

## OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee

Our Lady's P.S.



## SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

9<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome back after the summer holidays and a special welcome to all our new pupils entering Reception, Primary One and other classes in our school. I hope that we will work together to ensure the children feel safe and happy in school and receive a high standard of education, in keeping with the traditions of our school.

First of all, I would like to congratulate Eimear Mc Gahan who was selected to represent our school and Cumann na mBunscol Armagh at half-time of the All-Ireland football final in Croke Park on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September. In what was a tremendous occasion and surely a very special experience for Eimear and her family especially as Jason Mc Gahan is involved with the Kerry team and her grandfather Peadar Mc Gahan was stewarding at the final.



There have been many changes and improvements to our school over the summer break. As you may have noticed the outside of our school building and railings have been painted which has made a huge improvement to the appearance of the school. Our school foyer and school office were also painted and we hope to paint the school hall during the Halloween break. Brendan Mc Elvanna carried out further ground works to improve the drainage of our grass areas so we can maximise the space available for the children to play on. I would like to thank Brendan and Colm Mc Gahan for overseeing these works.

Mrs Comiskey also organised the installation of two new buddy benches in our playgrounds before the summer break and we have purchased ten new laptops, a laptop trolley and 13 new I-Pads. We have also bought new tables for Primary 7, new chairs for Primary 6 and new play equipment for our Foundation Stage area. 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.

There have also been some staff changes over the summer holidays. Mrs Frances Bratton our P1 Classroom Assistant for 24 years has retired. This was only confirmed at the end of August, so we plan to invite her back for an assembly with the children and celebrate her time in our school and wish her well for the future.

As you were informed at the end of last year Mrs Hegarty is now our Reception/P1 teacher. Mrs Hayley Morgan has temporarily moved to Reception/P1 as Foundation Stage Classroom Assistant. Mrs Aisling Rooney has commenced employment in our school and will be assisting with the Reception/P1 class and Mrs Louise Cahill has also joined our school team and will be working with Mrs Comiskey in Primary 3. Mrs O'Hara has moved to Key Stage Two and will be teaching Primary 5, Monday – Thursday and Mr Conor Mc Cann will teach P5 on a Friday. Mr Mc Cusker will teach Primary 6 again this year.

Finally, Mrs Comiskey has now taken up the role of Vice-Principal. Mrs Comiskey will continue as our SENCO and Designated Teacher for Child Protection in her new role. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the whole school community to wish Mrs Comiskey the best of luck in her new role and I am certain that she will serve the school with great enthusiasm and dedication as she has done throughout her time here.

**Please read the following important information & sign the attached permission slips. Thank you.**

**CLASSES – 2019/20: Reception & Primary One** – Mrs Noreen Hegarty, **Primary Two** – Mrs Kerry Dillon  
**Primary Three** – Mrs Kate Comiskey **Primary Four** – Mrs Aideen Mc Cloy  
**Primary Five** – Mrs Karina O’Hara (Mon-Thurs) & Mr Conor Mc Cann (Fri) **Primary Six** – Mr Ryan Mc Cusker  
**Primary Seven** – Mr Tomás Mc Kee (Mon, Tues & Fri) & Mrs Ann Maxwell (Wed & Thurs)

**BREAKFAST CLUB – Breakfast Club will continue this year from 8-8.40 am** (children must not arrive until **8am** in the interests of Health & Safety and Child Protection protocols) and the daily charge will remain at **£1 per day** for each child which must be paid on arrival or in advance regardless if they take food. We do not receive any extra funding for this service so we must ensure that all costs are covered. Thank you. The children will continue to be offered: diluted orange juice, water or milk to drink. Food options will include toast, pancakes and a cereal. There will be one cereal that will change although we must be mindful of allergies. Weetabix with warm milk will be available in the cold winter mornings and we will also offer themed breakfasts on specific mornings. There will continue to be a variety of games, music and activities for the children to enjoy during Breakfast Club although it is vitally important that children’s behaviour is excellent. Breakfast Club is very popular, and I would like to thank Mrs Rosie Morton and Ms Eilish Mc Crory for the excellent service they provide for the children every morning.

**MORNING SUPERVISION** - Children will be supervised in the yard from **8.40 am as normal (children are not permitted to be in school grounds unsupervised)**. On dry mornings the children will leave their school bags in designated areas outside the school and go to the top yard (R/P1-3) or main yard (P4-7). Teachers will collect all pupils at 9 am. On wet mornings children are to enter the school via the Main school door and go straight to the assembly hall where they will wait until they are collected by their teacher. External classroom doors will not be opened in the mornings. It is vitally important that all children **arrive punctually to school and are ready 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-time – **10.45 am – 11 am**.

Lunch-times – **Mon – Thurs: P1, 2 & 7 – 12 – 12.50 pm** and P3, 4, 5 & 6 – **12.45 – 1.35 pm**.

