

OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee

Our Lady's P.S.



SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

9th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

A big welcome back to everyone following the extended closure of our school due to COVID-19 and the summer holidays. A special welcome to all our new pupils entering Reception, Primary One and other classes in our school. We have 31 children in our Reception and Primary One class this year and 7 new children have also joined our school in P2-P7; bringing our school population to 190. I hope that we will all continue to work together to ensure that all the children feel safe, secure and happy in school. Last year, was probably one of the most difficult years that many of us have ever experienced. As we begin this school year we realise that it will be another year with many challenges, due to the unprecedented times we are living in, but if we cooperate, work in partnership and strive to do the best that we can I hope that we will be successful in providing the children with stimulating educational experiences.

I would like to thank you for your cooperation with our new COVID-19 arrangements. I would urge you to continue to social distance when leaving the children to or collecting them from school. The school gates will continue to be closed as we use the carpark area as an extra playground. Please drive and park safely in the local area and be respectful of private residents' property close to the school. Please remember to lock your car and remove all valuable items from your vehicle when parking and walking to school. If your child is unwell, we would advise that you keep them off school until they feel better. I realise that this will present challenges to families, but I feel it is in the best interests of the whole school community if we can reduce transmissions of illnesses in the school. It is vitally important that if your child or a member of your household displays any symptoms of Coronavirus that they do not come to school and you follow PHA advice and arrange a COVID-19 test if this is required.

There have been many improvements to our school over the summer. Our Foundation Stage area and classes have been painted with new blinds added and the hooks have been lowered in the cloakrooms to make them more accessible for the children. New playground markings have been put down in the playgrounds and new tables and chairs have been purchased for some of the classrooms. We will continue to make improvements to our school as we strive to ensure that we provide the children with the best possible learning experiences that we can offer.

As all of our children are now in school; I must comment that it is great to have everyone back and I feel that sentiment is shared by all children, parents, staff and governors. I must give credit to the excellent work that has been completed with the children over the past six months at home as all of the teachers have commented on the good standard of work that they are completing in class. Well done.

Due to the current circumstances and the large number of children in our school some new staff members have joined our team. Mrs Nicola Mc Bride, Mrs Irene White and Mrs Una King have commenced their new roles as Classroom Assistants and Miss Colleen Kerr will teach Primary 5 on a Friday. We are delighted to welcome all new staff members and I hope they will enjoy their work and make a positive contribution to our school. Our current class staffing arrangements are as follows:

CLASSES – 2020/21: Reception & Primary One: Ms Noreen Loughran (previously Mrs Hegarty), Mrs Aisling Rooney, Mrs Louise Cahill and Mrs Nicola Mc Bride. **Primary Two:** Mrs Kerry Dillon, Mrs Helen Gillespie and Mrs Joanne Kearney. **Primary Three:** Mrs Kate Comiskey and Mrs Joanne Kearney. **Primary Four:** Mrs Aideen Mc Cloy and Mrs Irene White. **Primary Five:** Mrs Karina O'Hara (Mon-Thurs) & Miss Colleen Kerr (Fri) and Mrs Mary Mallon. **Primary Six:** Mr Ryan Mc Cusker and Ms Eilish Mc Crory. **Primary Seven:** Mr Tomás Mc Kee (Mon, Tues & Fri), Mrs Anne Maxwell (Wed & Thurs) and Ms Eilish Mc Crory.

BREAKFAST CLUB – Breakfast Club will recommence on Monday 21st September. As we are now using the school hall as our Primary 7 classroom we will have to amend our arrangements. Children will be able to come into school between 8-8.40am and go to their classrooms so they can remain in their class bubbles. They will be offered either toast or pancake and can engage in some reading, drawing, mental maths games etc. As the children will be in their classrooms we have had to organise extra staff to supervise them so the daily cost will be £2 per child or a maximum of £5 per family (regardless of whether the children take food or not). Payment can be made via Parent Pay. Thank you.

MORNING SUPERVISION - Children will be supervised in the yards from 8.30 am until Breakfast Club recommences. From Monday 21st September Morning Supervision will be from **8.40 am (children are not permitted to be in school grounds unsupervised)**. Children will leave their belongings in their cloakrooms and make their way to their designated play areas (R/P1 & P2: Small yard; P3 & P4: Carpark and P5 - P7: Main playground) on dry mornings. Teachers will collect all pupils at 9 am. On wet mornings children are to enter the school via their external classroom doors and remain in their classroom until lessons commence at 9am. It is vitally important that all children **arrive punctually to school and are prepared to learn.**

SCHOOL HOURS – Reception: **9 am – 12 noon** (until Halloween) and **9 am - 1 pm** (after Halloween).

