



Saint Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit

www.stmaryspsbellaghy.co.uk

September/October 2024



TERM 1 DATES

Friday 30th August –
Monday 23rd December

CLOSURES

Mon 30th Sept
School closure for
all classes
(staff training)

**Mon 28th October–
Fri 1st November inclusive**
School closed for
Halloween Break

EVENTS

Wed 25th Sept
Opening Year Mass 10am
Children must bring a coat
to school.

**Wed 23rd & Thurs 24th
October**
1pm finish P1-7
Parent Teacher Meetings.
Times will be sent out by
teachers. If you have a
preference for a particular
day, please let the class
teacher know.

Thursday 17th October
School Photographer
Nursery, P1 & P7

Fri 25th October
Halloween Dress Up
All classes (P1-P7) will finish
at 1pm

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back to all our boys and girls, and a special welcome to our new pupils who have joined St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit. We know they will love St Mary's!

It is wonderful to see all the classes back at school with lots of stories to tell about their summer fun. We are delighted to welcome new staff to the school: Miss Ciara Monaghan (P4 teacher) Mrs Tara McNamara (P3 teacher) and Miss Hannah Byrne (Assistant). We trust they will be very happy at St Mary's.

We are all so proud to see all the classes looking so smart in their new school uniform. We hope to encourage and reward full school uniform as the year progresses. We ask that uniforms be **clearly marked with the child's name and class**. There is a white band on the inside collar of the half-zip which is very suitable for writing the child's name.

Beginning of the School Year Mass 2024-2025



St Mary's PS NU and St John Bosco PS will be celebrating the
Beginning of the School Year Mass
on Wednesday 25th September 10am.

The mass will be held at St Mary's Church.
Parents are very welcome to attend, or tune in on the webcam
<https://bellaghyparish.com/webcam>

Children in Primary 1-7 will be attending.

P1&P2 will be bused to the chapel.

P3-7 children will need coats as they will be walking to the chapel.

All children will sit with their teachers in the front pews.

NUT FREE POLICY

We have staff and pupils in school with nut allergies.

As a result St Mary's is a 'Nut Aware – Nut Free School'. Please be vigilant when packing snacks and lunches to ensure that no nuts come in to the school.



Please **DO NOT** send your child into school with any nut-based products – this includes:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peanut jelly• Nutella based products• Spreads, e.g. chocolate spread• Cereal bars | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some types of biscuit containing nuts• Condiments, e.g. satay sauce• Cakes containing nuts• Some snack pots containing nuts |
|--|--|

It is important that you check the labelling of food products before sending these to school as it is not always apparent that products contain nuts or traces of nuts. We also ask that, if your child consumes any nut-based product before school, they wash their hands thoroughly and rinse their mouth before entering the school grounds. Thank you for your continued support.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION



Our new school website has a communication app which allows messaging, letters and links to be sent directly from the class teacher.

It allows each pupil to have up to two contact numbers who will receive the information.

Tomorrow all parents will receive a copy of the contact information the school holds for their child(ren). Please ensure these forms are returned to the school by Friday of this week.

If all the information is returned, each parent will receive a text message with a verifying link to download the app for their child(ren)'s class. It is hoped that this will be a secure platform to send reminders and notifications directly related to the class or whole school events.

Please return your data sheet ASAP so that we can start using our app as soon as possible.

If any of your details have changed from last year, please amend your data information accordingly. If your details change during the course of this year, please let the office know as soon as possible.

Also, please inform us of any new or relevant medical details which should be amended or added to your child's records.

Please be reminded that parents can contact the class teacher by phoning the office, writing a note and sending it to school, or passing messages onto Mrs McCann at the front door each morning.

DECLARATIONS

Tomorrow (Tuesday 23rd Sept) parents will receive a text with a link for each of their children to grant permission for data protections, photographs, policies and procedures etc.

All Nursery and Primary 1 families will receive paper copies of the policies. Policies are all on the school website for P2-7 parents to view. If you wish to receive a paper copy, please notify the office.

