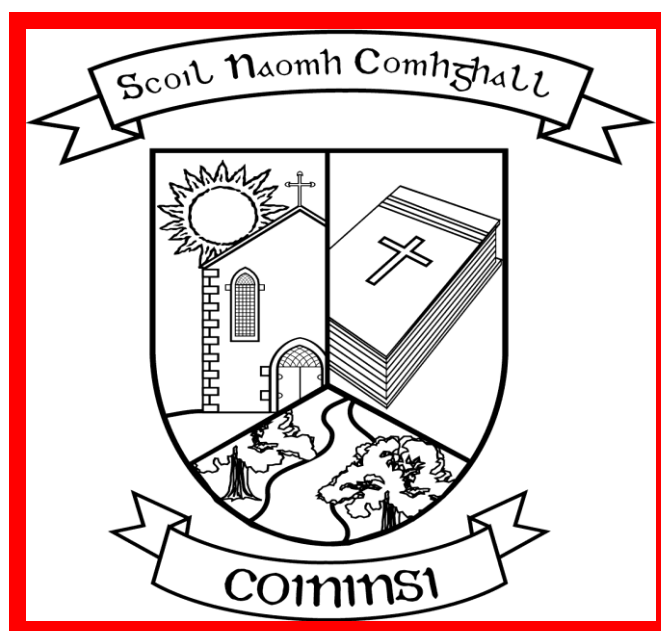


SAINT COMGALL'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

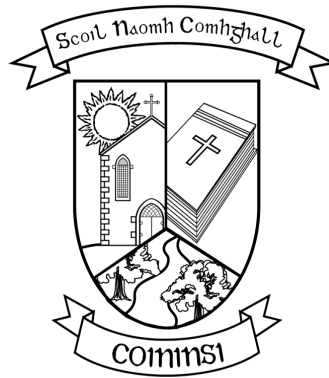
CONNONS, CLONES, CO. MONAGHAN



Prospectus: 2023/2024

Principal: Mrs AM Pennell
BscHons, PGCE, PgDip Leadership

Tel: 047 55329
Mobile: 00447586562522
Email: stcomgalls@gmail.com
Website: www.stcomgallsns.ie



Connons,
Clones,
Co. Monaghan
H23 EH04

Dear Parents,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you and your child/ren to St. Comgall's N.S., Connons to learn, enjoy and participate fully in the next stage of your child's life, eight years of enjoyable and rewarding learning at Primary School. We're very conscious of the responsibility with which you are entrusting us; namely the educating of your child. Our principal aim is to help all children to not only attain a high level in the basic skills but to encourage them to blossom as individuals and to use to the fullest the talents that they have been given.

We are committed towards achieving the highest standards for your child and working with you closely to achieve this. We are conscious of the fact that you have been your child's first teachers and the continued importance of your role in your child's education is key to success. An open and trusting relationship must exist between the home and the school to achieve these high ideals. We encourage an 'open communication' policy where you should feel comfortable to schedule a chat with the class teacher or arrange a meeting with the class teacher at any time of the year to discuss any concerns you may have.

We look forward to seeing you in school and if there are any questions or queries you have please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Marie Pennell
(Principal)

VISION

St. Comgall's is a co-educational, Catholic primary school in the parish of Clones catering for the educational needs of all our children. As a caring school, together with the whole school community, we share a common goal - to do the very best for all our children. As a Catholic school we aim, first and foremost, to establish and foster Christian values for life, but also to strive to show due recognition for all other religions. This 'Plean Scoile' is intended to help you understand more about the life and work of our school. It outlines what we stand for and highlights what pupils will experience in our school. It explains the curriculum and policies on offer to our pupils and how these fit in with recent government legislation for all schools.

MISSION STATEMENT

*At St. Comgall's N.S.
we are committed to providing a rounded education for the children in our care; an education which recognizes and respects the uniqueness of each child. The full potential of the child is fostered within an atmosphere of mutual respect, care and understanding, as he/she strives to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed, to cope in an ever-changing world. We acknowledge the importance of every aspect of school activity and aim to build a systematic framework of schooling that is built upon the collaborative involvement of the key partners in our school community, in our planning and policy-making processes. A healthy respect for change and development is fundamental to our thinking.*

CONTACT DETAILS

School Address:
Connons,
Clones,
Co. Monaghan
H23 EH04

Telephone: 047-55329
00447586562522

Email: stcomgallsns@gmail.com
Web: www.stcomgallsnsclones.ie

SCHOOL HISTORY & SURROUNDINGS

St. Comgall's a two-classroom teacher rural primary school situated in the Drumlin countryside of west Monaghan, approximately eight kilometres from Clones. It is also the base school for a Special Education Teacher (SET) who provides invaluable assistance to all pupils. The original two classroom building was built in 1952 and was extended and extensively refurbished in 2006/2007. The new facelift is not only beautifully designed but also incorporates some of the most modern, up to date facilities available in any Irish school.