**Fri: P1, 2, 3 & 7 – 11.45 am – 12.35pm** and P4, 5 & 6 – **12.30 – 1.20 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 a note to their teacher. Please note that a 100% attendance can only be achieved if the child is present for a full school day.

**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 at 2pm** – **P1** children will be collected from the front foyer, **P2** children will be collected from the Foundation Stage Resource Area and **P3** children will be collected from outside their classroom or the P3 cloakroom on wet days. **Primary 4 – 7** – children can be collected from the front of the school as normal 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. They then have meetings, afterschool clubs, classroom planning etc. to attend too. We would appreciate 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. **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 on these matters.

**123 CLUB** – 123 Club will continue to operate this year for **P1, 2 & 3 children** for a concessionary fee of **£3 per day**. We do not receive any extra funding for this service, so we have had to increase the charge to £3 to ensure that all costs are covered. Mrs Helen Gillespie and Mrs Joanne Kearney will supervise the children in 123 Club and provide a variety of fun activities for them. 123 Club was again very popular with both parents and pupils last year 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 attached booking form if you would like your child to attend 123 Club although one off bookings can be made by contacting the school. All monies should be paid in advance or on a Monday in a separately labelled envelope as it is checked by the 123 Club staff. I would like to thank Mrs Helen Gillespie and Mrs Joanne Kearney for their excellent management and supervision of the children in 123 Club.

**PLEASE DRIVE AND PARK SAFELY IN AND AROUND THE SCHOOL. 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. Polo shirts and sweatshirts are available from Dessie's, Armagh. (Plain polo shirts are acceptable), ***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. I and all the staff greatly appreciate your support and co-operation. Thanks!

**SCHOOL DINNERS** – 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 each **Monday in advance**. (Payable either by cash or cheque, made out to the school). Please send money into school in a sealed envelope with your child's/children's name(s) and amount clearly written. School Dinners Cost **£54.60** for the month of September for those parents who wish to pay monthly. Our September menu is now available on our website ([www.ourladyspstullysaran.com](http://www.ourladyspstullysaran.com)).

**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 / FRUIT MONEY** - We provide and encourage each child to have some fruit each morning, and it is very popular with most pupils. Snack/Fruit money for every pupil will be £5 per month. This must be paid each month in advance to cover the cost of the fruit (You can pay each term or full year in advance if you wish).

**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 is 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** - Please find updated holiday dates attached and a list of school closures is also available on the school website.

**SCHOOL WEBSITE** – Please visit our school website [www.ourladyspstullysaran.com](http://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.

#### **IMPORTANT DATES –**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September** – P1 Class photograph.

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September** – **School Closed @1pm (dinners will be served) to facilitate essential staff training.** Sorry for any inconvenience caused. As part of our Shared Education Partnership Teachers and Classroom Assistants will be participating in 'Effective Feedback' training which can only be facilitated for the three schools from 1.30 – 6.30pm. School will close @1pm for all children.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September** – Beginning of year Mass @ 10 am in Tullysaran Chapel – Coffee morning in aid of the Southern Hospice in the school after Mass.

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October** – P1 - P7 Curriculum Information Evening.

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October** – Book Fair.

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October** – P4 & P6 Library visits.

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October** – Midland Theatre Shows.

**P2 - 7 Parent Teacher Meetings** – Week beginning 21<sup>st</sup> Oct (After-school Mon-Thurs – Dinner hall).

**Halloween holidays** – 28<sup>th</sup> Oct – 1<sup>st</sup> Nov.

**R/P1 - 4 Christmas Panto** – Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Christmas Dinner** – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December (School will close @ 1pm).

**R/P1- 4 Christmas Shows** – Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December.

**P5 – 7 Christmas Panto** – Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December.

**Christmas Holidays** – 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec – 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan (School will close @ 12 noon on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> Dec).

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January** – Children return to school.

**Mid-Term Break** - Monday 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> February.

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March** – P4 First Penance @ 7pm.

**St. Patrick's Day Closure** - Monday 16<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March** – P7 Service of Light @ 7.30pm in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh.

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May** - Holy Communion @ 10 am.

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May** – Provisional Confirmation date @2pm in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

**AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES** – Will commence next week for all P2-7 children. We will strive to offer a variety of activities throughout the year including Art, Science, Irish and Cookery clubs. **Term one clubs:** Zumba, Karate and Soccer (P2 & 3), ICT & Karate (P4 & 5), Gaelic football and Soccer (P6 & 7) and Transfer class P7. P1 clubs will begin in term 2.

**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/carer to be used in the **event of an emergency** or to be updated for our text messaging service.

Finally, I would request that you read the attached Pastoral Care leaflet, Complaints Procedure, Internet Safety information and sign the relevant permission slips. 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 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.

Many Thanks,

Tomás McKee

Mr Tomás McKee.

Principal