 St Patrick’s P.S.

 and Nursery

 Castlederg



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**September 2019 Newsletter**

**Welcome Back**

Welcome back to all the pupils and staff for another school year. We wish them every success this academic year. We hope all our new pupils and P1 and nursery pupils have a happy and successful time at St Patrick’s PS/Nursery.

**Meals/Healthy eating**

The price of a **school dinner** is presently £2.60. This money can be paid daily, weekly or monthly. 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 class teacher.

 \***Please note that free school meals entitlement needs to be applied for annually and that pupils not on the free school meals register must pay for their dinner.** School dinner menus have been sent home

Children can also purchase a healthy break from the canteen in the morning. The cost of break is £1.80 per week at present and the children get to choose from a range of healthy options.

**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.

**Extended Schools Clubs**

**Breakfast Club** will continue for all pupils in P2 to P7 with the P1’s able to come when they have settled in their new class. Breakfast club runs from 8.20am until 8.45am. Children can receive a hot breakfast at a reasonable price.

**Homework and Afterschool Clubs**

Clubs will commence next week running from Monday 9th September 2019 until Thursday 12th December 2019. Any child in P4 to P7 can stay for these clubs. The clubs will run from 3.15pm until 4.30pm. The children must be collected by 4.30pm. Children can buy a snack at cost price at this club. Due to a reduction in the school budget we will charge a small fee of £2 daily for homework club as last year. There is no charge for sport, music or other clubs at present.

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Please note clubs will only take place based on pupil uptake and new clubs will be offered after midterm. Parent/s must complete an after schools form if they wish their child to stay for clubs.

**Sport and PE**

The children will receive PE times this week. Children must bring PE clothes, or PE uniform for PE and for sports clubs. A new PE Uniform has been designed with help from our pupil council and can be ordered from O’ Neill’s. The PE uniform is reasonably priced at approximately £18 for shorts and a jersey and I would encourage all pupils to buy this. **This PE uniform will be compulsory for PE from September 2020.** P1 to P5 pupils may also be able to buy skinnies and a sweatshirt this year. P6 and P7 pupils will be allowed to purchase school half zips and skinnies this year. These can be worn for PE and when travelling to matches or athletics or sports events. Order forms will be available online on the school website or from Deirdre in the school office.

It is important that the children’s clothes, coats and uniforms are clearly marked to prevent new uniforms being lost.

**School Photographs**

Lauren Coulter will be in school and nursery to take school photographs on the Monday 23rd September 2019 and Tuesday 24th September 2019. A thumbnail print will be sent home and parents can opt to buy. P1 and P7 group photos will also be taken on this day. Please inform the class teacher in writing if you wish family groups to be taken or if you do not wish your child to be photographed. The local papers will be in to photograph the P1 first days at school next week and your class teacher will let you know on which day this will happen.

**Homework/School Diary**

Most of our pupils will receive homework this week/next week. It is important that reading, spelling and any learning for homework is given proper attention as well as any written homework. Parents are expected to check and sign homework diaries from P4 to P7 each week. Parents may also write any notes to the teacher in this diary. Many thanks.

**Pupil Safety.**

I would appreciate if parents do not use the school car park to drop off or collect children, as this presents an unacceptable risk to our pupils. Please consider local residents when parking.

Children are also expected to enter or exit from the main pedestrian gates only and pupils/parents may use the back gate in the morning and evening. Children walking must cross using the lollipop crossings at Patricia’s crossing at Willowcrest or Bernie’s crossing at Taggart’s shop.

* **P1 and P2 Pupils are collected from the school at 2.15pm** (lower playground)
* **Pupils using buses will be collected at 3.05pm and 3.10pm**. – **Please leave bus areas clear of cars.**
* **Children in Mrs Mc Glade’s P3 will be brought to the school gates at 3.00pm for collection to avoid a build-up of traffic**. (lower playground)
* **Children in P3/P4 Mr Keenan’s class and P4 Mrs. Smith’s class will be collected at 3.05pm**. (lower playground)
* **Children in P5, P6 and P7 can be collected as normal at 3.15pm.**
* **Pupils attending clubs can be collected at 4.30pm**

Pupils should not be collected early or late from school except in emergencies. Pupils can become upset if not collected on time. Parents must sign out pupils for medical appointments from the school office.

**Child Protection arrangements.**

All visitors and parents are expected to report to the school office if they need to visit the school other than normal or collection times. Parent/s and all visitors must enter and exit the school by main entrances thank you.

If at any time you have a concern, please arrange an appointment to speak to Mrs Mc Glade Vice-Principal or myself.

Nursery Parents may also speak to Mrs Shelley in the Nursery if they have any concerns.

**Mrs Mc Glade is also the designated teacher for child protection and can be contacted at school if you have any concerns.**

**Entrance Exam**

Any parent who wishes their child in P.7 to enter an entrance exam for local grammar schools must apply to the grammar school for an application pack. More details are available on the grammar schools’ websites. The **deadline for completed applications is Friday 20th September 2019.**

**Contacting the school office**

We would ask that each family ensure that any changes in address or phone numbers are notified to Mrs. Deirdre Traynor in the school office. Parent/s also will need to indicate if their child needs to carry medication in school for asthma etc. Children who require inhalers must have these for school outings, sport and swimming etc.

**I would also stress that phoning the school to request changes for collection times or pupils staying for clubs are only made in emergencies.** Pupils should know what clubs they are staying for and how they are getting home i.e. walking or getting the bus each morning.

The school office is open from 9.15am to 3.15pm and is closed for lunch. Messages can also be left on the school answering machine and non-urgent queries can be emailed to Deirdre in the school office at the email address – dtraynor107@stpatricks.castlederg.ni.sch.uk or at the school email above - these messages are checked daily.

**Newsletters**

Newsletters, school letters, school menus and online safety newsletters will continue to be posted online on the school website [**www.stpatrickspscastlederg.co.uk**](http://www.stpatrickspscastlederg.co.uk)from September 2019. So continue to check in to the school website to be kept up to date about school life and information.

We welcome Fr. Paul Fraser as our new Parish Priest and School Chaplain. There will be a mass to celebrate the beginning of the school year on Friday 20th September 2019 at 10am in St. Patrick’s Church. All pupils from P2 to P7 will attend. Parent/s and friends of the school are also welcome to attend this Mass. We will remember our families, pupils and staff who have had bereavements or illnesses over the summer months.

A school holiday list is included and may be subject to change.

Wishing you all a successful school year.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Mc Gurk

Principal