



Loreto Abbey Dalkey

Bulletin August 2026



From the Principal

Dear parents and guardians,

As we return to school, I hope your holidays provided an opportunity to rest, renew energy and spend time with family and friends. We are delighted to welcome the students back next week and thank you for entrusting your daughter's education to us.

During the summer, the school hosted the Dalkey Book Festival which brought many renowned authors and an audience of thousands to our grounds. We were joined too by a large group of European students studying here on language courses throughout the summer. Additionally, a comprehensive refurbishment programme was undertaken and we are

hopeful to have it fully completed before our return to school. The development will enhance the learning and teaching environment and has cost in excess of €500,000.

The work included:

- Phase 3 of the repointing of the stone exterior of the convent building.
- The stairs and landing areas of the second and third floors were reconfigured to improve disability access.
- The staff toilets were refurbished.
- The lecture theatre was remodelled with an improved A.V. system installed.
- Two additional classrooms were developed in the convent area.
- The roofing in the Concert Hall and on the C Corridor was upgraded which included the replacement of slates and sky lights.
- Surveys were conducted on the convent building in preparation for future development.
- The Sports Hall was sound-proofed and the gym was further developed with new machines and flooring.
- Upgraded emergency lighting.

This bulletin contains some practical advice regarding our return to school and the procedures in place for the effective organisation of a learning environment. Further information on our extra-curricular programme will be published in the first edition of the “Dalkey Diary”, our weekly newsletter emailed every Friday.

As we begin this academic year, we look forward to working with parents to ensure that every student is encouraged to be the best she can be in our educational community and that she avails of all of the opportunities and possibilities that September brings.

We look forward to meeting you in person over the coming year.

Mr. Robert Dunne

Principal

Contacting the School:

4th Year Head: Ms. Colette Gallagher

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Telephone: 01 - 2718925



Principal	Please contact Ms Holly Simmons, PA holly.simmons@loretoabbeydalkey.ie Telephone: (01 2718904)
Deputy Principal with responsibility for 4th Year	Mr. Will Flanagan will.flanagan@loretoabbeydalkey.ie Telephone: (01 - 2718902)
Additional Educational Needs Coordinator	Mr. Carl Thompson carl.thompson@loretoabbeydalkey.ie
Guidance Counsellors	Ms. Dara Shortt and Ms Orla Borphy guidance@loretoabbeydalkey.ie
Digital Device Coordinator	Mr. David Cullen david.cullen@loretoabbeydalkey.ie
Chaplain	Sr. Mary Dealhunty mary.delahunty@loretoabbeydalkey.ie

Key Dates:

Monday August 31st: 4th Year Orientation 9.00-11.00
Lecture Theatre. Students should bring a pen. Full uniform should be worn.

1. School Uniform

Our school uniform helps promote a sense of belonging to the school community and is a visual symbol of Loreto Abbey. Students wearing our uniform should be conscious that they represent the entire school and as such, their behaviour should reflect our ethos and code. In the minds of our young people, fashion trends can often result in unapproved amendments to the school uniform and in time this can lead to confusion over what is acceptable or permitted. We have noticed over the last year that three areas in particular sometimes need attention.

- 1.** The school jumper is still a required part of our uniform. The fleece may be worn over the jumper in very cold weather. The hoodie, long since discontinued, is no longer an accepted part of the school uniform.
- 2.** The following shoes are acceptable. What are not acceptable are canvas runners, trainers or sports shoes with visible logos.

Uniform: School Shoes

The following are examples of black or navy shoes which are acceptable as part of our school uniform:



Sports shoes with visible logos are not permitted. The following is an example of the type of shoe that is not acceptable:



- 3.** The school skirt is designed to be worn in a particular way. It should never be rolled up and it should not be altered to make it shorter.

2. Student Drop Off

There are over 1000 people attending both the primary and secondary schools on the campus every morning. Therefore, there are significant risks for both drivers and pedestrians with a number of potentially serious accidents occurring last year. For the safety of everyone we would ask parents and

guardians to please drop off and pick up students at Harbour Road and not to drive down the approach road to the school. This helps to keep the area around the school safe and accessible for everyone, particularly during the busy morning arrival period. We appreciate your cooperation with this arrangement.

