

St. Mary's Primary School Cabragh

10 Whites Road, Cabragh, Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, BT70 3AN

Telephone: (028) 8776 7356

Principal: Mrs Louise Quinn



Dear Parent/Guardian,

11th September 2024

We welcome back all our children for another school year and especially our 25 new Primary 1 children who begin primary school with us in St. Mary's and our new pupils who have joined us in other classes. I welcome our new parents and hope you have a very positive experience within our school community.

The emotional health and wellbeing of all our pupils is a key priority in St. Mary's. With this in mind, we will be offering a wide range of fun activities to support the children's physical and mental health, both during school and after school. These activities will include sport, music, 'Relax Kids', 'The Calm Kit' and French Club.

Please find below important information and details of the wide range of activities planned for this term and key events which should be noted in your diary.

School Rules

We kindly request that parents view the School Rules on the school website/Parent Area.

<https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/parent-area/general-school-rules/>

Home/School Communication

St Mary's strives to maintain close liaison with parents, and we greatly value the close partnership we have with our parents. To keep parents informed of important updates, we regularly use the school's texting service, the school website, <https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/home/> and the school Facebook page. **PLEASE NOTE** that due to issues with the 'CONNECT' texting App, we will now be using Broadcast Lists via WhatsApp to correspond with parents. **It is very important that parents save the school mobile number to their contacts lists, in order to receive messages from school.**

Each month a Calendar and Newsletter with key information and important updates will be posted on the school website. It is important that parents view these and make note of important events, including dates and times of After-school Clubs etc. **PLEASE NOTE: The school mobile phone is primarily a one - way system** and is used for sending important notifications to parents/guardians. The school mobile phone is not regularly monitored and we kindly request that parents who wish to contact the school avoid texting the school mobile and telephone the school office on 028 877 67356 instead. We thank you for your support with this matter.

School Dinners

Please note that **dinners MUST be paid for on a weekly basis.** School dinners can be booked and paid for via the SchoolMoney App. School meals are cooked in the school kitchen. The canteen staff are committed to providing healthy and nutritious meals. The dinner menu for September can be viewed on the school website. <https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/parent-area/dinner-menu-953/>

Holiday List

Please see the school website for school closures 2024-2025. This may be subject to change.

<https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/calendar/>

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Time-Keeping

Time-keeping is extremely important in the education of your child and is a life-long learning skill. If your child is persistently late they are missing out on important learning opportunities at the start of the lesson. I would like to remind parents that school begins at 8.45am. Children may be dropped off at school from 8.30 am onwards. Arrival to school before 8.30 am is only permitted for the early bus children.

Attendance

It is essential that your child attends school regularly and maintains a pattern of good attendance throughout their school career. Excellent attendance at school is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential. Please see the school website for further information.

<https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/parent-area/attendance/>

In the interests of safety, please telephone the school if your child is going to be absent or late before 9:00 am. We deem this to be a most important safety procedure. A note / Absence Notification Form is always required on the child's return to school. **Please note that the Education Welfare Officer regularly visits school to monitor attendance and punctuality.**

School Drop- Off Routines- Health & Safety

To avoid dangerous congestion on the Whites Road and to safeguard our school community, we kindly request that children entitled to school buses use them and parents should car share when possible. Those parents dropping off their children to school by car, should follow a one - way system to avoid dangerous traffic congestion on the Whites Road. Drivers should enter the Whites Road from the Dungannon / Ballygawley Road and exit the Whites Road onto the Fashglashagh Road. We also request that parents do not reverse into private drive - ways on the Whites Road. Please be mindful that our little children are walking to school on the pathways across these drive-ways. The health and Safety of our school community is paramount, and we appreciate your support with these safe- guarding measures.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

In the interest of Child Protection / Security and to avoid unnecessary disruption to class teaching, parents and visitors MUST report to the Secretary's office. Parents should not go beyond the school entrance foyer unless accompanied by a member of staff.

