



EDENDERRY
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Autumn Term 2024/2025 - 2

THE ECHO

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THE EDENDERRY ECHO

Welcome to the second Edenderry Echo of the 2024-2025 school year. Please do take the time to read through the Echo carefully as it contains a lot of information that helps you and your child/children prepare for a very busy second half of the autumn term.

PLANNED ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

Since the start of September, we have had a significant number of children removed from school for reasons which do not align with Department of Education Policy for the removal of children from school. This includes the removal of children to attend family holidays or family events in other countries. A number of these requests have been for a significant length of time, and this has undoubtedly impacted negatively on the children's start to the academic year.

Subsequently, the Department of Education has requested that all schools continue to publicise its publications Miss School = Miss Out: A Strategy for Improving Pupil Attendance and ETI Guide Practice Guide.

These documents will build upon the good practice already taking place in our school and will bring together our existing policies to strengthen our determination to improve pupil attendance.

We would again urge you not to remove your child from school during a school term unless this is absolutely necessary. The impact of their absence is often impossible to recuperate during the course of the school year and staff cannot be requested to provide work for a child who is going on holiday.

Copies of the DE documents can be downloaded from the Department's website at <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/miss-school-miss-out-improving-pupil-attendance-strategy> and <https://www.etini.gov.uk/news/attendance-schools-eti-good-practice-report-and-case-studies>.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS
A Parent's Guide



CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES

We are very aware of the fact that following the disruption of the COVID pandemic, Edenderry has not re-established a pattern for children to perform for parents on a regular basis. We are also aware that planning for, rehearsing and performing a show takes a considerable amount of time out of the normal school curriculum and impacts on the daily use of our PE hall.

After much consideration, we have decided to implement a new biennial plan to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to perform regularly.

Starting from this December, we will be working in two main groups for Christmas Performances. One year the P1, P2 and P3 children will perform for parents and the following year, our P4, P5 and P6 children will perform. Going forward, this means that every child will have the opportunity to perform at Christmas on three occasions during their time in school.

To align with this change, the P7 children will now take over the Remembrance Assembly and they will again, as always, perform at their Leavers' Assembly each June.

So, to clarify, this year our P1, P2 and P3 children will perform twice during the school day at Christmas and our P7s will oversee the Remembrance Assembly and their Leavers' Assembly.

We appreciate that our current P4s still have to perform for parents and because of this, for this year only, they will plan an Easter Assembly which their parents will be invited in to see. This new regular pattern will also now provide them with three more opportunities to perform before they reach the end of P7.

Due to the ever-changing nature of our SPSC and SPL classes, we will make an annual decision about their opportunity to perform either independently or with the mainstream classes.

We trust that you understand that children having the chance to perform for their families is very important to us. We want to do this in a way that equitable and valuable for them.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Please remember that Term 1B activities are still available to book via the school website. Our Friday afternoon Extreme Sports with Sports City proved to be a real hit with our P5 and P6 children during the first half of the term. This is now available to P7 boys and girls and can be booked via the link on the website. See below.

[Click here to book extra-curricular activities](#)

CHARITY FUNDRAISERS FOR 2024-2025

We want to say another big thank you for the incredible £1,100 that was raised via the cash pots for the Khulula Choir. We were flabbergasted by the generosity of the school community and delighted to help the choir to feed so many hungry children back in their home country. We had a wonderful afternoon with them, listening to them sing and learning about their culture. You can see this on the school website.



Please be assured that going forward, we are very aware of the many needs close to home, including the challenge it is for many of our own school community to provide for their own family on a daily basis. Considering this, and after consideration, we have agreed that it is sensible to limit our annual fundraising to a maximum of three charities in any school year. It has always been a proud tradition of the school to fundraise for the annual poppy appeal and this will remain as one of our annual fundraising events. Our second this year has been the Khulula Choir fundraiser. Our final charity fundraiser this year will be for Reach Mentoring whose staff provide emotional health and wellbeing support for many of our children each week. This fundraiser will not take place until the Summer Term.

School Council Elections 2024/2025

PTA PLANS FOR 2024-2025

Following our first PTA Committee Meeting of the year, we can now confirm the planned PTA events for this school year. These will include the following:

Mid-term Dance Party:	25 th October
Christmas Fair:	6pm – 8pm on 6 th December
Break the rules day:	Spring Term (April)
Summer Fair:	Summer Term (June)

DANCE PARTY DAY

Please remember that this Friday (25th October) is a PTA fundraiser with each child asked to contribute £1 to wear their own choice of clothes for the day. Children may come in fancy dress, if they wish, but please remember that scary costumes and masks are strictly forbidden. Mr Mitchell, along with the usual class teachers and assistants, will be overseeing dance parties for each year group.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Plans are well underway for the PTA Christmas Fair. This will include various products being sold from stalls in the assembly hall, a raffle, performances by the school choir and the opportunity to visit Santa's Grotto. Tickets for this event priced at £2 per adult and £1 per child, will go on sale closer to the time. An adult ticket will include tea or coffee and a child's ticket will include a visit to see Santa and parents are welcome to photograph this with their own cameras.

