



Scoil Náisiúnta Bhantiarna Lourdes

“Mol an óige ‘is tiocfaidh sí”

Hospital Hill, Bunclody, Enniscorthy,

Co. Wexford Y21 R820

Website: www.bunclodyns.com

Email: bunclodyns@gmail.com



20th September 2017

Parents/Guardians of Children taking part in Rackard League Competitions

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I write to make you aware of how the Rackard League Competitions run and how they differ considerably from the GAA Under-12 Competition. The Under-12 has three periods of time with the middle section given over to ensure all members of the panel get the chance to play. This means that every player gets at least one third of the playing time on the field. We in the school fully support this system and have tried to get it introduced in to the Rackard League Competitions but without success.

At the moment Rackard League is very competitive and it means that there is very little opportunity for anyone but the strongest players to play. There are two halves as in a normal adult competition and if the stronger players are taken off to give others a chance to play it often means losing and being knocked out of the competition. Occasionally when one team is clearly far ahead at half time, schools arrange between themselves to concede defeat and then play as many substitutes as possible for the second half, but this never happens when the scores are close. If we qualify with a game or two still to be played in the opening rounds (as happened in previous years) it does allow us to give all members of the panel a chance to play but it can mean a heavy defeat as the opposition may need to win to stay in the competition and they will play their strongest 15 players!

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There are nearly 40 pupils on both the boys and girls panels for football. Realistically other than the strongest 15 – 18 players the others will not get much match time unless we qualify early or are knocked out early! It may happen that players from a more junior class are picked before someone from an older class and this also adds to the difficulty.

This year a new committee runs the Rackard League. Perhaps changes will be made in the future following the success of the Under-12 competition in recent years.

In the meanwhile I ask that you talk to your son or daughter and explain the situation. Rackard League does reflect the often harsh reality of competitive sports and if your child finds this too difficult to understand or accept at the moment perhaps they are not ready to participate until they are a little older.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Mac Roibeaird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

James Roberts, Principal