SCHOOL DINNERS

The price of school dinners is £2.60 per day.

Children should bring their dinner money to school in a **labelled wallet or envelope** to ensure money does not go missing. Each classroom has a box for storing the wallets during the school day. The canteen staff collect dinner money directly from the children.

The menu is included on this newsletter and is also on the school website. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the office to speak to Joanne (School Cook).

FREE SCHOOL MEAL FORMS

Applications must be renewed annually or if circumstances change.

Forms are available from the school office or online:
www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

St Mary's is part of the Healthy Eating School Initiative. We try to encourage the children to make healthy choices for snack and lunch. We ask that all parents/guardians support us in the implementation of this policy at lunchtimes.

Children are encouraged to eat their sandwiches/bread items first before yoghurts and fruit. **No crisps, chocolate (including small chocolate bars/chocolate spread, fizzy drinks)** should be part of a child's snack or lunch. We ask for your full co-operation please.

The Student's Council introduced 'Everything in Moderation' Treat Day on Mondays.

Lunch children are allowed to bring one small treat such as a fun-sized bar in their lunch. **No crisps are allowed.** The Student's Council have agreed a list of suggested foods which is visible in all classrooms.

All children are encouraged to bring a **WATER BOTTLE** to school every day as the water fountains require a cup/bottle. They are welcome to refill them throughout the day.

SNACK

Children should bring one *small snack* to school each day such as a plain biscuit or piece of fruit to have at break time. Please do not send sandwiches as break time is very close to lunchtime when the children have more time to eat something more substantial.

MILK

Term 1	Term 2/3	Total
£16	£19	£35 for the year



TEXT MESSAGING SERVICE

We hope to continue to use our text messaging service. To ensure we reach as many parents as possible, please ensure to check your Priority 1 mobile number is correct.

AFTER SCHOOL CHOIR

Afterschool Choir for P4-7 is on each Tuesday **3-4pm**
New members are very welcome



MUSICAL TUITION!

Musical tuition has started.
Lessons are on **Wednesdays**.

Any queries, please speak to Mrs Fegan.



EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

We celebrate European Day of Languages on Thursday 26th Sept. Each class will research fun facts and information about a country in the EU. The children are invited to dress up in the country's colours.

- P1 France
- P2 Italy
- P3 Germany
- P4 Portugal
- P5 Ireland
- P6 Netherlands
- P6/7 Spain



SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER

Tempest will be in the school on Thursday 17th October. Please ensure children are in full uniform.

WHOLE SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH June 23

The whole school photograph which was taken in June, is still available to order. Please contact the school office and the online details will be forwarded to you.

Childhood is a unique experience.

Respect it.

Enjoy it.

Protect it.

PRIMARY 6 SWIMMING

Swimming lessons for Primary 6 and Primary 7.
Sept-mid Feb
COST: £3 per week

FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT COACHING

We are delighted Michael Gerard Doherty will be coaching classes on Tuesdays. This coaching has been arranged and paid for by Bellaghy WolfTones GAC. We are very grateful for this funding as we know as well as strengthening muscle and bones, exercise builds confidence, inspires positivity and improves social skills in our children.

MATHS WEEK IRELAND



Miss Monaghan and Mrs McNamara are co-ordinating Maths Week 2024. They have a special Maths Challenge for all classes to complete. We look forward to lots of fun activities and competition!

Children will receive a code to register with their class. Target Boards will run every Friday until Maths Week.



PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS Wed 23rd & Thurs 24th October



- Parents of pupils within P1-7 will be invited to attend Parent/Teacher meetings on either Wednesday 23rd or Thursday 24th October.
- School will close early on both days 1pm for all classes.
- We ask parents to collect children promptly on each day as there are no teachers available to supervise the children.
- Teachers will distribute times nearer the date.
- Meetings are strictly 10 minutes long.

We remind parents that teachers are available by appointment throughout the school year. Please telephone the school office to arrange meetings.