The accommodation comprises of two interactive whiteboard resourced classrooms, a multi-purpose classroom, P.E. and equipment storerooms and special needs toilet facilities. There is also an attractive welcoming reception area equipped with library resources, a staffroom and a Principal's office in the building. Outside boasts landscaped gardens, two substantial tarmaced playground areas with a wooden playground and poly-tunnel in the rear playground. Indeed, our school looks out on an idyllic, peaceful setting with St. Alphonsus' Church across the road and our community hall, football field and tennis court located adjacent to the school.



'President McAleese visited St. Comgall's N.S.'

At St. Comgall's we offer:

- An appealing, safe, well-maintained building
- A stimulating, challenging learning environment with a wide range of teaching equipment including interactive whiteboards, visualisers and a computer for every child, designed to develop all subject areas
- Small class sizes which facilitate a low pupil/teacher ratio, ultimately enabling teachers to focus more on each child's individual needs and talents
- Caring, talented, dedicated staff with high expectations for all
- An environment which fosters good behaviour, cultivating happy, confident, motivated pupils who strive to achieve the highest possible standards
- Excellent attention for the education of children with special needs
- Supportive, interested co-operative parents
- A well - informed, dedicated Board of Management
- Links with parish, community, sporting and Industry Groups
- Successful participation in local Competitions

Teaching Principal ~ <i>3^d, 4th, 5th, 6th Classes</i>	Mrs. Ann Marie Pennell
Teaching Deputy Principal ~ <i>Junior Infants, Senior Infants, 1st, 2nd Classes</i>	Mrs. Elaine Hagan
Special Education Teacher (S.E.T.)	Mrs. Donna Prunty
Special Needs Assistant (S.N.A.)	Mrs. Mary Kirke
Secretary	Mrs. Stephanie Fitzpatrick
School Cleaner	Ms. Catherine Connolly
Caretaker	Mr. Gerry McAdam
Music Teacher	Mrs. Maria Maguire
G.A.A. Skills Coach	Ms. Anne McKenna
Dance Teacher	Mr. Gerard McQuaid

Board of Management

The term of office of the Board of Management is four years and comprises of eight members, represented as follows; the principal teacher and one other teacher on the staff, two direct nominees of the patron (Bishop), two parents of children enrolled in the school and two community members. The board is required to meet at least once in every school term to participate in discussions and work and all members are collectively responsible for the management of the school. Board members in office at present are:

Chairperson	Mr. Stephen Mc Cabe
Principal	Mrs. Ann Marie Pennell
Treasurer	Mr. John Connolly
Teacher Representative	Mrs. Elaine Hagan
Patron Nominee	Mr John Connolly
Parent Representatives	Mrs. Jacinta McCaffrey
Community Representative	Miss Cathy Kirke/ Mrs Helen Maguire

Parents' Association

St. Comgall's has an active Parents' Association which works with the principal, staff and Board of Management to build effective co-operation and partnership between home and school. It provides parents with the opportunity to play a full role in their child's education and in the development of the school. The Parents' Association elects a committee that manages the responsibilities of the Parents' Association on behalf of all the parents. Membership of the association is open to all parents.

Chairperson	Susan McCaffrey
Secretary	Deirdre Parker
Treasurer	Natasha Duffy

We welcome parental participation in school life, which is encouraged in many ways e.g. through involvement in celebrations, concerts, sacramental preparation, school Masses, sport's days, school tours, fundraising and through parental expertise to some aspect of subject areas e.g. visual arts.

School Hours

<u>Start:</u>	9:20 a.m.
<u>Break (Sos):</u>	11:00 – 11:10 a.m.
<u>Lunch (Lón):</u>	12:30 – 1:00 p.m.
<u>Home Time:</u>	2:00 p.m. (Junior Infants / Senior Infants) 3:00 p.m. (1st Class – 6th Class)

A shorter school day will be in place for the first two weeks of each new school year for Junior Infant pupils. Junior Infant pupils go home at 12:00 p.m. during the first week and at 1:00 p.m. during the second week.

