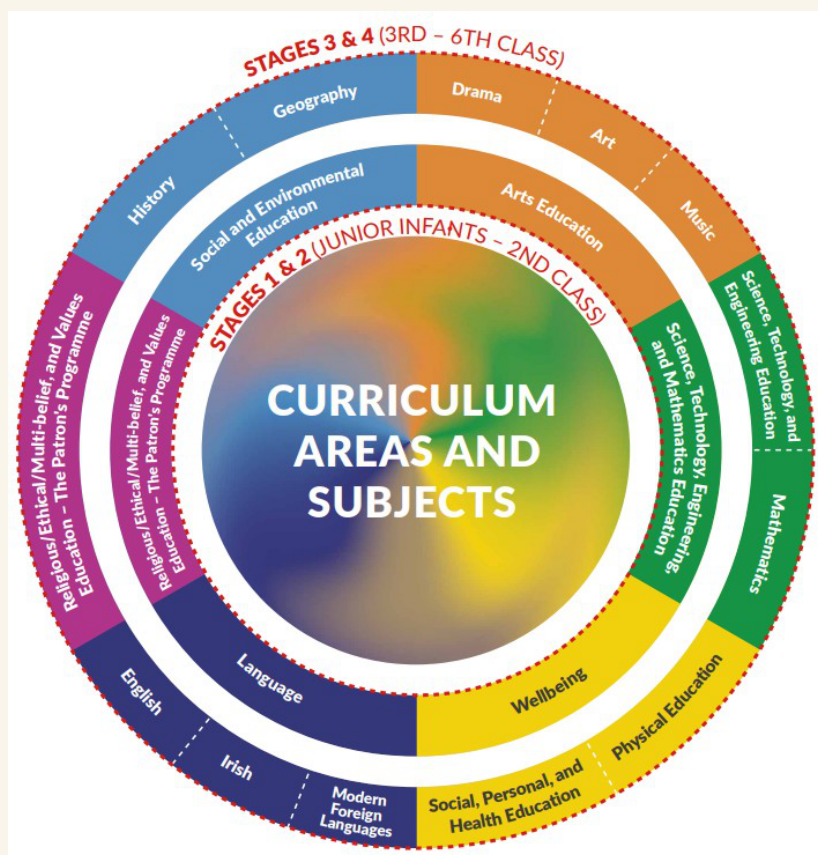
The **Let's Get Ready** campaign is a lovely resource for families preparing for important milestones such as starting primary school. Filled with practical tips, playful activities and supportive advice, it helps parents and children build confidence, develop routines and feel emotionally ready for new beginnings.



LEARNING TOGETHER

The Primary Curriculum

Children at St. Peter's learn across the full range of curriculum areas and subjects, from Junior Infants right through to 6th class.



Curriculum Areas & Subjects — Primary Curriculum Framework.
Find out more at www.curriculumonline.ie





Technology & the Outdoors

● Technology

Pupils are given “hands on” experience of technology with interactive Whiteboards in all of the classrooms. These provide a huge choice of media through which we can bring the curriculum to life. iPads and Chromebooks are used in a cross-curricular way to give children confidence in dealing with this modern medium of communication & source of knowledge. Staff are constantly updating their skills through in-service courses so as to equip themselves all the more to help pupils develop their skills. This creates a happy learning ethos for all.

● Outdoor Education

Pupils **walk / run a daily mile**, go on field trips, nature walks and outings throughout the year. We are fortunate to have various coaches from sporting organisations such as GAA, IRFU etc. who visit the school to enhance training sessions. (Our indoor sports hall means these activities can take place in all weathers.) Sports activities are catered for with both boys and girls from the senior classes competing in lunch-time leagues; our teams participate in inter-school competitions in gaelic, soccer, hurling/camogie, rugby, rounders, cross-country etc. Mayo County Council also provide a tutor to facilitate cycling training and Road Safety to the senior pupils (usually 6th class) in school, at a reduced rate. At the rear of the school we have a pitch, running track and playground.