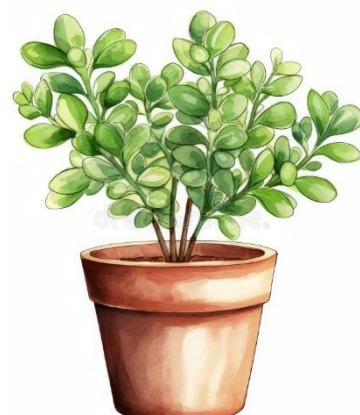
ECO NEWS

Recycle Week, 14th – 20th October

Classes will be focusing on Recycling, Conserving Energy, Protecting the Planet.

We always appreciate adult helpers to help with small green projects. If you have time and would like to volunteer, please pass your name to the School Eco Co-ordinator or school office.

We say a huge thank you to the children who looked after the classroom plants over the summer months. The plants returned healthy and happy from their holidays!



SCHOOL HOLIDAY LIST

All families have been given a copy of the school 2024-25 holiday list, which is also available on the school website. We would ask parents to arrange holidays during school closures.

ATTENDANCE

Please remember to notify the school if your child is absent. The school has a responsibility to monitor attendance and notify support agencies when necessary.

Parents should send a note to the class teacher or call the office if a child has been off sick.



MORNING CLUB

8.10-8.45am



Mon-Fri
Cost £1 per
child

223 TWO TO THREE CLUB

2.00-3.00pm

Mon-Fri
Cost: £2.50
per child



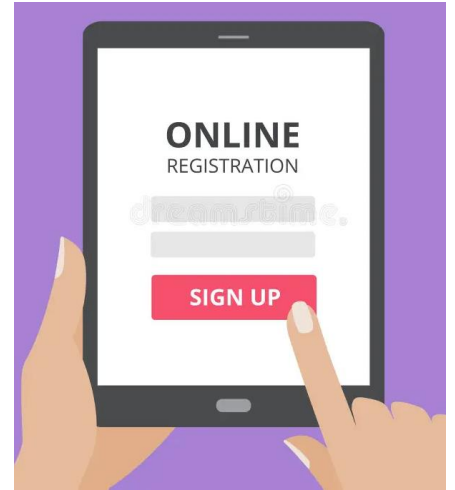
POLICIES

This week, all families will receive a text message with a link to the school website to view a number of policy overviews and GDPR forms such as Child Protection, Privacy Policy, Internet Policy, Data Protection etc.

A second text will connect to an online parental permissions form.

It is very important that parents/guardians submit the forms promptly. There is one form per pupil.

Please contact the office if you have any concerns and want to speak to Mrs McCann.



MEDICAL FORMS

Children will receive their **DATA CAPTURE INFORMATION** sheet. We ask parents/guardians to check it, make amendments where necessary, and return to school ASAP.

Any child with an Inhaler must leave a spare inhaler and/or spacer, clearly labelled, in the school office. Please inform your child's teacher if they require an inhaler so that the correct medical forms are completed. A separate policy and agreement for administering medication for Asthma will be distributed as required.

SICKNESS

If your child is sick they should not be at school. Any cases of vomiting or diarrhoea should remain at home 48 hours after their last episode.

SACRAMENTAL DATES

Primary 4:

First Confession Tuesday 25th March at 7pm

First Holy Communion TBC

Possible dates: Saturday 10th or 17th May 2025 at 11am

Primary 7

Mass of Commitment@ Sat 7th December (Vigil Mass)

Confirmation: Friday 7th March 2025 11am

St Mary's Primary School & Nursery School

25 Mullaghboy Road, Bellaghy, Magherafelt, Co Derry, BT45 8HX

Principal: Mrs Mary McCann BSc(Hons) PGCE PQH(NI)
Telephone: 028 7938 6360
Email: info@stmarysps.bellaghy.ni.sch.uk



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23<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to update you about our school's participation in Operation Encompass. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between Police and Schools. It is aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence.

