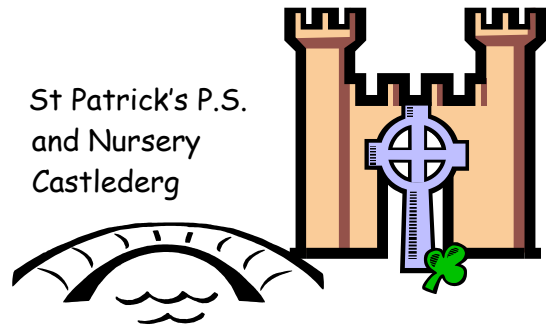


73 Castlefin Rd
Castledearg
Co Tyrone BT81 7EE



St Patrick's P.S.
and Nursery
Castledearg

Tel 028816 71458 Fax 028816 79821 email: info@stpatricks.castledearg.ni.sch.uk
www.stpatrickspscastledearg.co.uk

September 2024 Newsletter

Welcome Back

We welcome back to all the pupils and staff for another school year from this week. Good luck to everyone and especially to our new pupils, Nursery pupils and P1 pupils as they begin their school journey with us.

We wish Doreen Sproule and Linda Sproule from our catering staff a happy and healthy retirement. Both had worked in our kitchen, with Doreen giving over 40 years' service as our school cook in charge.

Mrs. Mc Glade our Vice-Principal has retired and Mrs. Emer Loughran P7 teacher has taken up a new position in St. Mary's Dunamore PS. We thank them for their dedicated service.

Miss. Grainne Sludden P.2 teacher and Miss. Shauna Mc Hugh P6 teacher have joined the teaching staff this term. We had to make some changes to the classes to be taught in P6 and P7 over the summer, however we wish these pupils every success in their new classes.

Mr. Adrian Doherty is acting up as Vice-Principal this term.

Morning and Collection Arrangements

Breakfast club begins at 8.30am. Other pupils can attend school from 8.50am except for children attending breakfast club or pupils who travel on EA school transport. Pupils will be allowed to attend classrooms from 9.00am with registration. School begins at 9am and finishes at 3pm for the older pupils.

Breakfast club is from 8.30am – 9.00 am at a cost of £1 which includes breakfast. After-school club will restart from Monday 9th September for P4 to P7 pupils and runs Monday – Thursday 3.00pm – 4.30pm at a cost of £2 daily. You can book a space by contacting the school office or your child's class teacher.

The P2/P3 pupils can be collected from 2pm from the bottom playground. P3 pupils will then stay until 3pm after the Halloween midterm holiday from Tuesday 5th November 2024. P4 – P7 pupils can be collected from 3pm. Bus children will exit from the pedestrian gate. There is a crossing patrol at Willowcrest, and pupils may exit using the back gate if they have their parent/s permission.

Pupil Safety

Parents should not enter the school buildings when picking up or collecting children except if they need to call at the school office. Children who attend late should enter the main school gate and wait to be received by a member of staff at the front door.

Please do not obstruct the main school gates or park in the bus bays at the front of school as this means the pupils must get off the bus in the middle of the road. Please avoid double parking as this blocks the main road and again puts the pupils at risk. Also be aware of local residents and avoid blocking entrances.

Older Pupils can be dropped off at the School Crossing Patrol Person at Taggart's Shop or at Willowcrest and walk up to school themselves. The back gate is also open from 8.50am and again at 3.00pm, which leads out into the close of Churchtown Park. Finally remember to escort the children across the road if not using School Crossing Patrols.

Attendance and School Uniform.

We pride ourselves on the high level of attendance of our pupils. The Department has also written to schools to remind us of our roles and responsibilities in ensuring attendance and punctuality. It is very important that pupils attend school and are on time. If your child is sick, it is important to notify the school office or the class teacher via Google Classroom so that attendance is marked properly. I have asked all staff to focus on the attendance of pupils this academic year.

