

OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee

Our Lady's P.S.



SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

14th September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to everyone and a special welcome to all our new pupils entering Reception, Primary One and other classes in our school. We have 29 children in our Reception and Primary One class this year and 3 new children have also joined our school in P4-P7; bringing our school population to 188. I hope that we will all continue to work together to ensure that all the children feel safe, secure and happy in school. As we begin this school year, we realise that it will be another year with many challenges, due to the exceptional times we are living in, but if we continue to work in partnership, I hope that we will provide the children with valuable and worthwhile educational experiences.

I would like to thank you for your cooperation with our **COVID-19 arrangements**. I would urge you to continue to social distance when leaving the children to or collecting them from school and to wear a face covering on school grounds. If your child is unwell, we would advise that you keep them off school until they feel better. It is vitally important that if your child displays any symptoms of Coronavirus that they do not come to school, and you follow PHA advice and arrange a COVID-19 test. The most recent Department of Education COVID guidance (9th September) states that the PHA will now be responsible for all contact tracing within schools. This approach replaces the previous school led process to identify contacts of COVID cases with a more targeted PHA led approach with support from schools. Schools have been instructed to continue to focus on the range of mitigations that are in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and to post a COVID Alert letter to inform parents of a positive case in a particular class. It is vitally important that we continue to be vigilant and work in collaboration to ensure that we keep our children in school, as safely as possible.

There have been many improvements to our school over the summer. We have completed major ground works at the back of the school which has provided greater space for outdoor play for our younger children. This work has included the installation of an outdoor shed for extra storage and a new gravel play pit. We plan to add an outdoor classroom, covered sand and water play area and other play equipment over the course of the next few months. I would like to thank Colm Mc Gahan (Parent Governor) for all his expertise with these improvements and Brendan and Ciaran Mc Elvanna for completing all of the work to such a high standard. Our P3, P4 and P5 classrooms have been painted with new blinds added to these rooms as well. Two new interactive boards have been installed in our P4 and P5 classrooms. We have also ordered a new interactive white board for our Primary 7 room. We will continue to make improvements to our school as we strive to ensure that we provide the children with the best possible learning environment that we can offer.

Due to the current circumstances and the large number of children in our school some new staff members have joined our team. Mrs Arlene Oliver, Mrs Rosie Trainor, Mrs Frances Kelly and Mrs Aoife Donaghy have joined our Non-Teaching staff team and Mr Conor Mc Cann will teach Primary 3 on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. 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 – 2021/22: **Reception & Primary One:** Ms Noreen Loughran, Mrs Arlene Oliver and Mrs Louise Cahill. **Primary Two:** Mrs Kerry Dillon, Mrs Helen Gillespie, Mrs Aisling Rooney, Mrs Nicola Mc Bride and Mrs Rosie Trainor. **Primary Three:** Mrs Kate Comiskey, Mr Conor Mc Cann and Miss Aimee Duffy. **Primary Four:** Mrs Aideen Mc Cloy and Mrs Joanne Kearney. **Primary Five:** Mrs Karina O'Hara (Mon-Thurs) & Miss Colleen Kerr (Fri) and Mrs Una King. **Primary**

Six: Mr Ryan Mc Cusker, Mrs Mary Mallon and Mrs Irene White. **Primary Seven:** Mr Tomás Mc Kee (Mon, Tues & Fri), Mrs Anne Maxwell (Wed & Thurs) and Ms Eilish Mc Crory.

Playground Supervisors: Mrs Mary Fullerton and Mrs Aoife Donaghy.

BREAKFAST CLUB – Breakfast Club continues to operate in our classrooms as we continue to use the school hall as our Primary 7 classroom. Children may come into school between 8-8.40am and go to their classrooms so they can remain in their class bubbles. They will be offered juice, water, milk, cereal, toast or pancake and can engage in some reading, drawing and maths games etc. The daily cost for Breakfast Club is £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 **8.40 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 - 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 2/2.05pm. **Primary 4 – 7** – children will be walked to the area outside the school kitchen by their teacher. Primary 4 and 5 will be ready for collection from 2.55pm and Primary 6 and 7 at 3pm. They can then walk to their parent/carer 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**. 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 and preparation 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.

