



## SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

13<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back to everyone and a special welcome to all our new families and pupils who are starting Primary One. We have two Primary One classes this year with 18 children in each class. Our school population is 190 pupils as we celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of Our Lady's Primary School. We plan to mark this milestone with a new welcome sign in our front foyer, a new school strip and some special events which will involve our whole school community, both past and present, coming together to celebrate our school and the special place it has within the community.

### SCHOOL GROUNDS

Over the summer holidays we continued to make improvements to our school building and grounds. We cleared the spaces outside our P3 and P4 classrooms so that the children can have access to an outdoor reading area. Two new tables have been ordered and will arrive shortly. We also cleared some hedging at the front of the school and completed further drainage work to the front grass areas to improve the children's play spaces. I would like to thank Colm Mc Gahan (Trustee Governor) for all his expertise with these improvements and Brendan and Ciaran Mc Illvanna for completing all of the work to such a high standard.

Our new Primary 1 classrooms were painted with new blinds added to these rooms as well. We have agreed plans to add a covered area to the front of our Primary 1 learning space to facilitate sand and water play. Avalon Blinds hope to complete this work in the next few weeks. 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.

### WELCOME NEW STAFF

We welcome three new teachers to our school this year. Mr Aidan Forker has commenced his role as our new Vice-Principal and Primary 7 teacher; Miss Catherine Holland is our new Primary One teacher alongside Ms Loughran; Miss Roisin Quinn will teach Primary 3 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday with Mrs Maxwell teaching P3 on Wednesday. Mrs Linda Kennedy has also joined our school non-teaching team and is assisting Mrs Rosie Morton with the cleaning of our school. We are delighted to welcome all new staff members and I hope they will enjoy their work and make a positive contribution to Our Lady's. They have already made a great start!

Our current class staffing arrangements are as follows:

### CLASSES – 2022/23

**Primary One:** Ms Noreen Loughran, Mrs Arlene Oliver, Mrs Louise Cahill and Ms Eilish Mc Crory.

**Primary One:** Miss Catherine Holland, Mrs Arlene Oliver and Mrs Aisling Rooney.

**Primary Two:** Mrs Kerry Dillon, Mrs Helen Gillespie and Mrs Sheila Hughes.

**Primary Three:** Miss Roisin Quinn (Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri), Mrs Anne Maxwell (Wed), Mrs Rosie Trainor and Miss Aimee Duffy.

**Primary Four:** Mrs Aideen Mc Cloy and Ms Eilish Mc Crory.

**Primary Five:** Mrs Karina O'Hara (Mon-Thurs), Mrs Anne Maxwell (Fri) and Mrs Joanne Kearney.

**Primary Six:** Mr Ryan Mc Cusker and Mrs Una King.

**Primary Seven:** Mr Aidan Forker, Mrs Mary Mallon, Mrs Joanne Kearney and Mrs Irene White.

**BREAKFAST CLUB:** Children may come into school between 8-8.40am for Breakfast Club and go to the designated rooms. P1-P4 children go to P3 and P5-P7 children go to their classrooms. They will be offered juice, water, milk, cereal, toast or pancake and can engage in some reading, drawing and maths/ICT 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. **Please ensure that children do not come arrive into school before 8am. 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 (**P1 & P2: Small yard; P3 - P7: Main playground**) on dry mornings. Teachers will collect all pupils at 9am. 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:**

**Primary 1 – 3:** 9 am – 2 pm

**Primary 4 – 7:** 9 am – 3 pm

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

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

**Fri: 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. Children should not attend school if they are unwell and must self-isolate for at least 3 days if they test positive for COVID. Please contact the school to inform us as to why your child is absent; the school must be provided with a reason via phone or email to the school ([info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk)). Thanks.

**COLLECTION OF PUPILS: 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 (or email) in to school if you would like your child(ren) to walk home, to the GAA Club or**

**Community Centre.** 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:** There are two new buses servicing our school with larger capacity. Children can be registered for School Transport on the EA website. It is vitally important that all children wear a seat belt on the buses and behave appropriately.