Primary 1 – 3: **9 am – 2 pm** and Primary 4 – 7: **9 am – 3 pm**.

Break-times – R/P1-4: **10.30 am – 10.45 am**. **P5-7: 10.50am - 11.05 am**

Lunch-times – **Mon – Thurs: R/P1, 2, 3 & 4 – 12 – 1 pm** and **P5 - 7 – 12.45 – 1.45 pm**.

Fri: R/P1, 2, 3 & 4 – 11.45 am – 12.45pm and **P5 - 7 – 12.30 – 1.30 pm**.

Pupils are legally required to be in school during the above times. Please try to arrange medical or dental appointments outside school hours. On your child's return to school after an absence, the school must be provided with a reason via email to the school (info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk).

COLLECTION OF PUPILS – **Reception** children will be collected from the front foyer **@ 12 noon** until Halloween and **@1pm** for the remainder of the year. **Primary 1, 2 & 3 – P1** children will be collected from the front foyer from 1.55pm; **P2** children will be collected from the back of the school from 2pm and **P3** children will be collected from outside their classroom or the P3 cloakroom on wet days from 2pm. **Primary 4 – 7** – children will be walked to the area outside the school kitchen by their teacher. They can then walk to their parent who should wait outside the school grounds or arrange to meet their child(ren) at the GAA club or Community Centre at **3pm**. **Please ensure that children are collected punctually from school.** At 2.10pm teachers are timetabled to take groups or cover other classes so children who have not been collected will go to **123 Club (from 21st September)**. If a child is in 123 Club after 2.15pm there will be a charge. At 3pm teachers are timetabled to be on duty until 3.10 pm and have meetings, classroom planning etc. to attend to. We would appreciate it if you could ensure that your child(ren) is/are collected promptly at collection times and that they know how or with whom they are going home. We do appreciate that anyone can be delayed or there can be a mix up regarding collection arrangements. If a child is uncertain with how they are travelling home, we cannot permit them to travel on the school bus. We will ring you to inform you that they are waiting at the school for collection. We will also instruct children to walk back down to the school if there is nobody there to collect them at the GAA club or Community Centre. **Please send a note in to school if you would like your child(ren) to walk home.** We must have a written record of consent at the beginning of each school year. Thank you for your co-operation with these matters.

Play Park – A large number of children are going to the play park after school and as much as it is great for them to meet and play it could have an impact on our class bubbles if a child tests positive for COVID-19. If your child is playing in the play park, please remind them to socially distance, behave appropriately and wash/sanitise their hands after playing in the park. Thank you.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT – School Transport is now operating as normal. It is vitally important that all children wear a face covering on the buses. We will be checking the children as they arrive to school in the morning and on departure in the afternoon to ensure compliance. I would like to thank Sinead Daly and NI Scrubs for supplying the school with FREE face masks for children and adults, visors and other PPE for our school. Children can be registered for School Transport on the EA website.

123 CLUB – 123 Club will recommence from Monday 21st September for **P1, 2 & 3 children** for a concessionary fee of **£3 per day**. We will continue to charge £3 per day for 123 Club as we do not receive any extra funding for this service, and we will have to employ an extra staff member to supervise the children in their classrooms. Mrs Helen Gillespie, Mrs Joanne Kearney and Mrs Aisling Rooney will supervise the children in 123 Club and provide a variety of fun activities for them. 123 Club has always been very popular with both parents and pupils as it enables one pick-up at 3pm or the younger children can travel home on the bus. It is also a good social opportunity for the pupils to engage, play with their peers and develop friendships. Please complete the booking form on the back of the permission slips that are attached to the Newsletter if you would like your child to attend 123 Club. One off bookings can be made by contacting the school via phone or email. Payment for 123 Club can be made via Parent Pay. Thank you.