● Active Month

The school partakes in an Active Month during the school year. It is a non-competitive initiative which highlights the importance of P.E., physical activity and sport in schools & communities. During this month pupils take part in activities such as Gymnastics, Yoga, trips to the Tennis club and much more! Teachers also incorporate learning-on-the-move and movement breaks. A huge thanks to our Parents Association Committee, who generally cover the cost of trips to the Tennis Club and Kids in Motion. The school endeavours to provide Physical Activity in all of the following areas — Competitive / Non-Competitive, Team / Individual, Contact / Non-Contact — which are inclusive and differentiated.



Extra-Curricular Activities

As St. Peter's is a co-educational school, special emphasis is placed on games which promote inclusive participation where enjoyment is the desired outcome. Games such as basketball, rounders, tennis, volleyball, unihoc, table tennis, tag rugby, Gaelic football, hurling, camogie, cross-country and soccer are enjoyed by both boys and girls. The school has won many awards at County and Connaught level in the aforementioned games. An activity / sports day is held in late May / early June for the pupils.

The school boasts of a **Marching Band**. The Band takes part in the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade and won the overall award (The Jason King Memorial Cup) in the past. Most recently the Special Recognition Awards in 2023 and 2026. Pupils are taught Tin whistle from 3rd class up, with accordion lessons available to those pupils who choose to play accordion in the school band. Pupils are also given instruction on other band instruments – drums, bellyra, cymbals etc.

Music Generation Mayo — our pupils in fourth and fifth classes are taught how to play the ukulele by a tutor from Music Generation Mayo. Our Senior Pupils also participate in school quizzes and all the children have the opportunity to visit both the Museum of Country Life and the Linenhall Arts Centre. These outings have allowed them to explore local history, art, and culture, enriching their learning experiences beyond the classroom.

The pupils participate in our annual in-house Carol Service at Christmas. Other years, Senior pupils took part in workshops with the "Whistle Blast Quartet" and Mayo Music Generation. Our pupils have performed playing their ukuleles with other schools such as Scoil Raifteirí and also in the Linenhall Arts Centre and the TF Royal Theatre. Our Senior Pupils, from 3rd to 6th class, gain valuable skills through lessons in modern languages, for example French, Italian and Spanish. These lessons not only help improve their communication abilities but also introduce them to different cultures. The interactive nature of the classes makes language learning both engaging and enjoyable.



Green-School Initiative

The school has a long tradition of promotion of conservation in the environment. It has won numerous awards for its work in this area. Prompted by these former successes, the school entered for Green Flag status and was awarded its **First Green Flag award in 2003** by An Taisce for the theme of Litter & Waste. Pupils are encouraged to recycle waste litter and to respect the internal and external school environment. The pupils operate as litter wardens on a rota basis. We often have walk-to-school days and car-pooling is encouraged.



We continue to foster positive attitudes in the children towards their environment.

2**Flag 2 · Energy****3****Flag 3 · Water****4****Flag 4 · Travel****5****Flag 5 · Biodiversity****6****Flag 6 · Global Citizenship: Litter & Waste****7****Flag 7 · Global Citizenship: Energy****8****Flag 8 · Global Citizenship & Marine Environment****9****Flag 9 · Global Citizenship & Travel**

In May 2025 we received our 10th GREEN FLAG — Global Citizenship: Food & Biodiversity.

● School Garden

In keeping with our Green Flag, the school has developed an organic school garden. An out-door polytunnel classroom has been constructed. Pupils are engaged in acquiring basic planting skills. This out-door learning environment is becoming an integral part of the S.E.S.E. curriculum.





Behaviour & Communication

OUR MOTTO

"Treat others as you would like them to treat you."

All pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner both to themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect to other pupils and adults. Inappropriate language is unacceptable. Respect must be shown to the property of the individual and to that of the school at all times. If any deliberate damage is caused, the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost of repair/replacement.

School Rules are devised with regard to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. There are various sanctions which may be imposed on a child who breaches the "Code of Behaviour". Our "Code of Behaviour", Anti-bullying policy and our Acceptable Use policy are available to view on our website www.stpetersnssnugboro.ie

● Bullying

If you suspect that your child is being bullied, the best person to contact is the class teacher. We have a school policy for dealing with bullying. The class teacher and staff will then implement that policy and follow the various steps contained therein.

