

January /
February News
2026



Welcome back, we hope you had an enjoyable and safe Christmas Break and are ready for a new Term. We were delighted to welcome back all our children and staff for Term 2. We would like to wish our entire school community a Happy New Year!

Important Dates:

School will close at 1pm - Wednesday 4th, Thursday 5th and Friday 6th February for Parent teacher meetings.

9th - 13th February - Mid Term Break

Saturday 14th March 11am - Confirmation St Patrick's Church Dungiven.

Saturday 30th May 11am - First Holy Communion St Matthew's Church Drumsurn.

Children Starting P1 in September 2026.

If you know anyone starting P1 in September 2026. Applications are made online again this year. The Parent Portal for Online Applications opened at Noon on 7th January and closes 12 Noon on Wednesday 21st January.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/applying-for-a-school-place>.

Catholic Schools Week 18th - 23rd January



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
PARTNERSHIP

Sunday 18th January is the start of Catholic Schools Week. The theme for this year is "Normal Lives Called to Holiness". We will explore what it means to be fully alive as a human being - living life to the full in Christ.

Winter

As the weather has turned colder, we ask that you send a coat to school with your child because we endeavour to spend some time outdoors every day. **Also please ensure your child has a pair of indoor shoes to change into when they come into school.**

Please notify school in writing of any change of contact details, because we use these to notify parents of any changes e.g. exceptional closures etc.

P2 - P7 Parent Teacher Meetings.

School will **close at 1pm** on Wednesday 4th, Thursday 5th and Friday 6th February to facilitate Parent teacher meetings for P2 - P7 children. Invitations and time slots will be sent out in due course. If P1 parents would like another meeting, please contact school to arrange one.

Post Primary P7 Parent Portal

The P7 Parent Portal for the Post Primary Transfer process opens Tuesday 27th January at 12 noon and closes Thursday 19th February at 12 noon. Information on how to apply is available at: <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/post-primary-admissions-guide>

REMAINING SCHOOL CLOSING 2025 - 2026

Monday 9th - Friday 13th February.
(school re-opens Monday 16th February)

Half -Term

Tuesday 17th March and Wednesday 18th March.

St Patrick's Day & Teacher Training

(School closes 11.30am Wednesday 1st April)
Thursday 2nd April- Friday 10th April.
(school re-opens Monday 13th April)

Easter Holidays

Monday 4th May - Wednesday 6th May

May Day & Teacher Training

Monday 25th May

May Bank holiday

School closes 11.30 am Tuesday 30th June for Summer!

Breakfast Club runs daily from 8.15am - 8.45am £1.50 per child per day.



After School Clubs

Mondays

Stay & Play Club £1 per child per week will start today Monday 12th January for 6 weeks until 23rd February.

P1 - P3 children 2.30pm - 3.30pm.

Senior Choir will restart today Monday 12th January

P4 - P7 3pm - 4pm

Tuesdays

Literacy Reading Club £1 per child per week will start Tuesday 13th January for 6 weeks until 24th February.

P1 - P3 children 2.30pm - 3.30pm.

Cross Country Club P4 - P7 will restart Tuesday 13th January

P4 - P7 3pm - 4 pm

Wednesdays

NO CLUBS

Thursdays

Dance Club Term 2 will restart Thursday 8th January

P1 - P3 2pm - 3pm

P4 - P7 3pm - 4 pm

PTA Christmas Fundraiser

The PTA would like to thank everyone who bought squares for the Hamper Draw or entered the Raffle.

S.V.D.P Fundraiser - with your help we raised £300. Many thanks to everyone who donated.

Absences

Please remember to keep school informed should your child be absent for any reason. If your child is feeling unwell you can check the PHA website for up-to-date guidance on whether you should keep your child off school.

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/do-i-need-keep-my-child-school-english-and-translations>

THE POST-PRIMARY TRANSFER PROCESS FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN P6

The Department of Education has a booklet available to P6 parents at:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Advice%20for%20P6%20Parents%20-%20January%202025.PDF>

Attendance Tiers from The Department of Education:

I am writing to remind you of updated Guidance for Schools recently issued in respect of monitoring and reporting pupil attendance. As you will be aware, attending school regularly is important for all children because of the link between attendance and attainment. Regular attendance at school, combined with high-quality teaching and learning, ensures that pupils get the best possible outcomes from their time in compulsory education.

The Department of Education has been considering how it can better present pupil absence statistics to help inform and support schools, parents, and pupils regarding pupil attendance. The Department of Education will now measure pupil attendance in TIERS and we as a school, will also monitor attendance and communicate attendance INFORMATION TO PARENTS/ CARERS IN Tiers also.

The tiers, as created by The Department of Education, are outlined below:

TIER 1a

Pupils recognised as "Regular Attendance" missing 0% - 0.49% of school. Roughly less than 1 day per month.

TIER 1b

Pupils recognised as "At Risk Attendance" missing 5% - 9.9% of school. Roughly 1+ day per month.

TIER 2

Pupils recognised as "Chronic Attendance" missing 10% - 19.9% of school. Roughly 2 - 3 days per month.

TIER 3

Pupils recognised as "Severe Chronic Attendance" missing 20% or more of school.

In future communication regarding attendance, we will be using the Tier system to update parents and carers.

Staff Car Park

In the interests of pupil safety - Only staff cars should use the staff car park. Parents are asked to use the parking bays on the Drumsurn Road or the car park beside Little Rascals Playgroup.

In exceptional circumstances parents can contact the school in advance for permission.

For up-to-date info you can follow us on:

Schools NI app. Download it from your app store and type in Our school's name: St Matthew's Primary 296 Drumsurn Road Limavady BT49 0PX.

School Website: <https://www.stmatthewsprimaryschool.com/>



ST. MATTHEW'S SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Keeping children safe is our number one priority. We ensure that the safety and wellbeing of every child is at the centre of every decision we make. If you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, please speak to us!



Liam Begley
Chairperson of the Board of Governors



Micheal McCutcheon
Designated Governor for Child Protection



Ann-Marie Kealey
Principal
Designated Teacher for Child Protection



Tyrone Proctor
Deputy designated Teacher for
Child Protection