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. Children can be registered for School Transport on the EA website.

123 CLUB – 123 Club is available for all **P1, 2 & 3 children** for a concessionary fee of **£3 per day.** Mrs Lousie Cahill, Mrs Aisling Rooney and Miss Aimee Duffy will supervise the children in their classrooms for 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 has commenced for P2-P7 children from Monday 6th 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 most parents should be familiar with from last year. Seesaw will initially be used to inform parents of the weekly spellings but as the year progresses more activities may be posted on it and if children are instructed to isolate due to a positive COVID-19 test; Seesaw will be used to support them with their 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 can be sent home if required. We will continue to use Mathseeds (P1 & P2) and Mathletics (P3-7); with 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. We have also purchased a three-year licence for Accelerated Reader for P5-P7 children to further extend our children's reading and learning skills in Key Stage Two. More information will follow over the course of the next few months regarding Accelerated Reader. Finally, children are permitted to use a school bag as normal to bring their belongings to and from 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 (no white)**. 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 children are not permitted to change their clothing in school for PE.

PARENT-PAY – We will continue to use Parent Pay this year so that parents can pay for school dinners, Breakfast/123 Clubs, afterschool clubs and other bills online. Parent Pay has significantly reduced the amount of cash coming into school and enables parents to manage their own payments. We have experienced some technical difficulties with Parent Pay and would ask you contact the school if you are having any problems when making bookings or payments. Thanks. The cost of a school dinner is currently, **£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 school dinner 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 (www.eani.org.uk). 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.

SNACK – Children should bring a drink of water and a healthy snack (for break-time): fruit, pancake, sandwich, crackers with butter/cheese (*Not permitted: diluted juice, 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 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 – An up-to-date provisional school holiday list is available on the school website. We have made two amendments to our holidays. School will be closed for all children on Monday 4th October for a Staff Development Day, and we have amended our Christmas holidays with the children now returning to school on Wednesday 5th January 2022. Please note we may have to make further amendments to our provisional holiday list as we had hoped to take a week's break at the end of May, beginning of June (30th May – 3rd June). However, these dates may have to be amended if Confirmation is on 5th June. We will confirm these holidays once Confirmation dates are released in October. We are sorry for any inconvenience caused.

SCHOOL WEBSITE – Please visit our school website www.ourladyspstullysaran.com and download the school app to keep up to date with news items, relevant documents, messages and events. 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. We would like to thank: *PD Electrics, Dzine Hair Studio and Discount Furniture and Appliances Ltd.* for sponsoring our website last year. Thank you.

IMPORTANT DATES –

Wednesday 29th September: P1-P4 Curriculum Information Evenings via Zoom.

Thursday 30th September: P5-P7 Curriculum Information Evenings via Zoom.

Monday 4th October: Staff Development Day – School Closed for pupils.

Book Fair: 15th-22nd October.

Halloween Holidays: 28th October – 2nd November (*Children finish school on Wednesday 27th October and return to school on **Wednesday 3rd November**.*)

Flu Vaccination: Friday 19th November.

Christmas Holidays: 23rd Dec – 4th Jan (*School will close @ 12 noon on Wednesday 22nd Dec and children will return to school **Wednesday 5th January 2022**.*)

CONTACT DETAILS - Please advise the school via email (info@ourladys.tullysaran.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 – A letter regarding afterschool activities has been sent home this week. All P2-P7 classes will be offered afterschool activities during term one. We hope to be able to offer a wider variety of afterschool activities in terms 2 and 3. Afterschool activities will also be offered to Primary One children in terms 2 and 3. We will continue to review our arrangements throughout the year.

Please remember to drive and park safely in the local area and be respectful of private residents' property close to the school.

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 included with the Newsletter and have been sent home. 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. 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 Mc Kee

Mr Tomás Mc Kee

Principal



Permission Slips 2021/22

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, Mathseeds, 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 online 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, Mathletics, Mathseeds, Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

Signed: _____ **Child/Children** (Parent should sign for children in R/P1 and P2)

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 class teacher. 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.