If you have any questions about the PTA Christmas Fair, or you know anyone who would be interested in purchasing a stall, please send an email to address below.

edenderry24@yahoo.com

BREAK THE RULES DAY

We will explain this further in the days to come. In short, it will be a day when children can pay a donation to the PTA in order to gain approval to break some of our usual school rules. This could include, for example, not wearing their uniform, sitting where they wish in class, not doing their homework and other ideas which we hope the school council may suggest.

SUMMER FAIR

Again, we will provide more details on the planned summer fair, closer to the time.

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

We will be discussing our annual election of school councillors in assembly this week and the elections will then take place on Thursday. Councillors are elected in the P4 to P7 classes and in the Senior SPL class. All children are welcome to stand for election and to canvas and each class councillor will be elected by their own peers.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER VISIT

The school photography company 'School Pix' will be in school on 6th and 7th of November for the annual school photographs. Each child P1-P6 will be photographed, and parents can then decide if they wish to purchase the photographs taken.

Please note that the P7 year group and individual photographs will not be taken until later in the school year.

OPEN AFTERNOON FOR NEW P1 PARENTS

We will be hosting an Edenderry Primary School open afternoon to provide prospective new parents with an opportunity to visit the school between 1.30 pm and 3.30 pm on Friday 3rd January 2025. Please advise new and prospective parents to keep this date free in their diaries. Please also encourage new parents to take a look at the school tour which is now on our website. See link below.

[Edenderry Primary School Tour](#)

POPPY APPEAL AND REMEMBRANCE 2024

Poppies will be on sale in school from 21st October to 8th November.

The P7 Remembrance Assembly will start at 9.30 am on 8th November and will be for P7 parents and serving or former serving members of the armed forces only. It has still to be confirmed, but the NI Children's Commissioner may also be in attendance for this special occasion. Unfortunately, however, we do not have space for other family members.

In preparation for the assembly, we would also ask for your assistance in two ways.

Firstly, if you are coming by car, please be conscious and respectful of the neighbouring properties and park considerately so the entrances to neighbouring developments or houses are not in any way blocked. Relationships with our neighbours are very important to us and the best way we can maintain this is to be respectful of their property on occasions like this.

Secondly, if the attendance of younger children is essential, please be conscious of the nature of the event and the fact our P7 children have been rehearsing for some time in order to perform to the best of their ability. Considering this, we would respectfully request that any younger children attending are removed promptly if they become unsettled.

Thank you.



FIRST AID COMMUNICATIONS

Parents will appreciate that we have a number of staff who are specifically trained to provide first aid and to oversee the use of the school defibrillator. It is also important to note, however, that some first aid, such as a minor cut or scratch can often be treated by any member of staff and school has always retained records of first aid incidents in a relevant folder. In recent weeks, we have amended our head injury policy to now advise parents when any head injury occurs. This change is in line with DE expectations. Considering the nature of outdoor play in a primary school, this will definitely mean more calls from school to you, but ultimately the process ensures that you, as a parent, will have the final say in any head injury.

Going forward, we are also further improving our first aid communications by replacing our accident folder with a new self-duplicating first aid incidents form, a copy of which will be given to parents. You will see this implemented in November.

NEW SCHOOL SPORTS KITS

We want to say a huge thank you to the people who have offered to contribute to the purchase of our new school rugby, football and hockey kits. We now have sample kits from the company who provided us with the best quote. We will be discussing the quotes and options with potential sponsors in the same order that we were approached by you. In other words, those who approached us first will be given the first option on the sponsorship options.

The staff named below will be following up with those who offered to assist us over the next couple of weeks with the aim of having our teams in new kits before the start of the spring term.

Rugby - Barry and Mrs Liggett
Football (boys and girls) - Mr Mitchell
Hockey (boys and girls) - Mrs Irwin

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

25 Oct	Non-uniform Dance Party Day
25 Oct	TAG Rugby Tournament
28 Oct	Staff Development Day
28 Oct–1 Nov	Mid-term holiday
6-7 Nov	School photographer visit
8 Nov	P7 Remembrance Assembly
22 Nov	Portadown College Cross Country
5 Dec	School Christmas Dinner
6 Dec	PTA Christmas Fair
11 – 12 Dec	P1-P3 Christmas Performance
19 Dec	Nursery Nativity
20 Dec	Last day of term (early finish)
3 Jan	Open Afternoon (for new P1 parents)
6 Jan	Spring Term Starts