

OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee



23rd May, 2021

Reference: May & June Arrangements

Dear Parents/Guardians

I write to you to outline our arrangements for rest of May and June.

First of all, I would like to congratulate our Primary 7 children who made their Confirmation on Saturday in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh. The children have worked so hard over the past few weeks preparing for this special occasion and participated outstandingly in the ceremony which was celebrated by Archbishop, Eamon Martin. Thanks to all the staff who assisted with the preparation of the children and a special thanks must go to the Primary 7 parents for all their brilliant support. Thank you.

We now look forward to the Primary 4 children celebrating their Holy Communion on Saturday 29th May. It has been a busy month for the Primary 4 children, who made their First Confession in a beautiful ceremony on Thursday 13th May. Preparations are now well under way for their Holy Communion which will be celebrated on Saturday. Due to COVID 19 restrictions only children and their parents may attend this celebration however we are sure that it will still be a very special experience for everyone. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the whole school community to wish all our Primary 4 children and families the best of luck for their Holy Communion.

I must take this opportunity to remind everyone that it is still very important that we continue to follow our COVID 19 protocols to ensure that all children can continue to enjoy face to face teaching and to make sure that Holy Communion goes ahead as planned. Please remember to encourage your child(ren) to wash their hands regularly and if they display any **symptoms of COVID 19** (*continuous cough, high temperature, loss of smell/taste*) they **MUST** not attend school or travel on school transport. Children must also not come to school if a member of their household or someone with whom they have had a **close contact** is being tested for COVID19. It is preferable that a child misses one or two days rather than a whole group of children and adults having to isolate for 10 days. Adults entering school grounds must wear a face covering and are encouraged to wear a face covering if waiting to collect children at the school gates.

If a child displays COVID-19 symptoms in school, we will isolate the child in a designated area (child will be supervised by an adult) and contact parents. Parents must then follow PHA guidance. If someone in a class bubble tests positive for COVID-19 we will send out a text message, as everyone within the bubble will have to isolate for a minimum of 10 days. The school will then contact PHA for further guidance and letters will be posted on our school website, outlining the isolation period. Please ensure that your contact details are up to date and you have plans in place to deal with such an event. Hopefully, this is something that we will not have to deal with but it is vital that we continue to be vigilant, even though things are opening up, and are prepared to respond appropriately.

Over the course of the last few months we have strived to return to some type of normality and have been delighted to be able to offer afterschool activities for most classes. Thankfully, the Department of Education has now informed schools that we can begin to plan day trips for our classes and matches against other schools. Our teachers are currently planning trips for each class during the month of June and we hope to organise a couple of football/camogie and possibly hurling games for our Primary 7 children.

The Department of Education has also offered schools funding to host **Summer Schemes** for some pupils. We plan to organise our Summer Scheme during the final two weeks of July. The Summer Scheme will be offered to P3-P6 children and will run from **Monday 19th July until Friday 30th July**, 9am-12.30pm each day. The focus of the Summer Scheme

will be on emotional health and wellbeing through fun and interactive activities such as arts and crafts; with the children being given the opportunity to play games outside. Some of our Primary 6 children will also be given the opportunity to engage in transfer work. We realise that these dates may not suit everyone however we hope to facilitate as many children as possible. The Department of Education has recommended that schools accommodate 25% of the school's population. This would mean that we could facilitate around 50 children each day. If you would like your child(ren) to attend the Summer Scheme, please complete the permission slip at the end of the letter and return it to the school by Friday 28th May. We will then contact you in June to confirm arrangements. If we are oversubscribed, we may offer places for one week to facilitate as many children attending as possible.

