



December 2020 Newsletter



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Principal: Mrs. Mary Bacheta

Dear families and friends

Happy 1st December!! I hope everyone is doing well.

At this time of year, we are usually still buzzing from our successful Christmas Fair and looking forward to our whole school Christmas performance. This year we are continuing to look forward to sharing a Christmas performance with you but in a different format so the staff and the children are busy preparing this as a special treat for you.

The children are just the most amazing little people and we are so proud of everything they have achieved since March. We have counted our blessings often since returning to school in September and we want to make this Christmas more special than ever. Even though our parents, families and friends are at a distance we still want you to feel part of everything we do and enjoy in school.

Most of the information we need you to know is sent out via the website or through the teacher via email so keep a close eye on these platforms to ensure you are kept up to date. This newsletter contains more general information and reminders for the whole school community. Please keep it and make a note of the arrangements for December.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ACCESS TO SCHOOL BUILDING

Unfortunately, some of the 'return to school' arrangements remain the same in relation to access to the school building. Children will continue to be met at and brought to the gate by a member of the school staff in the mornings. It is with regret that access to the school building continues to operate by appointment only. If you need to talk to the teacher, please ring the office and we will let the teacher know.

SCHOOL GATES

Congregating and waiting at the school gates is discouraged to reduce the potential spread of the virus. Please drop and go or wait in the car until your child has been brought out to the gate.

Please also wear a mask or face covering if not exempt.

TRAFFIC

Young children have the potential to run and are not always aware of the dangers on the road. Please keep your child close by your side at all times when outside the school gates.

DISABLED AREA

The area at the gates must be kept clear for disabled road users. Please do not drive or reverse into this area unless you are eligible to do.

Let's keep working together to keep us all safe.

FLU VACCINATION

There will be a mop up for the flu vaccination on Tuesday 8th December 2020. We will facilitate this service in the school for any child who missed the flu vaccination in October.

REMINDER SCHOOL CLOSURES

School will close for Christmas holidays on Tuesday 22nd December 2020 at 11.30am. Children return to school on Wednesday 6th January 2021.

CAN YOU HELP WITH OUR FOOD ADVENT CALENDARS?

Who doesn't love an advent calendar! Especially if it is full of your favourite treats. Well this year, I think we would just be happy if we could get the world back to a safe place to live and enjoy.

As a school are very conscious of the suffering and hardship that some families have endured since March. For many reasons, families and friends in our school and wider community have faced difficulties that have been unavoidable.

Instead of fundraising as we usually do, we would like to invite you to take part in sending an item of food (non-perishable) to school so that we can make up food parcels for anyone who may need a helping hand.

There is no pressure but if you feel that you can help, just send it in with the children on or before the 10th December.

Examples of items include:

Tinned food

Pasta

Tea

Coffee

Biscuits

Cereal

Festive treats

Rice

Toothpaste/toiletries

Hand soap



Please also contact us confidentially if a food parcel would help your family get through the Christmas period.

CHRISTMAS DINNER-WEDNESDAY 9th DECEMBER 2020

Our Annual Christmas dinner will be served on Wednesday 9th December this costing £2.60 as normal if paying for dinner. Children can come to school wearing their Christmas jumper/clothes/hat/hairband/tinsel to celebrate. As always this is optional-some children prefer the routine of the school uniform. There should be no pressure on anyone but the option is there if you wish.

IMPORTANT-If you would like your child to attend the Christmas dinner, please send in the money for this on or before the Monday 7th December to allow the kitchen to secure numbers.

CHRISTMAS JUMPERS 9th TO 22nd DECEMBER

The children can put the uniforms away until January 2021 and come to school wearing Christmas jumpers/hairbands/hats/tinsel etc from 9th December.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you change your contact details including email address, please let Mrs Ashford know as it is even more important than ever that we have your current details.

ADVERSE WEATHER/ SNOW ARRANGEMENTS

Luckily, we do not experience too many days where we feel that we may not be able to open the school or that weather conditions may hinder attendance at school. To put it into context, children are expected to attend 185 school days so we are only talking about a very small number of adverse weather days when conditions may cause us an issue. We try not to dwell on these days but focus on all the other happy days we come to school.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, the most important factor is the Health & Safety of every member of our school community.

To ensure you do not feel under pressure or put anyone in a situation where children or adults are at risk we would encourage you to carefully assess the weather conditions before making the journey to school. We understand that a large number of families including staff live in areas where there are steep hills and untreated roads. We do not want anyone to worry about the journey to school. We also understand that parents and guardians have the added pressure of needing to get to work on time. Unfortunately, we cannot predict or change bad weather but we can offer solutions to help us have a more pleasant experience.

Please note the following:

As far as is possible we will always try to open the school, however, on the rare occasion where it is deemed too dangerous, a message will be sent through the website and on Facebook at the earliest opportunity.

In the event of adverse weather, there is no immediate rush required to get to school. Children will be marked in for the morning session if they arrive in before 10.30am. Just contact the office to let us know.

If you can avoid driving up the hill to the school, please do so as it can be very slippery, especially around school time when traffic is going in both directions. A later arrival will also mean you will miss some of the congestion. A number of parents used the entrance down at Shepherd's Glen last year and they found this an easier route.

Just an additional note on the above: I have tried to get the 'gritter' to come up and salt the hill and have been told that we need to have a larger number of road users to justify this. If you have time, I would encourage you to continue to put pressure on the local MLAs and council to afford us this much needed service.





CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Tuesday 22nd December at 11.30am-return on Wednesday 6th January 2021

FIRST COMMUNION-PRIMARY 4

Saturday 8th May 2021 in St. Columb's Church, Chapel Road followed by refreshments in the school assembly hall. (time to be confirmed)

CONFIRMATION-PRIMARY 7

No date as yet.



Thank you for your continued support in all that we do.



**HAPPY CHRISTMAS
EVERYONE!**



Mrs. Bacheta and staff

