

OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee

Our Lady's P.S.



OCTOBER & NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER



Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you are all keeping well. It is hard to believe that it is almost the middle of October and the dark nights are upon us again. I wish to draw your attention to some important information, dates and events that are scheduled to take place over the course of the next few months.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents who joined our Curriculum Information sessions at the end of September. We had excellent attendance for all our sessions with 130 parents logging on over the two nights and we hope that everyone who logged on found the sessions to be informative and worthwhile. I would also like to thank all our teachers for preparing and presenting their overviews for the year.

BEGINNING OF YEAR MASS: We held our beginning of year Mass last Wednesday in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Tullysaran. Primary 4-7 children attended the Mass which was celebrated by Fr. Emmanuel. Unfortunately, parents were not allowed to attend but it was a lovely service with children from each class involved in the ceremony.

BOOK FAIR: The Book Fair has arrived this week and will be in school until Thursday 21st October. Each class will have the opportunity to visit the Book Fair; view and purchase the books on offer. Adults may also call into the school foyer to buy books for the children with online purchases also available (further details are on our school website). This is our first Book Fair for two years and it provides us with an excellent opportunity for the children to receive a new book to read and to raise extra funds for the school to purchase new reading materials.

HALLOWEEN FANCY DRESS DAY: I am delighted to inform you that we will host a 'Halloween Fancy Dress Day' on Wednesday 27th October. This will be a non-uniform day and I hope that as many children as possible dress up however children may come to school in their own clothes if they choose not to dress up. We will have a special Halloween assembly and all classes will parade their outfits for the rest of the school. The children will also engage in some fun Halloween activities and receive a special treat. There will be a small charge of £1 per child which will go towards school funds. School will be closed for our Halloween holidays on Thursday 28th October until Tuesday 2nd November with the children returning to school on Wednesday 3rd November.

PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS: Our annual Parent Teacher Meetings will once again occur over the phone this year due to current Department of Education COVID 19 guidelines. They will be scheduled to commence on Tuesday 8th November until Wednesday 24th November. Similar to last February all teachers will be designated a particular day to complete their meetings. As you can appreciate each teacher will have quite a few phone calls to make so there will be a time limit of ten minutes per phone call. If further time is required a supplementary meeting can be arranged with the class teacher. Teachers will discuss how children are currently progressing in school and P4-P7 teachers will be able to report how children performed in their standardised assessments at the end of last year. Further details regarding your child(ren)'s Parent Teacher Meeting(s) will be sent home after the Halloween holidays.

If you need to contact your child's class teacher, you can ring the school between 3-4pm on any week day or email your child's teacher; during the school term. Teachers should not be contacted outside of normal school hours and they have been advised to only reply to emails during school hours. Please be mindful that teachers have their own commitments outside of school. In an emergency please use the school info address (info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk). Thank you.

Teacher's email addresses:

Reception/Primary One: Ms Loughran: nloughran844@c2kni.net

Primary Two: Mrs Dillon: kdillon751@c2kni.net

Primary Three: Mrs Comiskey & Mr Mc Cann : kcomiskey765@c2kni.net and cmccann276@c2kni.net

Primary Four: Mrs Mc Cloy: amccloy737@c2kni.net

Primary Five: Mrs O'Hara: kohara636@c2kni.net

Primary Six: Mr Mc Cusker: rmccusker298@c2kni.net

Primary Seven: Mr Mc Kee & Mrs Maxwell: tmckee362@c2kni.net and amaxwell453@c2kni.net

MATHLETICS & MATHSEEDS: Mathletics (P3 - P7) and Mathseeds (P1 & P2) have been set up for all children and weekly tasks are being set by class teachers as an essential part of the children's learning. It is vitally important that all children complete their Mathletics tasks as part of their homework. Teachers will be monitoring children's work on these programs and will contact parents if children are not completing their online work.

PARENTPAY: I would like to thank all parents who are using Parent Pay to pay for dinners, Breakfast, 123 and Afterschool Clubs. Parent Pay has greatly reduced the amount of cash coming into school and it allows parents to manage their own school accounts. There can sometimes be issues with ParentPay and we would appreciate if you experience any difficulties that you report these to us ASAP. We still accept cash or cheque payments in school but would prefer if these payments were made via Parent Pay. If we do not receive payment for dinner, Breakfast/123 Clubs or any other school activity after two weeks we will send out a written notice. If payment is not received for dinner the Education Authority will not permit the child(ren) to receive dinner and they will have to take lunches until the bill is paid. We have also adopted the same rule for all other activities. If a bill is not paid by the end of the third week, entry/participation will be refused until it is settled. We do not want to implement this protocol but will if necessary. I would like to thank Mrs Berni Mc Anallen, our school secretary, for overseeing all school and 'Parent Pay' payments.

