 St Patrick’s P.S.

 and Nursery

 Castlederg

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 **October 2019 Newsletter**

**(also online at www.stpatrickspscastlederg.co.uk)**

**Messy Hair Day**

Our Pupil Council are organising a Messy Hair Day on Friday 11th October for fun but also to raise funds for the **Gemma Mc Hale Foundation**. This foundation has provided Mindfulness lessons for year 6 pupils for the last 3 years and individual counselling sessions for pupils for the last 2 years. The suggested donation is £1 per family – Thank you.

**Midterm Break**

The school will be closed on Wednesday 30th October, Thursday 31st October, Friday 1st November and Monday 4th November for the Halloween Break.

**Curriculum/Trips/Extended School Activities.**

* P6 and P7 pupils are currently receiving gaelic coaching with Fiachra from the Tyrone County Board on Monday mornings.
* To date the pupils Dave and Vera have been busy planting radishes, broccoli, cabbage, winter pansies and strawberry slips in our new poly tunnel. They will be harvesting potatoes, parsnips and carrots etc. this term and doing an Autumn tidy in our school garden and we will be planting out daffodil bulbs and spring flowers in November.
* Nursery pupils will visit the Castle Park for an Autumn Sponsored Walk this term.
* Mr Keenan and Mrs Smiths’ classes take part in a Sentinus Science and Engineering Robot Workshop on 14th November in school.
* Year 5 Pupils took part in Cyber Safety Online Safety Training in September organised by Allstate.

**Community Relations and Equality and Diversity**

* P5 pupils will host the P5 pupils from Edwards PS this week to take part in a Mathematics and Engineering Project Building Bridges.
* P3 Pupils will visit Edwards on the 21st November 2019 to study together People Who Help Us in the local community.

**Maths Week Ireland** takes place from 14th – 20th October this year. The children will be encouraged to take part in problem solving, puzzling and maths activities in class during this week – more activities and ideas can be found at [www.mathsweek.ie](http://www.mathsweek.ie)

**After school clubs**

Transfer Club for P7 continues on a Monday with Mrs. Mc Erlean We wish these pupils good luck in the upcoming exam.

Boys Gaelic Football club for P5 and P6 continues on a Tuesday with Mr. Keenan and the boys will take part in a Halloween Tyrone County Blitz in Strabane.

There will be a Music Club in preparation for Christmas events and Girls Gaelic Football after the midterm holiday.

Homework club will run until Thursday 12th December. Any child in P4 to P7 can stay for this club. The clubs will run from 3.15pm until 4.30pm. The children must be collected by 4.30pm. The homework club costs £2 daily which includes a snack.



**Halloween Hooley/Halloween Cake Sale/Coffee Tuesday 29th October from 10am**

This year we plan to hold our annual Halloween Hooley, Cake Sale and Coffee morning on Tuesday 29th October before midterm. Children who wish may dress up on the day. Remember children no scary masks as some of our younger children can be frightened

Pupils can also buy treats from our annual cake sale. Donation of treats and cakes are welcome. Parents and friends of the school can attend our Cake Sale/Coffee Morning to buy cakes and for tea and refreshments from 10am – 11.30am. All donations will go to school funds.

**Halloween Safety and Council Events**

Remember Firework Safety this Halloween Holiday. Children should never handle fireworks and sparklers should only be used with adult supervision. The pupils will learn about Firework Safety this month and Top Tips for Parents can be found at

<https://www.nifrs.org/fire-storm/assets/documents/Fireworks/FireworkSafety.pdf>

It is always advisable to attend local council or community groups celebrations.

**Parent Support Group**

Our Parent Support Group are organising **Personalised Christmas Cards/Mugs etc.** for parents who wish their child to take part. All profit will go to school funds. Pupils can collect design sheets from their class teacher. Forms and designs need to be returned by Friday 25th October. It is important that the pupils name and class details are filled out correctly with any payment included matching the order form.