Under its insurance policy, school authorities do not accept responsibility for any child who arrives on school grounds before 9:10 a.m. or who remains on after 3:00 p.m.. Parents are asked to ensure that children are in school at the stated time and collected at the appropriate times.



Laptop/Ipad for every child!



Tin Whistle	P.E. Coaching	Sacramental Preparation	Christmas/Easter Activities	Active Schools
Christmas Play	Discover Primary Science&Maths	'Write-a-book'	Annual School Mass	Gymnastics (alternate years)
Book Rental Scheme	Stay Safe Programme	Community members' visits	Gaelic Football/ Soccer Blitz	Healthy Eating Initiatives
Green Schools	Credit Union Quiz	School Garden	'Blue Star' Programme	Recycling Initiative
Paired Reading	Mobile Library Service	St. Patrick's Day Activities	St. Brigid's Day Cross Making	Irish Dancing (alternate years)
Book Club	Competitions	School Tour	Swimming (alternate years)	Cooking
School bus	Hallowe'en Activities	Educational Outings	Sport's Day	Charity Events

School Curriculum

'The Primary School Curriculum is designed to nurture the child in all dimensions of his or her life – spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical'

Primary School Curriculum, 1999

English

Oral Language, Reading,
Writing

Gaeilge

Labhairt, Léitheoireacht,
Éisteacht, Scríbhneoireacht

Maths

Number, Measures, Algebra,
Shape & Space, Data

History

Local Studies, Story, Life
Society Work & Culture in the
Past, Early People & Ancient
Societies, Continuity &
Change Over Time

Geography

Human Environments,
Natural Environments,
Environmental Awareness &
Care

Science

Living Things, Energy &
Forces, Materials,
Environmental Awareness &
Care

Music

Listening & Responding,
Performing, Composing

Art

Drawing, Paint & Colour,
Print, Clay, Construction,
Fabric & Fibre

Religion

Grow in Love Programme

Drama

Exploring & making drama,
Reflecting on drama, Co-
operating &
communicating in making
drama

Physical Education

Games, Athletics, Dance,
Gymnastics, Aquatics,
Outdoor & Adventure
Activities

Social Personal & Health Education

Myself, Myself & Others, Myself & the Wider World

School Books / School Book Rental

It is each parent's responsibility to provide the necessary stationary materials for his/her child's education. Booklists for each class level are annually reviewed and carefully selected for appropriate educational content. Class booklists are sent out in June. Books are ordered and purchased by the school. Parents can choose to prepay for the books in June or wait and pay for them on return to school after the summer holidays.

A loan service for many school books on the curriculum is in operation in the school. This applies mainly to children in senior classes as it is workbooks that are predominantly used at junior level.

Home / School Communication

St. Comgall's N.S. welcomes a partnership with parents in the education of their child/children. Communication procedures are as follows:

Formal Parent/Teacher meeting – Held once a year, normally in the first term. Both parents are invited to attend having received a formal written invitation to this meeting.

By appointment – Parents are asked to make a telephone call to arrange a meeting with either the Principal or class teacher. This provides an excellent opportunity to exchange information or to discuss matters of concern. Teachers should not be approached by parents during teaching sessions.

General School Meetings – May be held to discuss issues of importance regarding school policy or health/safety issues.

Notification in the form of a letter will be sent out beforehand.

Parent/Association Meetings – Principal and Deputy Principal and SET teacher may attend part of P.A. meetings to update parents on educational issues of interest to the education of their children.

Homework Folder– A note may be written and sent home in the homework folders

Telephone Links and E-mail: Information in 'Contact Details' of booklet.

Newsletters: Newsletters are issued each term to the oldest member of each family. The newsletter contains information about school activities and policy issues. Pupils, parents and teachers are encouraged to use this medium to promote the school.

School Website: Information pertaining to school issues, policies and procedures can be found on the school website at www.stcomgallsns.ie The website is updated on a weekly basis and parents are invited to log in regularly and follow their child's learning journey.

