



SAINT MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY UNIT

Principal: Mr P Gilchrist

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29th August 2025

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

As we open the doors to a brand-new school year, I would like to extend a heartfelt welcome back to all our families—both returning and new. I hope you had a restful and enjoyable summer break and are feeling refreshed and ready for the exciting year ahead.

We are delighted to begin another year of learning, growth, and discovery. Our dedicated staff have been busy preparing classrooms and planning engaging lessons to ensure your child feels safe, supported, and inspired from day one.

This year, we continue to focus on nurturing a positive school environment where every child is encouraged to reach their full potential. We value the partnership between home and school and believe that strong communication is key to your child's success. You will continue to receive regular updates through newsletters, our school app, and parent meetings, and we warmly invite you to get involved in school life whenever possible.

We are truly looking forward to a fantastic year ahead and thank you for your continued support.

A few reminders are included below to help with getting back to routine.

School routine

From Monday 1st September 2025 pupils from Primary 2 through to 7 will be in school from 9.00am, and the school doors will open at 8.45am. Those pupils in Primary 2 and 3 finish at 2.00pm and those in Primary 4-7 finish at 3.00pm from Monday- Thursday. School dinner will be provided from Monday 1st September 2025. Primary 1/2/3 pupils will be dismissed at 1.45pm and P4/5/6/7 dismissed at 2.00pm each Friday.

Please note that we have also asked for all pupils to provide a fully resourced pencil case, to remain in school. A reminder of the resources required is contained at the end of this letter.

Breakfast Club

We are delighted that we will be continuing to provide a Breakfast Club within the school from Monday 1st September 2025. This will be available from 8.00am each morning and run until 8.45am. Pupils can come and avail of a breakfast and be supervised in the Breakfast Club room. Pupils will not be permitted to leave the Breakfast Club area before 8.45am. The cost for attendance is £2.00 per person. You can register your child by sending in a weekly payment in an envelope with your child's name clearly stated at the front and which days you wish your child to attend. This will be collected in the Breakfast Club area.

After School provision

Our After School's programme will begin on Monday 1st September 2025. More details are included in separate communication.

Curriculum Meeting

Curriculum meetings for P2-7 classes will be held for parents on Tuesday 16th September 2025. For Primary 2 and 3 pupils this will begin at 2.05pm and at 3.10pm for P4/5/6/7 classes. These meetings will begin with a short presentation by Mr Gilchrist and then proceed to your child's classroom and your child's teacher will outline the curriculum to be covered this year. It will also be an opportunity for you to meet your son's/ daughter's teacher.

Uniform

Uniform is an important part of identity for our pupils and we encourage them to wear it with pride. All pupils are asked to wear black shoes on normal school days with a tracksuit and trainers permitted on designated PE days. Please ensure you have clearly labelled items of uniform and any other belongings such as lunch boxes with your child's name and class. Please check at regular intervals to ensure that your child's items are clearly marked.

School Meals

School meals will cost £2.60 per day (£13.00 weekly) We would be grateful if the money could be placed in an envelope with your child's name and paid each Monday morning to your child's class teacher.

Communication

The school will continue to use our web site and Facebook page to keep you up to date with goings on at Saint Mary's. **If you have not done so already, please download or update the Schools NI app from the school web site as all text messages and communications will be issued through this.** A test message will issue to all during week beginning 1st September 2025.

Safeguarding

We continue to adhere to Department of Education Safeguarding principles with the protection and safeguarding of each individual child to the fore of our thoughts. Should you wish to leave a message or speak to your child's class teacher before school begins you are required to enter the school via the front entrance and notify Mrs Young, our school secretary, and she will either take a message or get the class teacher for you. If you require admittance to the school during normal school hours you must always do so through the front entrance and visit the school office. **There will be strictly no admittance permitted through the back entrance to the school.**

Jewellery and Make Up

Can I please remind you that apart from small stud earrings, jewellery is not permitted for safety reasons. During PE activities earrings should be removed for safety reasons. Alternatively, pupils are advised to tape front and back to make them safe to prevent the stud penetrating the bone behind the ear. The taping should be done at home for younger pupils. Staff are not permitted to remove or tape earrings for students. Pupils are not permitted to wear make up in school.

Welcoming and Inclusion Ethos

As part of our Welcoming and Inclusion ethos we continue to ask that no Birthday invites are given out during school time. Understandably, when a child doesn't receive one they can experience feelings of isolation and exclusion and begin to question friendship groups, which can have consequences within school. The circulation of invites should be a parental task outside school. Also, for health reasons, we cannot accept Birthday cakes for distribution in class, due to a number of allergies present in our school. I thank you for your understanding on this matter.

Playground Equipment:

As tempting as I know it is for children to play on the playground equipment, we ask that you support the school in not allowing children to climb on playground equipment before and after school. The equipment is for school use only under the supervision of school staff. Unfortunately, accidents do occur. As a result of misuse by younger siblings, the school cannot take responsibility for this.

Healthy Eating

As a school we operate a Healthy Break Policy. We try to encourage all children to participate in eating a healthy break. Please aim to send your child to school with either a piece of fruit, vegetable, a bread or dairy product at break time each day. There is firm evidence to indicate that pupils' attention and concentration can be improved with regular drinks of water throughout the school day. Therefore, we would like you to send your child to school with water in their drink bottles and not fizzy or diluting drinks. If we are to adhere to a whole school healthy eating strategy, it is important to look after our children's teeth. Normal internal snacks will still be made available.

Should you wish to discuss these, or any other matters relating to the school, or your child's education, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to another productive year and I thank you in anticipation for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mr Gilchrist
Principal

P 2 / 3 / 4
Stationery List

Item	Checked
Writing Pencils	
Pencil Sharpener	
Pencil Rubber	
Pritt Sticks	
Colouring Pencils	
White Board Markers	
Scissors	
A bottle of Hand Soap and a box of tissues.	

P5/6/7
Stationery List

Item	Checked
Writing Pencils	
Pencil Sharpener	
Pencil Rubber	
Whiteboard marker	
Coloured Pens for marking with (Green, red of blue)	
Pritt Stick	
Scissors	
Colouring Pencils	
30cm ruler	
Mini Dictionary	
A bottle of Hand Sanitiser and a box of tissues	



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Planned School Closure 2025/26

Monday 1st September	-	School re-opens for all pupils
Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October	-	School Closed (Halloween Holiday)
Monday 22nd December - Friday 2nd January	-	School Closed (Christmas Holidays)
Friday 6th February	-	School closed to Pupils for Parent Interviews
Monday 9th February- Friday 13th February	-	School Closed (Mid-Term Break)
Tuesday 17th March	-	School Closed for pupils
Friday 3rd April - Friday 10th April	-	School Closed (Easter Holidays)
Monday 4th May	-	School Closed (May Bank Holiday)
Monday 25th May Wednesday 27th May	-	School closed (Mid-Term Break)
Tuesday 30th June	-	School Closes at 11.00am for Summer Holidays