P1 and P2 Afterschool

The P1 and P2 Afterschool is optional for P1 and P2 pupils. The Afterschool Club runs from 1:30 pm - 2:45 pm each day. The Afterschool for Primary 2 pupils will commence on Monday 2nd September 2024. This can be booked via the School Website. <https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/after-school/> **We kindly request that payment is made on a WEEKLY basis.** It is the responsibility of parents to keep a note of the dates your child attends P1/P2 Afterschool. Please mark your child's name on an envelope, indicate the days your child attended and enclose payment for the days attended that week. Payment MUST be made to the school office on a weekly basis. The school is dependent on prompt payment so we can employ and pay the Afterschool Leader. Thank you for your support with this matter. The Afterschool for Primary 1 pupils will commence on Monday 30th September 2024.

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Start of Year Mass

The Start of Year Mass will take place on **Wednesday 18th September, at 10:00 am** in St Joseph's Church, Ackinduff.

Flu Vaccine

The school nurse will be here on **Thursday 17th October** to administer the **flu vaccine**.

Parent Teacher Meetings

The **Primary 7 Parent Teacher Meetings** will take place on **Friday 25th October 2024**. P7 Parents will be notified in due course about their time slot. Parent teacher meetings for **P1 – P6** will take place **week beginning Monday 18th November – Friday 22nd November**. Parents will be notified in due course about their date and time slot.

Multi-Sport Afterschool

The **Multi-Sport Afterschool** (6 week programme) will begin on Monday 9th September for **Primary 5**. The children in P5 may wear their PE kit to school for Multi-Sport. The Afterschool Club runs from 2.45 pm-3.45 pm on a Monday and will be facilitated by a trained professional. This afterschool will initially be offered to Primary 5 pupils for six weeks.

P7 Transfer Numeracy & Literacy Club

The P7 Transfer Numeracy & Literacy **Club** will start on Monday 2nd September 2024 and will run on Monday & Tuesday evenings from 2.45 pm – 3.45 pm.

SEAG- Information for P7 Parents

Pupil Registration for the SEAG Entrance Assessment is closing soon.
The Registration Period ends at 11.59pm on Friday 20th September 2024.

KEY DATES:

- **SATURDAY 16th NOVEMBER 2024 Entrance Assessment Paper 1**
- **SATURDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2024 Entrance Assessment Paper 2**
- **SATURDAY 25th JANUARY 2025 SEAG Results Day**

If you want your child to have the opportunity to apply to an academically selective school, then your child will need to sit the SEAG Entrance Assessment papers. You will need to complete a Pupil Application so that SEAG has all the details it needs to be able to put arrangements in place for your child to take the Entrance Assessment on 16th November 2024 and 23rd November 2024 in one of the SEAG Assessment centres. Only pupils for whom a Pupil Application has been completed are registered to sit the Entrance Assessment. All Pupil Registrations for the 2024 SEAG Entrance Assessment including all outstanding documentation must be completed and submitted by the deadline on **Friday 20th September 2024**. **If you wish your child to sit the Entrance Assessment, please register**

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as soon as possible so that you do not miss the deadline. Your child's birth certificate and a passport sized photograph must be uploaded to confirm the identity of the pupil.

There is an administration fee of £20 to register a child to sit the Entrance Assessment.

Parents of pupils with a Free School Meals Entitlement (FSME) are exempt from the £20 fee.

Fundamentals Coaching

AB Coaching will facilitate a Coaching Programme for P1-P7 in St. Mary's. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Killeeshil GAA who will be contributing towards the cost of this programme and for reducing the cost to parents. This is very much appreciated by all at St. Mary's! There will be a small charge to parents. **The cost will be confirmed at the beginning of October. This can be paid in 3 termly instalments.** Fundamentals Coaching for P1-P7 commences on Friday 6th September. The children in P1-P7 should wear their PE uniform into school on Fridays.