Attendance

Under the School Attendance Act each child is obliged to attend school every day, on which the school is in operation unless there is a reasonable explanation for not attending. The school expects and encourages regular attendance as it ensures that your child makes maximum academic progress and develops self confidence and friendships with others. Class teachers maintain school attendance records. Where a child is frequently absent without explanation, then, parents will be contacted by phone or letter and the attendance officer will be notified. Should a child reach 20 days absence cumulatively, then, under the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, school authorities are obliged to report this pupil to the National Educational Welfare Board. Parents are asked to note that:

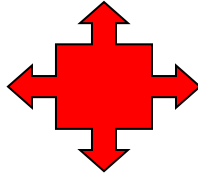
- if your child is ill for a lengthy duration, please telephone the school.
- when your child has been absent and is returning to school, a note should be sent to the class teacher for our records.
- if your child is required to leave school early, please phone the school requesting permission or send in a note to the teacher.
- we must also be informed, either verbally or through a written note, if another person, not known to staff is collecting your child, or if your child is going to another child's home.

No child will be allowed to leave the school premises during the school day without parental permission. Parents will accept all responsibility for the child once he/she leaves the school.

School Discipline

At St. Comgall's N.S. we expect all our school community to act in a positive, caring and respectful way towards each other. To this end we have some school rules for our pupils:

1. We work hard and always try our best.
2. We show respect to everyone and their property.
3. We walk and talk quietly within the school.
4. We listen when someone else is speaking.
5. We are brave and always tell the truth
6. We say sorry if we hurt someone.



In our Code of Behaviour we endeavour to reward good behaviour on the part of the pupils. Rewards are recognition of good behaviour, worthwhile work, kind gestures, effort and academic success.

Care is taken to ensure that all children are rewarded on a weekly basis through our:

- Star Award System
- Star Student Award



"Star Student" is a weekly award

N.B. Acceptance of admission to the school implies the parents' acceptance of the school's Code of Discipline.

In cases where a child has transgressed the school rules, there is a set of sanctions involving staff members. Where a serious breach of rules occurs, parents will be involved either by receiving a telephone call or by being invited to come into the school to discuss the matter. The full Code of Discipline is issued to all parents on a child's entry into Junior Infants.

Anti-Bullying Code

Bullying is the repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical behaviour conducted by an individual or group against others. Every pupil has the right to enjoy his/her time in St. Comgall's N.S., free from bullying, both in school and on his/her journey to and from school. Bullying will not be tolerated within our school; it will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with in accordance with our Anti-bullying Policy.

Green-Schools

We were awarded our fourth Green Flag by An Taisce in 2022. Through developing an awareness around travel and how to effectively lower our carbon emission we are not only promoting good health and a more active lifestyle but benefitting the environment and bodies too.

'Biodiversity' is the theme now being explored with all classes, as part of the process to achieve a fifth Green Flag in the Green-Schools Programme, 2024.

Through our school garden we also strive to help children become aware of, acknowledge and appreciate environmental and planetary issues.



"Working towards our Fifth Green Flag on 'Biodiversity'"

Homework

Homework is given for your child's benefit. It is a means of reinforcing and consolidating learning that is taking place in the classroom and it can positively involve parents in a child's formal primary education. We recognise that a balance between each child's need for recreation and the development of hobbies/ interests is necessary, thus, the following set amount of homework takes account of that:

Infants Classes	(10 - 15 minutes)	3 rd / 4 th Classes	(30 - 45 minutes)
1 st / 2 nd Classes	(15 - 30 minutes)	5 th / 6 th Classes	(45 - 60 minutes)

We also recognise that some evenings are busier than others and as a result of consultations with parents, all homework is set on a Monday and needs to be completed and returned to the school on Friday morning. Each child will receive their homework folder on Monday and it is at their and their parent's discretion as to when homework is completed.

Parents are asked to:

- supervise and encourage children to do their homework carefully and neatly in a quiet area, avoiding interruptions from television/radio.
- listen to children reading and ask them their spellings and tables
- send in a note of explanation the next day, in the event of homework not being completed, and ensure homework is completed during the weekends.

If parents have any concerns about homework e.g level of difficulty or time required by the child to complete it, you are welcome to arrange an appointment to come and discuss the matter with the class teacher.