HOMEWORK – Homework will begin for P2-P7 children from Monday 14th September. Primary One children will receive homework activities from October. As with previous years we will be utilising some online learning forums as well as some paper work. Children will receive their homework at the beginning of each week with an overview of the activities that should be completed. Pupils can then complete their homework when it is convenient over the course of the week and return the written work on a Thursday or Friday (as set out by the class teacher). All children will receive reading; spelling activities will be completed in school each morning although parents will receive the weekly spelling list on Seesaw. Seesaw is an online learning app which will be familiar to our current P2 and P3 parents as they used it last year during lockdown to interact with their children's class teacher. We received very positive feedback regarding Seesaw and all teachers have participated in online training over the summer. Some classes will just initially use Seesaw to inform parents of the weekly spellings but as the year progresses more activities may be posted on it and if a class bubble is instructed to isolate due to a positive COVID-19 test they will use Seesaw to continue learning. Seesaw (class app) can be downloaded on to a phone, I-pad, Tablet or can be accessed online. Guidance on how to download and access Seesaw will be sent home next week. We will continue to use Mathletics; with two tasks set for each child weekly although children are free to access Live Maths games on Mathletics. Children will also receive either a Literacy or a Numeracy homework each week to be completed in a homework book to be brought back into school at the end of the week. As children will be bringing some materials in and out of school they will be permitted to bring their belongings in their school bag from 14th September, though no extra stationery or other materials should be brought into school. Please ensure school bags are clearly labelled. Thank you.

SCHOOL UNIFORM – Please ensure that your child is wearing the correct school uniform: plain navy trousers/tracksuit bottoms/skirt/pinafore, white polo shirt, crested sweatshirt and plain black footwear. Branded trousers/tracksuit bottoms or polo shirts are not permitted. ***It is important that all uniforms, shoes and school bags are clearly labelled.*** Thanks to all parents/guardians for ensuring that their children arrived back to school in plain black footwear.

PE – Children do not need to bring a change of clothes for PE. They just need to bring a change of footwear to school (*they don't need to be black*) and girls can wear shorts under their skirts or tracksuit bottoms/trousers on PE days. Under the current guidance it is not appropriate for children to change their clothing in school.

PARENT-PAY – We are currently in the final stages of arranging Parent Pay which will allow parents to pay for school dinners, Breakfast/123 Clubs and other bills online. This will reduce the amount of cash coming into school and will enable parents to manage their own payments. We have experienced some technical difficulties but hopefully they will be ironed out this week and we will be fully functional by the end of the week. The cost of a school dinner is currently the same price as last year, £2.60 per day = **£13 per week**. This must be paid in advance on a Monday if making a cash/cheque payment (Cheque payments should be made payable to the school). Please send money into school in a sealed envelope with your child's/children's name(s) and amount clearly written although we would encourage all parents to sign up to Parent Pay. Please contact Berni, School Secretary, if you have any queries regarding Parent Pay or school dinner payments. Thank you. Our September menu is available on our website (www.ourladyspstullysaran.com).

FREE SCHOOL MEALS – Information regarding applications for free school meals can be found on the Education Authority website. It is very important that you register your child(ren) for free school meals even if they take lunch as the school receives extra funding from the Department of Education for children who are eligible for free school meals.

SCHOOL YELLOW ENVELOPES PACK - Costing **£2.00** are available from the office, (this is a valuable means of labelling and keeping track of all the money that comes into the school).

SNACK – Children should bring a drink of water and a healthy snack (for break-time): fruit, pancake, sandwich, crackers with butter/cheese (Not permitted: jam, chocolate, Nutella, peanut butter, sugary spreads etc.) to school with them each day for break-time.

LUNCHES - All pupils who take lunch must have a lunch box with their name 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 food allergies we request that **no peanuts, seeds or related products are brought to school.** The school strives to be a '**Nut Free Zone**'. Thank you.

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 all medication sent into school is within its best before date and in a container with the child's name clearly visible.** Pupils who wear glasses must have them in school and the teacher should be informed. Thank you.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS - A list of school holidays and closures is available on the school website.

SCHOOL WEBSITE – Please visit our school website www.ourladyspstullysaran.com to keep up to date with news items, relevant documents and events. We encourage all parents to download the school app (details can be found on the website)

so that you can receive updates throughout the year. We are also inviting local businesses to sponsor our school website. For £50 we will include your business' name on the ticker tape at the top of our school website homepage for one year. We will provide you with a letter of receipt that you can include for your accounts. All previous sponsorship has now expired. We would like to thank: Campbell Fuels, D' Zine Hair Studios and PV Macrai's Interiors for sponsoring our website for the last two years. Thank you.