Swimming

Swimming lessons commence on **Friday 13th September** for **Primary 5**. (six- week programme). Swimming lessons are compulsory and part of our Physical Education Curriculum. **The cost of swimming lessons (including transport) for Primary 5 will be confirmed shortly.** (We are waiting for the bus company to provide a price). The fee can be paid on the School Money App. Children with long hair must wear a swimming cap. All children must wear goggles. The children should wear their PE uniform into school on swimming days (Friday). Your child will need to bring their swimming costume/swimming trunks, a towel, and goggles to school on each of the following Fridays.

September 13th, 20th, 27th & October 4th, 11th, 18th.

French Club

Le Club Français will resume in St. Mary's on Monday 9th September (P1-P5) and Wednesday 11th September (P6 & P7). We look forward to welcoming Mrs Diane Daly back to St. Mary's. Diane will teach French to all children in P1-P7 during the school day. Le Club Français is a fun language club for children. The children will learn French through songs, games, plays, stories and lots of fun activities. **The cost of French Club is £16.50** per child for the year. This can be paid in 3 termly instalments of £5.50. The fee must be paid via School Money. Learning a foreign language at a young age has many benefits for children and can reinforce literacy skills and nurture enthusiasm. Studies suggest that at a cognitive and academic level, children learning an additional language are more creative, better at solving complex problems and can score higher on standardised tests.

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Relax Kids

We look forward to welcoming Paula McGilligan from Relax Kids back to St Mary's on Thursday 12th September 2024. We are happy to let you know that **P1-P4** will have the opportunity to take part in the 6 week Relax Kids programme.

What is Relax Kids?

Relax Kids supports your children's mental and emotional health and wellbeing with a range of tools and techniques to help calm their body and mind and build confidence and self-esteem. Relax Kids use a pioneering 7-step whole-brain holistic approach and fun, magical and creative techniques to help your children feel happier and healthier.

Please also see the Parent Area/ Relax Kids for resources and information about Relax Kids or visit the Relax Kids website. <https://relaxkids.com>

The Calm Kit- Katie Carey

We are delighted to announce that Katie Carey from "The Calm Kit" will be working with our **Key Stage 2** pupils this term. The children will take part in lots of fun activities including yoga, arts, crafts and music to promote positivity and healthy, happy minds. The workshops will help the children to become more confident and resilient. The children will have opportunities to express themselves, develop emotional resilience and relax.

Paddy Mc Intosh Cup Blitz- Eglis

Primary 5 will travel to Eglis on **Thursday 3rd October 2024**, to take part in the Paddy Mc Intosh Cup Blitz.

Primary 5- My Mind & Me Workshop

Primary 5 will take part in the 'My Mind and Me' interactive Mental Health Awareness workshop, delivered by AWARE (NI) on **Tuesday 26th November 2024**.

The aims of the programme are:

- To teach children about the 5 ways to Wellbeing and how they can use these to stay well.
- To help children understand when they might need support.
- To promote mental health and wellbeing amongst children.
- To develop language and understanding around thoughts, feelings, emotions and healthy behaviours.
- To signpost pupils to those equipped to help if needed.

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P5 WAU Trip to the Navan Centre

Primary 5 will be travelling to the Navan Centre in Armagh on **Tuesday 5th November 2024**. This educational visit '**The Vikings**' involves an exploration of Early Christian Ireland by examining the impact of Viking cultures. The pupils will encounter real life Vikings in the person of Living History interpreters and visit a Viking trading post, look at Viking weaponry and way of life. Pupils will have the opportunity to act out a Viking shield wall. **The cost of the trip will be confirmed in due course**, and this can be paid for via School Money. The children should wear full school uniform and bring a snack and a **packed lunch**. The children will return to school at 2:00 pm.

Primary 3 Trip to Palace Stables- Boxes in the Attic

On **Monday 23rd September 2024**, the Primary 3 children will visit the Palace Stables as part of their World Around Us topic, "Down Memory Lane". The cost of the trip is **to be confirmed**. The trip can be paid for via School Money. Please ensure to complete and sign the consent form and return to school. The children should wear their school uniform and bring a packed lunch.

Love For Life Workshops

Love For Life will visit P1 – P5 on **Wednesday 13th November 2024**.