● Acceptable Use

Children are not allowed mobile phones / electronic devices in school or on any school activity. If a child is found with a mobile phone it will be confiscated. In exceptional circumstances, arrangements may be made between the principal and parents of the child to hold a mobile phone for a child in the office for use after school hours.



Golden Rules

Some Golden Rules from the Code of Behaviour, Substance Abuse, Health & Safety and Acceptable Use policies. Please visit www.stpetersnssnugboro.ie to view these policies in full.

● Appearance of pupils

- ✓ Pupils are expected to wear their **full school uniform**.
- ✓ Hairstyles are expected to be kept neat. For hygiene purposes, long hair should be tied back to prevent the spread of head lice.
- ✓ Make-up is not to be worn during school times, and jewellery should be kept to a minimum for Health and Safety purposes.

● Health & Safety

- ✓ Fighting, rough play or any physical force is never allowed or tolerated.
- ✓ Pupils enter and leave the school building at all times in an orderly fashion. Pupils must walk within the school building and enter and exit the building quietly.
- ✓ In the interest of safety, when the bell rings during playtimes the children stop playing and move to their class lines. Children in the yard enter the school building with permission from teachers on yard duty.
- ✓ Except for the transverse wall, climbing on the school walls / perimeters is strictly forbidden.
- ✓ Cycling in school grounds is forbidden, except for the safe cycling workshops that take place on the school grounds.
- ✓ Pupils play on the playground equipment only whilst there is a teacher supervising. The playground is accessible during school hours only.
- ✓ Chewing gum is banned.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Glass bottles, correction fluids, other solvents, matches, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs are **NOT** allowed in or on the school grounds.



Accidents & Attendance

● Accidents

In the event of a serious accident the following steps will be followed:

- The parent(s) is/are informed immediately by phone. The child will be made as comfortable as possible.
- He/she will be reassured. They will be told that their parent(s) has/have been notified.
- A minimal amount of first-aid will be administered if deemed necessary.
- In some extreme cases it may be necessary to bring the child directly to the hospital / call an ambulance. The parent(s) will be informed of this fact.

Your permission to do this has been sought on the Enrolment Form.

● Attendance at School

Under section 21 of the Education Welfare Act 2000, the Board of Management of a recognised school is required to prepare a report twice a year on the level of attendances at the school. This report must then be submitted to the Child and Family Agency (Túsla). If a pupil has 20 or more absences in the school year, the school is obliged by law to forward his/her name to the Child and Family Agency / Túsla.

When a pupil is absent, an explanation from **PARENT(S) / LEGAL GUARDIAN(S)** must be sent to the school via Aladdin Connect. Pupils arriving late and leaving early from school must be logged by parents on the Aladdin Connect App.

● Allergies, illness & medication

Parents are asked to inform the school in writing if their child suffers from any allergies, long-term or short-term illness. Parents of pupils who are on medication or inhalers are asked to fill in an Indemnity Form (available from the school office) for school records.

PLEASE NOTE

Medication must NOT be sent to school in your child's school bag.



Parent & Teacher Communication

It is important for the school to have up-to-date phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Communications will be via Notifications on the Noticeboard, which can be viewed through the **Aladdin Connect App**. Formal parent-teacher meetings are held annually.

If a parent wishes to meet with or talk to a member of staff, they can schedule an appointment by contacting the school office on **094 9023079** or send an email to office@stepetersnssnugboro.ie

Our school has adopted the revised Parental Complaints Procedures as agreed by the INTO and the CPSMA. A copy can be found at: cpsma.ie/.../Parental-Complaints-Procedure-Updated-Dec-2023.pdf

● Aladdin Connect



The school uses Aladdin as a secure communication link between parents / legal guardians and teachers. It shares attendance, reports, permissions, booking of parent/teacher meetings, payment of school fees, sharing of appointments and much more!

The Board of Management has resolved that St. Peter's will be using the Aladdin Connect App; it is important to note that this information is confidential to you, your child's teacher and the principal.

Upon commencing Junior Infants, parents will be sent a unique registration link to download and register for the Aladdin Connect App. Please visit www.aladdin.ie for more information.