Operation Encompass is already established across all of England and Wales and is now coming to Northern Ireland. It is a very simple idea, but one that will help us to support and protect vulnerable children. When the Police attend an incident of domestic violence where one of our pupils is present, they will inform the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection at the start of the next school day. This information is shared in strict confidence and school staff are only told on a need-to-know basis.

Following any notification from the PSNI, our staff will provide immediate support to any child who has been the victim of domestic abuse. We know that when children do witness domestic abuse at home, this is a highly traumatic experience for them. By taking part in Operation Encompass, we can provide tailored and compassionate support to our pupils, in line with our school ethos. This builds on our existing commitment to child safeguarding.

Should you wish to find out more information, please contact the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mrs Claire McWilliams or alternatively you can read more about Operation Encompass at [www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org).

Kind Regards

Mrs McCann  
Principal

Mrs McWilliams  
Designated Teacher for Child Protection



# St. Mary's PS NU Who's Who 2024-2025



| TEACHING STAFF                                    | LEARNING ASSISTANTS | ADDITIONAL SUPPORT STAFF                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Principal – Mrs Mary McCann                       | Cathy McPeake       | Clerical-<br>Mrs Carmeen McKeever (Mon/Tues)<br>Mrs Nicola Scullion (Wed/Thurs/Fri) |
| Nursery – Mrs Fiona McGill                        | Cathy McErlean      | Building Supervisor- Sharron McQuade                                                |
| P.1 Mrs Aileen McLea                              | Pamela Donnelly     | Cleaner – Donna Donnelly                                                            |
| P.2 Mrs Margaret Fegan                            | Zara McKeague       |                                                                                     |
| P.3 Mrs Tara McNamara                             | Liz Logan           |                                                                                     |
| P.4 Miss Ciara Monaghan                           | Megan Hanson        |                                                                                     |
| P.5 Mrs Grainne Dooey                             | Mary Curran         |                                                                                     |
| P.6 Mrs Katie Carey and<br>Mrs Deirdre Mulholland | Diane Evans         |                                                                                     |
| P.6/7 Mrs Claire McWilliams VP                    | Pauline Cullen      |                                                                                     |
|                                                   | Hannah Byrne        |                                                                                     |
|                                                   |                     | <b style="color: red;">CANTEEN STAFF</b>                                            |
|                                                   |                     | Cook – Joanne Glasgow                                                               |
|                                                   |                     | Kitchen Staff- Dymphna Cartmill<br>Mary Convery<br>Joanne McBride                   |

**Article 19 of UNCR “Every child has the right to be protected from harm”**

If you have a concern about a child:

I have a concern about my/a child's safety.

I can talk to the child's teacher.  
Please call the school on **(028)79 386360** to make an appointment

If I am still concerned, I can talk to any adult who is responsible for child protection  
Designated Officer Mrs C McWilliams  
Deputy Designated Officer Mrs M Fegan  
Deputy Designated Officer Mrs F McGill  
Please call the school on **(028)79 386360**

Mrs Margaret Fegan  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher



Mrs Claire McWilliams  
Designated Teacher  
Child Protection and  
eSafety



Mrs Fiona McGill  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the  
Principal Mrs Mary McCann  
Please call the school on **02879 386360** to make an appointment



If I am still concerned, I can talk to the  
Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr Joe Diamond  
Please call **028 796 44111**



If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman  
**Tel: 0800 343 424**

At any time, I can contact: Social services –Gateway  
During Office Hours **0300 1234 333**  
Out of hours, weekends and public holidays **028 9504 9999**  
Police (Central Referral Unit CRU) **028 90259299**  
Educ. Auth. NE Region **028 94482223**

## THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ST MARY'S



Mrs Mary McCann  
Principal



2024-2025



Mrs Claire McWilliams  
Designated Teacher and  
eSafety Co-Ordinator



Mrs Margaret Fegan  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher and First Aider



Joe Diamond  
Chair of the  
Board of Governors



Mrs Fiona McGill  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher



Mrs Tracy Scullion  
Child Protection Governor



Mrs Cathy McPeake  
First Aider (Nursery)



Mrs Cathy McErlean  
First Aider (Primary)