Love for Life will deliver the '**Wonder!**' programme to our **P3 and P4** pupils and the '**I-Smart**' programme to our P5 pupils and the '**Treasured**' programme to our P1 and P2 pupils.

'**Wonder!**' is an exciting and interactive presentation for Key Stage 1 pupils. The 'Wonder!' programme invites our P3 and P4 pupils to wonder at how amazing and unique they are, to value and appreciate the people around them, to recognise and manage their feelings and emotions, and to understand the importance of keeping healthy and staying safe. The programme is jam packed with inspiring content to encourage self-awareness and build self-esteem, and to highlight the importance of having respect for your amazing body and that of others. Pupils will unpack what a healthy friendship looks like, as well as how to deal with conflict in a constructive way. Through fun activities and stories, the pupils will be able to celebrate being part of a diverse community made up of wonder-fully unique people!

Topics covered in this presentation include:

- Self-esteem & uniqueness
- Valuing community & diversity
- Keeping the body healthy and safe
- Exploring and managing emotions
- Friendship
- How to get help

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Love for Life will deliver the **'I-Smart'** programme to our P5 pupils on **Wednesday 13th November**.

'I-Smart' is an interactive presentation that takes **the P5 pupils** on a journey through the digital world and helps them to make smart and safe choices online. The presentation encourages pupils to use and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills to navigate tricky situations that they may come across online. It also helps them develop language so they can describe how they operate in the online world. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on how digital platforms affect the rest of the world and to consider how they can make this impact a positive one in their lives.

Topics covered in the presentation include:

- Self-esteem & uniqueness
- How the internet works
- How to treat people online & cyberbullying
- Personal information & sharing
- Social Media & mental health
- Safe searching
- How to get help

Love for Life will deliver the **'Treasured'** programme to our P1 & P2 pupils on **Wednesday 13th November**. **'Treasured'** is an exciting and interactive presentation for Foundation Stage pupils. The **'Treasured'** programme invites our P1 & P2 pupils to wonder at how amazing and unique they are, to value and appreciate the people around them, to recognise and manage their feelings and emotions, and to understand the importance of keeping healthy and staying safe. The interactive programme includes singing and story-telling.

Themes covered in the presentation include:

- Empathy
- Respect
- Kindness
- Choices
- Exploring and managing emotions
- Valuing Community
- Valuing Diversity
- Keeping healthy and safe

REIM E-Safety Workshops (P6 & P7)

REIM will visit St Mary's on **Thursday 7th November 2024** to deliver E-Safety Workshops for our Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils. The workshops provide up to date information and advice on current technology and trends in an informal and fun way, covering topics like cyber-bullying, stranger danger, creating a positive digital footprint and the negative impact social media can have on us as internet users.

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'Choices and Changes' (Primary 6)

As part of our ongoing commitment to the personal development of our pupils, St. Mary's PS has invited **Love for Life** to deliver the **'Choices and Changes'** programme to our Primary 6 pupils on **Wednesday 27th November 2024**. This external input enhances what we already deliver in relation to Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).

Love for Life has a long-standing reputation for engaging effectively in the specific area of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU). All of Love for Life's programmes are age-appropriate, offering accurate information in an engaging manner, helping children and young people to learn, reflect and develop in their knowledge, skills and attitudes in this important area.

The experienced and professional Love for Life team will create a safe and secure environment in which your child can have, engaging and respectful conversations about strong healthy relationships. Below is a short description of the programme, **'Choices & Changes'** *Choices & Changes - An introduction for 9-10 year olds to the physical and emotional changes they can expect during puberty, offering support as they explore and develop an understanding about the choices and changes in their lives.*

'What's Inside' – Primary 7

As part of our ongoing commitment to the Personal Development of our Primary 7 pupils, the children will be attending a workshop delivered by Love for Life, called 'What's Inside' on **Wednesday 27th November 2024**. This interactive programme aims to equip pupils in P7 to deal with the changes that so often cause concern and anxiety at their age. We remind pupils that they are all unique by looking at the process of conception, the amazing construction of our bodies and the continuing process of growing up. The gender-specific puberty talk is often the most reassuring part of the day for pupils who are worried about changes in their bodies. Target setting, friendship and assertive behaviour skills are also addressed in the presentation.