Uniform is also really important as it establishes a sense of belonging and membership of our school. There is great flexibility in our uniform policy, and we try to keep cost to a minimum. It is great to see the children returning to school wearing their uniform with pride and I would like to thank parents for making such a fantastic effort this year.

Meals/Healthy eating

I will include the school menu on the school website if you wish to have a look. A new menu will be issued in October. The price of a **school dinner** is still £2.60 which is really good value. This money can be paid daily or weekly. If you are paying for dinners in advance, it is helpful if you write the child's name, class and amount enclosed and place in an envelope for the school meals staff.

Please note that free school meals entitlement needs to be applied for annually. This is important as this improves our school funding, so it is well worth applying if you are eligible. There is also an allowance for school uniform for those entitled. I have added the link to the school website.

It is vital that no child brings nuts or nut products to school as a number of our pupils are at risk from various allergies.

The school operates a healthy eating policy so the children must bring a healthy break to school i.e., fruit, water for break time. Remember children should only bring water to school for break. Sweets, crisps cereal bars and fizzy drinks are not permitted at break time. We also

encourage healthy lunch boxes so treats and sweets etc. should be kept to a minimum. There is some guidance for children's lunchboxes on the school website for parents.

Contacting the school / Digital Schools.

All our school newsletters and other documents can be found on our school website etc. You can email the school or contact a member of staff using the enquiry email info@stpatricks.castledearg.ni.sch.uk or Sharon in the office smolloy891@c2ken.net You can also leave a message on the school answering machine if we are unable to answer your call. Parents can also message their class teacher via Google Classroom but not for emergencies. Phone messages and emails are checked daily. Nursery parents can contact Mrs. Shelley outside of class time directly using the Nursery Mobile at 07707838992

Google Classroom/Homework.

Children in P4 to P7 will receive their homework weekly via Google Classroom. The parents are now familiar with these platforms during the previous years. Pupils are very comfortable using Google Classroom and the different apps like Mathletics, Accelerated Reader and IXL. Pupils will also receive Spelling Workbooks and Reading Books and materials. Pupils in P5, P6 and P7 will also receive written work or papers to complete. Pupils in P1 to P3 will also have access to a Google Classroom but this will be used for class information and sharing videos etc.

The weekly homework for P4 – P7 will be posted in Google Classroom at the start of the working week. This will allow pupils and parents to complete homework at their own pace and allow parents to plan how they can oversee or help with homework over a complete week. Homework will need to be submitted by Friday morning to be assessed. Other than exceptional circumstances pupils are expected to complete homework.

Pupils will be able to complete the recommended reading and work scheduled but parents will also be able to access other tasks and books to extend their child in reading, english or maths. There will also be topic work in different subjects which will added to Google Classroom.

We would recommend that each family has access to a device for schoolwork purposes. We are using laptops, chrome books and laptops daily with our pupils. Families without access to internet or devices at home should let the teacher know and we will arrange for these pupils to have access to a school device.

Child Protection arrangements/Medical Needs.

Mrs. Shelley is the designated teacher for child protection for the Nursery and the School and can be contacted at school if you have any concerns or need advice.

Child Protection Procedures, Anti-Bullying Information and a Complaints Procedure are included on our school website. We also have access to a school counsellor if any parent wishes their child to access this service.

Parents may also speak to the Principal at any time if they have any concerns.

We would ask that each family ensure that any changes in address/email addresses or phone numbers are notified to the school.

Parent/s also will need to indicate if their child has any new medical needs or allergy needs. Allergy forms will need to be completed and returned to school. Children who require inhalers for asthma must leave these in a sealed bag in school and complete a school medical form.

Newsletters

Newsletters, school letters, school menus and online safety newsletters will continue to be posted online on the school website www.stpatrickspscastledearg.co.uk. So please continue to check the school website to be kept up to date about school life and information.

School holidays will be added to our school website calendar this week. The school is closed for Halloween Midterm on Thursday 31st October, Friday 1st November and Monday 4th November.

Many thanks,

Mr. Brian Mc Gurk
Principal