**123 CLUB:** 123 Club is available for all **P1, 2 & 3 children** for a concessionary fee of **£3 per day**. Mrs Lousie Cahill, Mrs Helen Gillespie 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 email the school to confirm 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 all P2-P7 children from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> 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 (or *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. It will be used to inform parents of the weekly spellings, homework or class announcements but as the year progresses more activities may be posted on it. Seesaw (class app) can be downloaded on to a phone, I-pad, and 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 & P3) and **Mathletics** (P4-7); 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 continue to develop our use of Accelerated Reader for P5-P7 children to further extend our children's reading and learning skills in Key Stage Two. 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.*** I would like to thank all parents for your brilliant co-operation with school uniform. All children are wearing the correct uniform with **plain black footwear**. Your support is much appreciated.

**PE:** Children do not need to bring a change of clothes for PE. They just need to bring a change of footwear to school (*PE footwear does not need to be black*) and girls can wear shorts under their skirts or tracksuit bottoms/trousers on PE days. If a P5-P7 child wishes to bring a change of clothes for PE or an afterschool activity they may do so. P6 & P7 children should attend swimming lessons during term one (this is dependent on the Council Strike Action ending) and P5 will go in term 3.

**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. There can be technical difficulties and mistakes with Parent Pay. We would ask you contact the school if you are having any problems when making bookings, payments or notice any mistakes. 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 Term 1 school dinner menu is available on our website ([www.ourladyspstullysaran.com](http://www.ourladyspstullysaran.com)). You can also view the daily dinner menu on Parent Pay when making a booking.

**FREE SCHOOL MEALS:** Information regarding applications for free school meals can be found on the Education Authority website ([www.eani.org.uk](http://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. We ask children to take what remains of their lunch home when they are finished so parents can see what their children are eating at lunch time. 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.

**SCHOOL HOLIDAYS:** An up to date provisional school holiday list is available on the school website. As Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September is now a Bank Holiday (*school will be closed*). We have amended our school closures for this half-term. We had planned a Staff Development Day for Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October but we have moved this school closure to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October to facilitate Parent Teacher Meetings. We are sorry for any inconvenience caused. Further amendments to our school calendar could be necessary over the year.

**SCHOOL WEBSITE:** Please visit our school website [www.ourladyspstullysaran.com](http://www.ourladyspstullysaran.com) and download the school app to keep up to date with news items, relevant documents, messages and events. We would like to thank all our website sponsors: *Mc Anallens of Benburb Spar, Northern Building Supplies, Shabby Duck Gifts, PD Electrics, Dzine Hair Studio and Discount Furniture and Appliances Ltd.* for sponsoring our website. Thank you.

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September:** Bank Holiday – school closed.

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September:** P1-P7 Curriculum Information Evening in school (please see class schedule, below).

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October:** Our pupils will lead a special Mass to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church of The Immaculate Conception, Tullysaran @10am. This will also be our beginning of Year Mass and there will be an exhibition of the children's work on the Church and refreshments served in the Community Centre after the Mass.

**Book Fair:** 13<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> October.

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October:** P1-P7 Parent Teacher Meetings (face to face) – school closed for children.

**Halloween Holidays:** 31<sup>st</sup> October – 4<sup>th</sup> November (*Children finish school on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October** and return to school on **Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November***).

**Flu Vaccination:** Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**Christmas Holidays:** 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec – 4<sup>th</sup> Jan (School will close @ 12 noon on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December and children will return to school Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023).

**Holy Communion:** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May @11am in the Church of The Immaculate Conception, Tullysaran.

**CONTACT DETAILS:** Please advise the school via email ([info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk](mailto: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.

**P1-P7 CURRICULUM INFORMATION EVENING:** We will host our annual class Curriculum Information Evening on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September in school. Over the last few years we have hosted these sessions on Zoom but we felt it would be better for parents to come into school this year and meet their children's teachers. To facilitate the sessions in school two classes will commence at the same time. If you have children in both classes, you should attend the session of your oldest child and perhaps speak to the other class teacher afterwards.

During the Curriculum Information Evenings, the teachers will provide parents with an overview of the children's learning for the year ahead. They will also give you guidance on specific strategies being promoted in school and of the standards expected in each class. We hope that all parents will use this opportunity to visit our school, the children's classes and meet our teachers. The Curriculum Information times are as follows:

Class(es)	P1	P2 & P3	P4 & P5	P6 & P7
Time	6pm	6.30pm	7pm	7.30pm

**AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES** – A letter regarding Afterschool activities has been sent home today. All P2-P7 classes will be offered afterschool activities during term one. 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 our 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 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 of luck 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**