

ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newtownstewart

www.stpatricksnts.com

Tel: 8166 1611

Fax: 8166 1645



September Newsletter 2019 - 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

On behalf of the Board of Governors and all school staff of St Patrick's PS, I welcome parents and children back to school, especially our new pupils and parents. I hope that everyone will have a happy and rewarding year.

Our thanks go to Gary & Janice for their cleaning and maintenance over the summer months. They have done a great job in preparing for our return!

Please keep this newsletter for reference - it is also on the school website

www.stpatricksnts.com

School Closings 2019/20

<u>2019</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>No. Days</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>No. Days</u>
September	26 th , 27 th	2	February	17 th - 19 th	3
October	31 st	1	March	16 th & 17 th	2
November	1 st & 4 th	2	April	9 th - 20 th	8
December	23 rd - 31 st	7	May	8 th , 25 th & 26 th	3
January	1 st - 6 th	4	June		0

Parent/Teacher Meetings: This year P/T Meetings will take place after school, commencing Monday 21st October

The School Day P1 & P2 9.15 am - 2.15 pm
P3 - P7 9.15 am - 3.15 pm



Morning Break 10.45 - 11.00am Lunch Break 12.15 - 1.15 pm

Children must arrive in class between 9.00 and 9.15 each morning. Early comers wait in the foyer until 9am. Pupils may not leave the school grounds during the day without permission. Late-comers may lose their Break to make up for lost time.

Absences - Teachers are **required** to input a reason for all absences. Therefore, a note of explanation to the teacher or a phone call from the parent is essential. Parents will be contacted if a reason is not supplied. Attendance registers are marked both morning and afternoon. Please note that Educational Welfare Officers regularly check our attendance records and visit the homes of persistent absentees. Please see the separate sheet '**Miss School = Miss Out**' provided by Educational Welfare Service. Teachers are happy to provide work for children to complete with parents at home if they are to be off school for more than 3 days.



Attendance Certificates are awarded to children who have missed **one day or less in the previous school year(s)**.

School Savings

St Patrick's operates a School Savings Scheme for pupils in Newtownstewart Credit Union. This encourages children to understand the importance of saving money and



also allows the school to retain any interest accrued and minimize fundraising activities amongst parents. Savings start on **Friday 20th September**.

School Uniform Navy trousers / track-suit bottoms (Plain navy blue) / skirt / pinafore
Navy tie (*optional*) Navy sweatshirt / sweater / cardigan
Blue shirt / blouse *Jeans/ 'Leggings' may not be worn.*

- *Uniform sweatshirts and other schoolwear are stocked by J Kemps & Sons, NTS.*
- As part of the Board of Governors' Health and Safety Policy, children attending St Patrick's are **not allowed to wear earrings, studs and suchlike to school at any time**. This applies to **all** children – both boys and girls.
- Mobile phones / smartphones may not be taken to school.



School Dinners School dinners cost **£2.60 a day**; £13.00 per week. **Dinner money MUST be paid in advance.**

St Patrick's is fortunate to have an excellent canteen with a 5-star hygiene rating, staffed by Mrs Sylvia Thompson, Mrs Ann Harkin and Mrs Edel McNulty.

Our school dinners are nutritious, tasty and good value for money. Please encourage your child to take school dinner – it is much better for them than a packed lunch.



Smart Snacks / Healthy Breaks: St Patrick's receives the Smart Snacks Award each year. Only milk, water, fruit, raw vegetables or yoghurt may be taken at Break time. **If taking lunches, no crisps, sweets or fizzy drinks please!** Our filtered, chilled water dispenser is installed in the foyer (with another drinking fountain outside P1) and can be used during non-class time. School water bottles costing £1 can be bought from the secretary – these can be used during class at the teacher's discretion.

Breakfast is considered the most important meal of the day because it is the first meal eaten after an all-night fast. Please ensure your child eats a good breakfast every day. Alternatively, St Patrick's runs a Breakfast club every morning from 8.15am-8.55am, cost £1.00 per day (£4.00 per week if paid on Monday) for juice, cereal & a choice of toasts. This begins on **Monday 9th September**.

Allergies: Some children in our school suffer from **FOOD ALLERGIES**. The most common food allergy – which can cause severe reactions – is **NUT ALLERGY**. This includes peanuts, cashews, almonds, walnuts, etc. Even the smell of nuts can cause a reaction.



All parents are asked to take care that their children DO NOT bring foodstuffs which contain nuts into school. Please be vigilant as it is not always clear that an item contains nuts. Check the contents on the packaging and if in doubt - leave it out.

Please inform the school of any allergies or other food concerns. Our kitchen staff are happy to talk to parents about any special dietary requirements or concerns. The kitchen phone number is 8166 2436.

Milk is available to children each day. This will start on **Monday 16th**. Children wishing to take school milk this term should bring in **£7.00** by Break time on **Friday 13th September**. Please encourage your child to take milk.

We cannot give refunds for absences or cancellations.

Fruit is offered from **Monday 16th also** as part of our Healthy Eating programme. It is subsidised through the Extended School Scheme. Please encourage your child to take fruit: the cost is **£7.00 for the term**, payable in advance. Orders should be in by **Friday 13th**.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



Physical Education Coaching for all classes will hopefully start soon.