HOLY COMMUNION – Holy Communion for Primary 5 children is scheduled to take place on Saturday 3rd October @11am in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Tullysaran. Due to COVID-19 restrictions only parents and child will be permitted to attend the ceremony. Children do not have to wear face masks. Mrs O'Hara and the children will be preparing for the ceremony over the next few weeks and further information will be sent home to the families later in the month. Mrs Comiskey and Aoibheann Scullin will perform the music at the ceremony and we hope to offer some light refreshments for the Holy Communicants and their parents after the Mass. Please contact Mrs O'Hara if you have any further queries or suggestions regarding Holy Communion.

IMPORTANT DATES –

Monday 21st September – Reception & P1 Class photograph.

Week beginning 28th September – P1-P7 Curriculum Information Evenings via Zoom.

Saturday 3rd October – Holy Communion in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Tullysaran @ 11am.

Monday 5th October – Staff Development Day – School Closed for pupils.

Wednesday 21st October – Flu Vaccine.

Halloween Holidays – 26th October – 30th October (Children return on Monday 2nd November).

Christmas Holidays – 23rd Dec – 5th Jan (School will close @ 12 noon on Tuesday 22nd Dec).

Wednesday 6th January 2021 – Children return to school.

CONTACT DETAILS - Please advise the school via email (info@ourladytullysaran.ni.sch.uk) 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/carer to be used in the **event of an emergency** or to be updated for our text messaging service.

AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES – Transfer Class has commenced for some Primary 7 children and 123 Club will begin from Monday 21st September. We hope to start Fiddle class at the end of September and then we will look at providing further afterschool clubs for all other classes. It is unlikely that we will be able to provide 4 o'clock club this year as we will have to keep children in their class bubbles for after school activities and this would not be possible with only small numbers attending. We will continue to review our arrangements throughout the year.

Finally, I would request that you read our Pastoral Care leaflet, Complaints Procedure, Internet Safety information that are on: [Our School - policies section](#) of our website and sign the relevant permission slips that are attached to the Newsletter. Thank you.

We greatly appreciate your support with the above arrangements. This ensures the smooth running of our school and provision for your child/ren of their full educational entitlement. We will continue to review our practices as we endeavour to create a safe environment for everyone and deliver high standards in all that we do.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all staff to wish you and your family all the best for the school year. Please contact the school to arrange an appointment, if you have any concerns or queries regarding your child(ren)'s education. Remember that you must wear a face covering on entering the school building and to socially distance in and around the school. There is a responsibility on all of us to work together to ensure that we act in the best interests of the children and the school community.

All the best and take care,

Tomás McKee

Mr Tomás McKee

Principal



Permission Slips 2020/21

Consent Note for School Excursions

I give my consent for my child(ren) _____ to participate in out of school events, off site sporting activities and competitions including swimming lessons when applicable.

Signed: _____ Parent / Guardian.

Consent Note for Publishing School Photographs, Recordings & Uploading pupils' work

I give permission for my child(ren) _____

To be photographed/recorded (Please circle): -

Individually - **Yes or No**

In a school group - **Yes or No**

For educational purposes e.g. classroom and home learning through online learning apps eg:- Seesaw, Mathletics - **Yes or No**

For school publications and productions e.g. Newsletters - **Yes or No**

For the media e.g. Newspaper - **Yes or No**

For the school website - **Yes or No**

For social media e.g. Facebook or twitter - **Yes or No**

Signed: _____ Parent / Guardian.

Consent note and Agreement for Acceptable use of ICT, Internet & E-Safety Agreement

I confirm that we have read, agree with and will use the code of acceptable ICT, E-Safety and internet use. I also give permission for my child(ren) _____ to use the Internet in School and for Blended learning at home.

Signed: _____ Parent / Guardian

Pupil's ICT and Internet Instructions

When I am using the internet on the computer/digital device I should only follow the instructions that the teacher gives me. If I want to go to a page that I am interested in I should ask the teacher first for permission. I should never search the internet on my own. If a website asks for my personal details or if the search brings up inappropriate material I should inform my teacher immediately. I will engage appropriately on online learning platforms eg:- Seesaw, Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

Signed: _____ Child/Children

I have read the Safeguarding Pastoral Care leaflet and Complaints procedure.

☐

(Please tick).

Please complete the above permission slips for your child/children attending our school and return to the school. Thank you.



123 Club – Booking Form

I would like to pre-book the 123 club on the following day(s): -

Day	Child/Children's names	Class(es)
Mon		
Tues		
Wed		
Thurs		
Fri		

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Please return the booking form to the school ASAP.

Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and if we are oversubscribed preference will be given to children with older siblings in P4-7.

Reminder – Payment for 123 Club should be made via Parent Pay. Thank you.