The fun and interactive 'What's Inside' programme aims to equip the Primary 7 pupils to make healthy choices and is a vital part of their learning before their transition into secondary school. The workshop includes a separate boys and girls puberty talk, positive qualities in friendships, bullying and how to make good decisions. The main focus of the programme is to affirm the uniqueness of the individual and to encourage respect for themselves and others.

Phonics Workshop

St Mary's will be hosting a **Phonics Workshop** intended for parents of children in Primary 1 and Primary 2 on **Thursday 3rd October 2024 at 1.00 pm in the Primary 1 Classroom**. The Primary 1 and 2 children will be supervised until the end of the workshop at approximately 2pm. At St Mary's we recognise the importance of building a strong relationship with our

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children's parents and families. This workshop will help parents understand the place and purpose of teaching phonics as a starting point for teaching reading.

Spooktacular Day

We will celebrate 'Spooktacular Day' on **Friday 25th October 2024** to celebrate Halloween! The children will take part in lots of Halloween themed activities and are encouraged to dress up in their Halloween costumes.

Halloween Holidays

School will be closed Monday 28th October 2024 – Friday 1st November 2024 inclusive.

Accelerated Reader (P4-P7)

As you are aware, your child was set an individual AR target at the start of the school year. It is so important that your child uses this fantastic resource for reading, to improve fluency and comprehension skills. The end date for this term's target is **Friday 13th December 2024**. Please encourage your child to keep reading and taking AR quizzes to ensure he/she reaches 100% by 13th December 2024.

Mathletics (P3-7)

Mathletics is an online learning platform that engages pupils through challenges and rewards. Linked to the National Curriculum, Mathletics supports children as they develop confidence in mathematics and allows them to practise key skills in a wide range of areas. It is designed to provide pupils with a captivating and safe learning experience which combines targeted and adaptive curriculum content, structured and interactive support, with engaging games and rewards.

Healthy Eating

St Mary's Primary School promotes healthy eating at school. Schools are monitored by the Department of Education to check that they are doing everything possible to promote healthy eating. Lunch is an important meal for school going children. It should provide one third of their recommended daily allowance of nutrients without being high in fat, sugar or salt. It should also provide dietary fibre. **High fat and high sugar content foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, buns, chocolate, sugary cereal bars and soft drinks are not permitted for lunch.** Children should bring a water bottle or milk to school. Please see the school website [https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/parent-area/healthyeating-/](https://www.stmaryscabragh.com/parent-area/healthyeating/) or click on the links below for some ideas. <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/> <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/school-packed-lunch-inspiration>

All children are allowed **one small treat on a Friday**. (EG- A fun size bar, Kit-Kat, Milky Way etc) **TO BE EATEN AFTER LUNCH**. We do not permit the children to bring in fizzy drinks,

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lollipops or packets of chewy sweets. The dentist does not recommend children eating sugary snacks mid -morning and recommends that children eat their treat immediately after their lunch.

Break-time Snacks

All children have a break at 10.30am. It is important that all children bring a daily snack to school for their mid-morning break. **Children should bring a healthy snack (sandwich, wrap, crackers/cheese, fruit, carrot sticks etc.)** **High fat and high sugar content foods like crisps, sweets, biscuits, buns, chocolate, sugary cereal bars and soft drinks are not permitted.**

PLEASE NOTE:- We have a large number of children with life threatening nut allergies. Please DO NOT send nuts to school with your child or foods that contain nuts.

RISE NI

RISE NI (Regional Integrated Support for Education NI) supports children in schools by working closely with parents and school staff to help children develop the foundation skills for Learning. Please see the RISE website for advice, training and resources.

<https://view.pagetiger.com/RISENI/parents>

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions regarding any of the above.

Kind regards,

Louise Quinn