Tin Whistle / Music / Singing for P4 to P7 children starts shortly, taken by our Music Co-ordinator, Mrs Sheridan. Each child requires a tin whistle which can be bought for **£3.00** from the school office. *Children **may not** opt out of these lessons.*

Violin Lessons for selected P5 - P7 children have started.

Musical Pathways for P1 to P3 have also begun.

After School Clubs –

P1 & P2 (Junior Club) starts week beginning Monday **16th Sept, 2.15-3.10pm**. Cost is £1.50 per day Mon – Fri (£1.00 for the second child).

P4-P7 children start week beginning **Monday 16th Sept** – *note to follow*.

A huge thanks to our Parents' Group for their fund-raising efforts over the years & especially the most recent Soapbox Derby.

Please support them in everything they do. ☆☆ New members welcome. ☆☆

GENERAL INFORMATION - *please read carefully.*

- Please note everyone must complete the pupil information form as it has been amended since last year – we have been informed that medical evidence must be provided for any serious conditions that you might list.

Telephone numbers in case of an emergency are vitaly important – keep the school informed of changes to phone numbers (especially mobile phone numbers).

Ensure that the school is aware of **any** special medical, family or social circumstances which might affect your child in school. [*Such information will be treated in the strictest confidence.*]

- Money should not be carried into school in a coat, trouser or shirt pocket. Put it somewhere secure like an envelope, purse or pencil case so that it can't be easily lost. The school will not be responsible for money, valuables or other belongings lost by pupils.
- **All sweatshirts (and footwear) must have names on them.** Children must be able to identify their belongings. This applies as much to P7 as P1. Every year staff waste valuable time trying to find missing sweatshirts and shoes. If items are clearly marked with the child's name or initials this won't happen. *A child **may not** take off their sweatshirt during school hours unless their name is clearly marked on it.* Unclaimed clothing or footwear will be kept for one month only. Don't forget to re-mark your child's name if it has washed off. (*Please consider giving unwanted schoolwear items to the school for lending to any child needing a change after a fall, accident, etc.*)
- Let the school know immediately if your child is being bullied. Bullying is never ignored and **will not** be tolerated. **All** allegations of bullying are investigated and parents may be contacted and called to a meeting to discuss their child's behaviour. The school has an Anti-Bullying Policy which is available to parents and is regularly revised. St Patrick's PS records incidents of bullying in the SIMS.net Achievement & Behaviour module.
- We praise and reward good behaviour. Pupil of the Month Awards, birthday treats, exceptional behaviour or good work stickers are only part of our extensive rewards system.



However, if children misbehave to such an extent that the Supervisor or Teacher sends them to the Headteacher or Deputy Head, they will be chastised and may be kept in over Break or Lunchtime. All

such incidents of misbehaviour are recorded in SIMS.net and, if serious, letters are generated to inform parents. Rewards and Sanctions are listed in our Pastoral Care Policy.

- Talk and LISTEN to your child each day and encourage them in all their activities in school. **Don't be too critical - emphasise the positive!!** [*Please don't react immediately to any tales – sleep on it first.*]



- Ensure your child completes any homework with care and attention, **including** reading and spellings. Homework is often the “bridge” between home and school and promotes parent involvement in the education process. Most classes have homework from Monday to Thursday and all homeworks are marked in accordance with our Marking Policy. Do not hesitate to contact the teacher if you are concerned about homework. **Parents are asked to sign written homework each night.** *It only takes a moment!*

- Please note that for Health & Safety reasons, we do not permit parents to use the school car park. Parents or taxis should collect their children from the pedestrian gate.

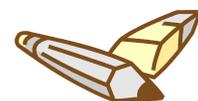
- Parents are welcome in our school. If you wish to speak to the teacher or Head, please make an appointment - teachers will not leave their classes unattended. For school security and child protection, visitors must enter and leave the school by the front door only. On entering school, all visitors must report to the Secretary or Head and may not walk into classes or the playground without permission (**Child Protection**). Occasional visitors to school are required to sign in and wear a visitor's badge. The front door locks automatically and visitors must press the intercom button during school hours to have it opened by a member of staff. Please ensure that our pedestrian gate is kept closed at all times after use.



- To ease congestion in the cloakrooms in the morning and to promote children's independence, parents are asked to let children make their own way to class. If you accompany your child to school, **please say goodbye to them in the foyer.** We appreciate your cooperation.

- It is worrying to note that some children have unsupervised access to internet sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube etc. Children **may not** post comments on the internet about any aspect of our school, nor may they contact staff through any of these sites.

- Children may purchase pencils, pens, rulers, erasers, sharpeners and water bottles from the office before 9.15 am or at the start of morning break.



- **Check your child's school bag each evening for school or teacher notes. The school web site (www.stpatricksnts.com) contains lots of useful information and is updated regularly.**

Our text service allows the school to contact parents quickly. It won't work if we don't have your mobile phone number!! Please be aware that only the parent listed as the first contact receives the text.

Similarly, the school Facebook page (search 'St Patrick's PS Newtownstewart') is a great source of information.

If you require any other information about St Patrick's or have any concerns, please ring or call to the school. We will be happy to help.

Peter Torney (Headteacher)