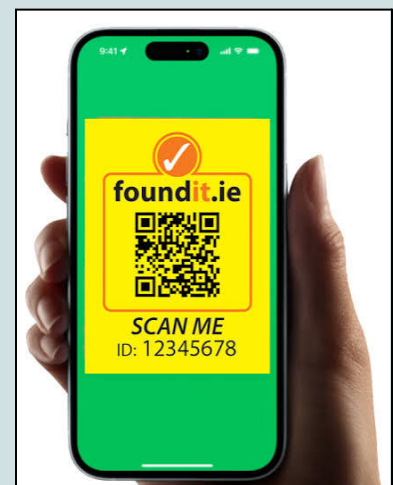
3. School Communication



We would encourage all parents and guardians to download the Loreto Abbey Dalkey Unique Schools app, which will be our main platform for school communication. We will continue to use VSware for recording attendance, marks and merits. Please ensure that you have access to both platforms before the start of the school year so that you can receive important information and updates.

6. Lost Property

Lost property can sometimes be an issue, particularly in the early days of term. The 'Foundit' stickers which are available are a way to be reconnected with any lost items. We would recommend that 'Foundit' stickers are applied to all school items. Foundit stickers can be purchased from the office and must be registered at www.foundit.ie



7. Class Arrangements

Every September, we receive requests to move classes. The reasons are varied but in a school our size, any move has an impact on the system that may not be immediately apparent to a student or a parent. If moves are facilitated for one student, an expectation develops that it is possible for all. We guarantee subject choice but we are unable to guarantee particular teachers and we would ask for understanding on this point. Please allow classes to settle. If your daughter is experiencing difficulty in a particular class, please contact the teacher directly in an attempt to resolve the problem. If the difficulty remains unresolved, please make contact with the relevant Deputy Principal or the Principal.

8. Pupil Accident Insurance

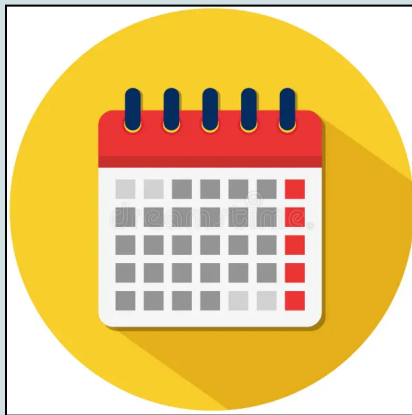
Each student is covered 24 hours per day, seven days a week for school and non school event under the Pupil Protector Personal Accident Plan. The cost of the plan is included in the school fees. There is an excess of €50 on any claim. For more information or to request a claim form please contact Maria Roberts on (01 2718926).



9. Attendance

In recent months, the Department of Education and Youth has been highlighting the importance of school attendance. Their campaign was motivated by ESRI research published earlier in the year which concluded that school absence has very significant negative consequences for educational attainment, health, wellbeing and social belonging and impacts significantly on early adulthood. The results of this research is very much our experience on the ground and in the last 15 months is the focus of a whole school approach to encourage school attendance, *"Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow; Every School Day Counts"*.

While our campaign has been relatively successful it is important to continue to challenge the mindset among some students that school is optional. Last year, 2469 full day absences were recorded with 20 students absent for 20 days or more.



On a national average, this is low. Our partial absence rate, however, is high with 3367 morning absences recorded and 3535 afternoon absences recorded. Many of these absences are with parental permission and the majority are legitimate due to illness, medical appointments, etc. There is a proportion, however, that are not and I would encourage parents to regularly check the VS system and review the pie-chart recording absences. In the event of a teacher being absent,

work is arranged for students and learning continues. There is no need for a student to leave the building.

If at all possible, please arrange for all medical/dental appointments to take place Wednesday afternoons or after-school. When the Rugby season begins, please do not sign your daughter out of school *unless* her brother or family member is playing. Few, if any, boyfriends support our students in basketball or hockey!

Lastly, if you are concerned about your daughter's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us so we can address any underlying difficulties she may be experiencing.

Often, supports put in place early prevents habit forming and make school a happier place for the student.

The window is open, admitting the September breeze: A month that smells like notebook paper and pencil shavings... A month that smells like both progress and beginning again. Lauren Oliver



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