Evaluation/Assessment

Evaluation/Assessment of children's work is an integral part of our school as it enables teachers to establish through a variety of means what each child is able to do, it diagnoses any difficulties as early as possible and assists teachers in planning appropriate tasks for pupils. This is carried out by:

- monitoring children's work through observation
- giving short written/oral tests on a regular basis throughout the year
- administering national standardised tests in English and Mathematics annually, usually in the last term

- administering end of year tests in June

Findings and results of observations/ testing are formally recorded by the teacher and reported to parents at Parent/Teacher meetings. We aim to provide parents with advice, either verbally or in written form, as to how a child's work might be improved.

Lunch & Healthy Eating

We encourage healthy lunches and request parents' co-operation in ensuring that children bring nourishing food to school. A simple guideline is to include in the lunchbox one food from each of the following: **(1) Breads, Cereals, Potatoes (2) Fruit & Vegetables (3) Milk, Cheese, Yogurt (4) Meat, Fish, Alternatives**

Unacceptable foods include - Chewing gum/ Crisps/ Any Bars/ Biscuits/ Sweets/ Fizzy drinks.

Children may drink water frequently during the day.

Lunch packaging is to be taken home and no glass containers or cans are permitted in school.

The school will liaise with organisations in the community that have a vested interest in health promotion among children at primary level.

Enrolment

The school promotes the integration of all pupils and supports the principles of inclusiveness, equality of access and participation. For the academic year 2023-2024, parents seeking to enrol a child/ children are asked to return a completed Enrolment Application Form (available in the office) with an original Birth/Adoption Certificate to the school and a child's P.P.S. number. Enrolment may take place:

- during our 'Open Day', held annually in January, for prospective parents.
- when pupils wish to transfer to St. Comgall's N.S. from other schools provided space is available for them. This transfer must be in accordance with Rule 64 of the "Rules for National Schools" and the school's admission policy.
- during the year if a family is newly resident in the area.

Any relevant documentation / details that supports ease of transfer for the child's benefit, is most appreciated. The Board of Management will write to parents of children who are to be admitted, offering them a place for their child/children.

New Pupils

We are delighted to meet, by appointment, prospective parents and pupils, to show them around the school and provide them with information about St. Comgall's N.S.. Our annual Open Day in January also offers families the opportunity to visit us and avail of the opportunity to view facilities and receive information on school provision. On these occasions an informal discussion with the Principal may be held and a school information booklet will be made available to parents. Pupils will be invited to come and spend a further informal period in the junior infant classroom at the end of June.

Our whole school community participates in welcoming and supporting new arrivals and their families and staff work closely to identify the needs of new pupils and to monitor early progress. New pupils will also have the support of their peers, as 'special buddies,' to show children around the school and familiarize them with school routines.

Religious Formation

As a Catholic school we support parents and the wider parish in nurturing the growth of faith and Christian living in the child. Religious education is provided for Catholic children attending the school and appropriate arrangements are made with parents who wish to absent their children from attending classes related to the preparation for the sacraments. Through the Grow in Love Programme we prepare the children for the reception of the Sacraments of First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.



Remembering our dead during November 2023'

School Uniform

At St. Comgall's each child is expected to wear the school uniform and to pay particular attention to their personal appearance at all times as it promotes a positive school image and develops pride in oneself and in the school.

Pupils wear...

a red v-neck jumper with school crest
a white shirt / blouse/ (JI/SI may wear a white polo shirt)
grey trousers / skirt / pinafore
black/brown shoes or runners
red school jacket with crest

P.E.

a red sweatshirt with school crest
a red polo shirt
grey tracksuit bottoms
runners



Parents are asked to purchase the school uniform and the school tracksuit/jacket in Hicks of Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh.

All personal items, including hats and other clothing must be clearly marked with your child's name.

Trainers/ runners are essential for P.E. (Physical Education). We ask parents to buy footwear which can be easily opened and closed e.g. Velcro fastenings.

Library

Enhancing the enjoyment of learning and the motivation to learn through reading is central to teaching and learning at St. Comgall's N.S..

Our library provides a range of reading material that includes a wide variety of genres. In this exciting library space our pupils can browse, share, discuss books in pairs/small groups, or alternatively simply enjoy uninterrupted, sustained, silent reading. Staff will continue in their efforts to ensure that the library caters for all levels of interest and ability so that every child at St. Comgall's N.S. will experience success and pleasure in reading independently.

The County Monaghan Library provides a mobile book loan service to the school each term. Children are offered the opportunity to choose both fiction and non-fiction books from the large selection in the van, which they can read either in school or at home.