**Road Safety/Leaving School Safely/Using Buses**

At this time of year, I appeal to parents to exercise caution when parking and to respect the basic rules which keep our pupils safe. Please leave keep clear boxes, bus bays and disabled parking bays clear as they are required for some of our pupils in the morning and afternoon. If you park too close to the pedestrian entrance of the school, you obstruct the view of the teachers and pupils and put the pupils at risk. Also make sure on collection that you cross your child safely. I notice the road is very busy at times. Pupils must exit gates by the front or back pedestrian gates only. Remind pupils using the back gate to walk home safely and in an orderly way. Also pupils travelling home in buses and taxis and cars must wear seatbelts and behave appropriately.

**Parent Teacher Meetings**

Parent teacher meetings will begin on the week beginning Monday 18th of November 2019 for Nursery and all Primary pupils. Appointments and times will be sent out after the Halloween Break. Please let the teacher know if you can attend or require another suitable time by recording it in the pupil’s reading record or school homework diary.

Parents should notify Mrs. Traynor in the school office of any changes to contact details or medical details held by the school. The Education Welfare Officer (School Attendance Officer) insists that parents forward a note or written explanation or contact the school by telephone or email if your child is unable to attend school. Notes can also be recorded in the pupil diaries in P4 to P7.

**Library Visits**

Pupils in P5 P6 and P7 visit the Library on a monthly basis. It is really important that the pupils are visiting the Library regularly, are encouraged to read every day as this is the most important skill taught at school. **Please ensure that the children are prepared when making the trip to the Library as they will have recorded this in their homework diaries.**

**Child Protection**

If at any time you have a concern, please arrange an appointment to speak to Mrs Mc Glade Vice-Principal. Mrs Mc Glade is the designated teacher for child protection. Nursery parent/s may also speak to Mrs. Shelley who is deputy designated teacher for child protection.

A Child Protection Leaflet and advice by the NI Anti Bullying Forum has also been added to the school website.

Parents also remember that you can speak with Mrs. Mc Glade or myself, if you or any member of the family are experiencing difficulties which may be impacting on your child’s progress at school.

**Breakfast Club**.

P1 children can now attend breakfast club. Breakfast club runs from 8.20am until 8.50am. Children can receive a hot breakfast at a reasonable price i.e. juice and toast 45p**.**

**Pupils are not permitted to attend school before 8.20am.**

**School Dinners/Healthy Eating**

The price of a school dinner is £2.60. This money can be paid daily. Full menus are available on our school website.

Children can also purchase a healthy break from the canteen at break time. There is also a break card scheme which costs £1.80 for the week and the children can exchange the card for an apple, a banana, melon or milk etc. each day.

**Remember not to pack cereal bars containing nuts or use chocolate spreads or nutella at lunchtime as these products are not recommended at school.**

The school operates a healthy eating policy so the children must bring a healthy break to school i.e. fruit, water for break time. Sweets, crisps, sugary bars including cereal bars or sugary yoghurts or sugary fruit juices or fizzy drinks are not permitted at break time. We also encourage healthy lunch boxes so treats should be kept to a minimum. **Sweets and fizzy drinks are not permitted in school**. Thank you.



**Flu Vaccination Programme**

The school nursing team will attend the school on the 6th November 2019 to undertake a flu vaccination programme for pupils who have given consent.

The Health Visiting Teams plan to visit the Nursery in November with dates to follow later.

**Online Safety Advice for Parents.**

Following on from last year we will be posting an Online Safety Newsletter each month on our school website. While this information may be more suitable for parents of pupils from P4 and up – there are some great tips and ideas to help you help your child (and older children) navigate the internet safely.

**Sacraments**

There will be a Mass for Parents and Pupils in P4 and P7 who wish to receive Sacraments this academic year on Monday 2nd December 2019 in St Patrick’s Church at 7.30pm.

P4 parents or pupils new to the school - if your child is to receive the sacraments and was baptised outside the Parishes of Castlederg /Ardstraw West or Aghayaran please provide the school with a Baptismal Certificate. Fr. Paul will publish the dates of sacraments in the Parish Newsletter once the confirmation date is finalised.

And finally well done to all our Nursery, P1 pupils and new pupils for settling in so well!!

Thank you

Brian Mc Gurk Principal