At the end of term two we posted a short survey for parents on our website regarding our arrangements for remote learning during term two. We would like to thank all those parents who completed the survey for their feedback which was very positive and also offered further suggestions on how we could further improve our remote learning provision if there is another school closure. The feedback was as follows:

-  The vast majority of responses thought that the use of Seesaw was excellent for remote learning and appreciated the teachers' efforts in posting learning activities, interacting with pupils and providing children with feedback on their work.
-  All parents who responded felt that the paper packs were a brilliant support and commented positively on their format and the inclusion of reading books.
-  Most parents felt that other online programs, such as Mathletics, Mathseeds and Nessy were very good for supporting the children with their learning and kept them motivated through the weekly leader boards.
-  The vast majority of parents felt that the live Zoom sessions were an excellent addition to our provision particularly the beginning of the week lessons and Friday quizzes in Primary 6 and 7. Parents felt that the children enjoyed seeing their teachers, classmates and the interaction during these sessions. One of the recommendations from some parents was that more regular Zoom sessions or video lessons for other classes would further enhance our provision.
-  Nearly all parents felt that the teacher's phone calls during February were very beneficial to discuss the progress of their child(ren) and how remote learning was going.
-  All parents who responded to the survey felt that the promotion of health and wellbeing activities through our fitness classes and Relax Kids was excellent and the parents encouraged us to continue to promote health and wellbeing in the future.
-  All parents felt that the communication from the school was very effective and appreciated the use of text messages as a helpful reminder.
-  Many of the parents who completed the survey commented on the excellent support and provision that was offered by the school through remote and supervised learning. During term two we strived to facilitate all requests for supervised learning from key worker families and this was clearly appreciated by parents which was very evident in the comments posted in the survey. Thank you.

We appreciate the many positive responses that were made by parents however we are always striving for improvement and we will reflect on the suggestions which were made to further improve our remote learning in the event of another school closure. Hopefully this does not occur but it is better to be ready to provide children and families with the best possible support that we can offer. Thank you once again to all those parents who completed the survey.

Please take note of the following dates:

29th May 2021: P4 First Holy Communion @11am in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Tullysaran

31st May 2021: School Closed – Bank Holiday

1st June 2021: School Closed – Staff Baker Day

3rd June 2021: School Photographer

17th June 2021: Reception & Primary One Parents' Induction evening via Zoom @7pm

23rd June 2021: P7 Leavers' Mass (Primary 7 last day)

24th June 2021: Transition day – children will meet their teacher for next year

25th June 2021: Last day of school year for all children (R/P1-P6) – normal finishing times

19th – 30th July 2021: Summer Scheme (P3-P6)

DROP OFF AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN – I would like to remind you about the importance of safety around the school in the morning and afternoon. Please ensure that you park and drive safely at drop off and collection times. Take your time, one or two minutes is not going to make a huge difference as you make your journey away from school. P4 & P5 will continue to leave school @2.50pm to ease congestion and facilitate greater social distancing around the school grounds in the afternoon. Please remember to be respectful of the properties that are in close proximity of the school grounds. Some parents continue to turn or park in people’s driveways. Please do not turn or park in the driveways of local residents. Thank you. If you are running late, don’t worry we will supervise children until they are collected although this should not be a daily occurrence. Morning drop off is usually better than the afternoon although I would remind all parents/guardians that children must not enter the school grounds until 8 am if attending Breakfast Club. All other children must not come to school until 8.40 am. If a child enters the school before this time, they will have to attend Breakfast Club and whether they take breakfast or not, their parent/guardian will be charged £2.

Please remember to keep up to date with dinner, Breakfast or 123 Clubs payments on ParentPay. We will contact you if money is unpaid and will have to refuse dinner or entry to these clubs if payments over a period of more than two weeks have not been paid.

Thank you for your continued support and anticipated cooperation with the above arrangements. Please contact the school if you have any further queries or suggestions.

Take care and all the best,

Tomás Mc Kee

Tomás Mc Kee

Principal

Summer Scheme 2021 Reply Slip

The Summer Scheme is free for all children who are currently in P3-P6. It will run from Mon 19th – Fri 30th July, 9am-12.30pm. There will be a focus on emotional health and wellbeing through fun and interactive activities. The children will be given the opportunity to engage in arts and crafts, games and playing outside. Our P6 children who may sit the transfer assessment in autumn will be given the opportunity to complete transfer work.

Please complete the slip if you would like your child(ren) to attend the Summer Scheme. We will then confirm if they are able to attend in June, once we have confirmed our numbers and arrangements. If we are oversubscribed, we may offer places for one week to ensure that we are able to facilitate as many requests as possible. Thank you.

I would like my child(ren) _____ to attend the Summer Scheme.

Signed: - _____

Date: - _____

Reply slips must be returned by Friday 28th May.