Each classroom is also resourced with extra reading material, including the 'Oxford Reading Tree' scheme. A reading record is kept and pupils are encouraged to further develop their expressive ability by writing book reviews periodically and by becoming involved in the process of making their own books through the 'Write-a-book' competition.



'Through our successful Book Club, our parents support our endeavours to purchase new books for our library'

I.C.T. Facilities

In all classes the use of ICT is used as a valuable and enriching tool for teaching and learning. Children have supervised access to appropriate hardware, software and internet access in the teaching of all subject areas, particularly when they are involved in topic/ project/ theme based learning. In using information technology pupils are encouraged to develop new skills and ideas while applying the knowledge and skills learned in all other areas of the curriculum. They also experience and appreciate the benefits and challenges of working as part of a team.

Educational Outings/Learning

As part of the school philosophy, teachers endeavour to provide as many practical experiences as possible. One aspect of this is to take the pupils on educational outings. These are usually used as a focus or a culminating activity to a unit of work and the experiences lead to activities related to all aspects of the curriculum. They are also used to develop social skills. Parents are informed in advance of the purpose, the details of travelling and the cost. At the beginning of each year parents are also asked to sign a consent form allowing their child/children to go on these trips.



'Our Biodiversity Committee visited Knocknagrave Environmental Centre' 2023



'Learning about Beebots 2023



'Learning about Clay Creations, Glaslough' 2023



Spooktacular scenes at St. Comgall's N.S. 2023



Celebrating Christmas with Santa and Mrs Claus 2023

Illness & First Aid Provision

When a child is too sick to continue class the parents will be notified. It is expected that an arrangement be made to collect a sick child, as the school staff are not insured to take children home. If a parent is unavailable, then persons (relative or neighbour) nominated by parents to care for their child/children, will be contacted. A child will be allowed to remain in during lunchtime as a result of a written/verbal request by parents. For supervision purposes if all staff members are out on the yard, then the sick child will be let sit in the veranda during break period.

Accidents occur despite supervision. Parents will be informed immediately by phone should an accident occur in school. The incident will be recorded in the 'Yard Incident Book.' Minor scrapes and cuts will be cleaned in school. Parents are asked to inspect the wound when a child arrives home.

Administration of Medicine

We ask that children who are prescribed medicine receive dosages at home. In exceptional circumstances, if medicines have to be given at school, the parents/guardians are asked to complete our 'Administration of Medicines Policy' in order for nominated staff to administer the medicine.

Where a child uses an inhaler or other medicine independently at home, then parents are asked to present a doctor's letter to the Board of Management, stating the child's ability to administer the medicine him/her self in school. In this instance, it is advisable that children needing to use inhalers or such medical aids should have a spare unit, properly labelled and in date, left in the school office for emergency use.

Each year parents are asked to sign a consent form allowing for the emergency treatment of their child by a doctor or hospital, in the event of parents not being contactable. On enrolment parents are asked to inform the Principal of any physical disability, illness or allergy from which a child may suffer.

Hygiene (Head Lice)

Head lice appear at school from time to time and parents will be advised when an outbreak occurs. Checks should be conducted regularly at home for all children and infestation should be treated immediately

Insurance Arrangements

Parents are urged to take out 24-hour cover with Allianz Pupil Personal Accident Insurance for their child/children. The policy has been operating in the school for a number of years and is competitively priced.

Money Collection

Children will bring money to school for such things as the book club or school outings. Teach your child to take care of money by using an envelope marked with the child's name, date and activity. Please send in the correct amount of money and on the child's return from school, look for a receipt, which is always issued by the school for any payment.

School Closures / Emergency School Closures

The list of school closures throughout the year will be sent out in June. The list will include the dates of staff meeting but not in-service days. A reminder of a closure in the form of written notification or text message will be issued a few days beforehand.

In the event of an emergency closure before school opening hours, parents will be contacted through either a phonecall or text message. Notification may also be announced on Northern Sound Radio after the 8.00am news. Where a closure is necessitated during a school day, parents or nominated guardian(s) will receive a phonecall and will be requested to make appropriate arrangements to collect child/children.

Mid Academic Year Changes

If, during the school year, a change in the above information is necessitated, then all parents will be informed in writing of the nature of such a change.

Thank you for reading St. Comgalls' N.S. School Booklet.

Ann Marie Pennell **(Principal)**