BREAKFAST & 123 CLUBS: Breakfast and 123 Clubs continue to operate as normal. We have had good numbers attending both clubs from the beginning of the year and we are indebted to our staff for supervising the children in both clubs especially Rosie Morton for preparing and cooking all the breakfasts; Aimee Duffy, Louise Cahill and Aisling Rooney for supervising the children. Breakfast Club commences each morning at **8am** (children must not arrive before 8am in the interests of Health & Safety and Child Protection protocols) and runs to 8.40am, with a concessionary charge of **£2 (which should be paid in advance via Parent Pay)**. Current food options include cereal, toast, pancakes and sometimes waffles. In the interests of fairness and to assist the school with the costs involved all children who arrive into school before 8.40am must pay, even if they don't take food. 123 Club is available to **P1, 2 & 3 children** for a concessionary fee of **£3 per day (which should be paid in advance via Parent Pay)**. 123 Club facilitates one pick-up time for families and younger children can also travel home on the bus at 3pm. It is also a good social opportunity for the younger pupils to engage and play with their peers. Please contact the school if you would like your child to attend 123 Club.

SCHOOL DINNERS: The cost of a school dinner is currently, £2.60 per day = **£13 per week (which should be paid in advance via Parent Pay)**. Menu is available on our website and Parent Pay.

LUNCHES: All pupils who take lunch must have a lunch box/bag with their names clearly visible. Fizzy or energy drinks are not permitted in school as we try to promote a healthy balanced diet for all. **As we have children who suffer from specific and severe food allergies, we request that no peanuts, seeds or related products are brought to school. The school strives to be a 'NUT FREE ZONE'.**

SNACK: Children should bring a drink and a healthy snack (for break-time): fruit, pancake, sandwich, crackers with butter/cheese (not permitted: diluted juice, jam, chocolate, Nutella, peanut butter, surgery spreads, crisps etc.) to school with them each day.

MEDICAL: Please contact the school directly if a new medical diagnosis has been made or an existing one no longer applies or has been amended. If your child has an asthma plan, please provide a copy of it with relevant medication to the office/class teacher. **Please make sure that you have returned the medical form and that all medication sent into school is within its best before date.** Thanks.

IMPORTANT DATES: (Please find an updated list of school events and closures on the school website.)

Book Fair: Thursday 14th – 21st October

Halloween Fancy Dress Day: Wednesday 27th October

Halloween holidays: Thursday 28th October – Tuesday 2nd November. School reopens on Wednesday 3rd November 2021.

Parent Teacher Meetings: Tuesday 8th – Wednesday 24th November

Flu Vaccine: Friday 19th November

P3 Remembrance Assembly: Thursday 25th November

Christmas Holidays – Thursday 23rd December – Tuesday 4th January 2022 (School will close @ 12 noon on Wednesday 22nd December – no dinners will be served). Children return to school on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES: Our pupils are enjoying a good variety of extra-curricular and after school activities. P3-P7 classes have been participating in weekly PE sessions with our Ulster GAA and O'Connells Tullysaran coach, Kevin Curran. Kevin has also been taking some P5 children for afterschool Gaelic on a Tuesday. P4-6 children are also playing hurling/camogie on a Friday morning with Damhlaic Rush who is a coach with Tyrone GAA. Some classes have also been offered Relax Kids which promotes positive self-esteem and well-being strategies. Every class will be given the opportunity to engage in Relax Kids activities over the course of the school year. P3 & P6 children have been participating in our Healthy Kidz Sports Club on Thursdays. Fiddle classes have commenced for some P4-P7 children on a Monday and our P5 pupils have just completed a four week African drums project with the EA Music Service. Afterschool activities will change for some classes after Halloween and we also hope to be able to offer Irish language classes to some year groups.

WEBSITE SPONSORSHIP: If any local business would like to sponsor our website, please contact the school. Thank you.

CONTACT DETAILS: Please advise the school in writing of any change of address or telephone contact details. It is **essential** that each pupil has a **Contact Mobile Number** for at least one parent to be used in the **event of an emergency** or to be updated for our text messaging service. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform us if you are not receiving communication from the school.

Please continue to follow the PHA guidance regarding Coronavirus and keep your child off school if they display COVID-19 symptoms or are feeling unwell. If you are unsure about your child coming to school, please contact us. Please also remember to drive and park safely in the local area and be respectful of private residents' property close to the school.

On behalf of all staff I would like to thank you for all your support and anticipated cooperation will all these matters. We would also like to wish O'Connells GAC Tullysaran the best of luck in their Championship semi-final at the weekend. Please contact the school if you have any concerns or queries regarding your child(ren)'s education. Thanks.

Take care and all the best,

Tomás McKee

Mr Tomás McKee
Principal