



# SAINT MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY UNIT

*Eco-School Green Flag Award 2017*

Principal: Mr P Gilchrist

E mail: [pgilchrist570@c2kni.net](mailto:pgilchrist570@c2kni.net)

Telephone: 028427 28278

53, Windmill Hill  
Portaferry  
Co. Down  
BT 22 1RH

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Dear Parents/ Guardians,

Welcome back to all for another new year in our school. It is a little bit different this year but we thank you all for your patience and understanding thus far. No situation is without risk but we have put in place policies and procedures, which we hope will help alleviate many anxieties and concerns but that will ultimately keep our schooling community as safe and secure as possible

All of our staff have been busy preparing the school in anticipation for the return of all pupils and ensuring the school is ready and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them, on your behalf, for their continued dedication and commitment. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those who visited the school over the last few months to brighten up our surroundings. It was a real community effort and we are all appreciate your ongoing efforts.

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

## **Illness/ Sickness**

Parent **must not** under any circumstances send their child (ren) to school with any symptoms of illness, however mild, including high temperature (37.8C or above), diarrhoea, nausea, sore throat, cough, loss of smell/ change to normal taste, rashes etc. The school refuses the right to refuse entry to any child where there are legitimate COVID-19 concerns regarding his/her health and it will be the parent's responsibility to arrange for their child (ren) to be collected promptly from school.

## **Morning and Afternoon Drop offs**

From Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September all pupils will be in school from 9.00am, with those in Primary 2 and 3 finishing at 2.00pm and those in Primary 4-7 finishing at 3.00pm from Monday- Thursday. On Friday Primary 1/2/3 pupils will finish at 1.45pm and Primary 4/5/6/7 at 2.00pm.

There are 5 points designated pupil entries into school;

- The entrance at the back of the school for P1 and P3
- The entrance in the P2/3/4 playground for P2
- The back entrance to the old end, closest to the car park for P7
- The front entrance at the "old end" for P5
- The main school entrance for P4 and P6.

We are encouraging independence and only one P2/3/4 parent/carer is permitted to escort pupils to the designated entrance on the first few week, thereafter children from P2-P7 are encouraged to proceed to their allocated entrance independently.

If arriving to school by car, we strongly encourage all parents to consider using all available car parking; ie at back of school, in main chapel car park and Windmill Hill; and use the pedestrian entrances at the back of the school, the Nursery entrance and on the Windmill Hill. To help with parking we are implementing a one-way system from the Parochial House entrance with entry only permitted to access the school and exit through the main chapel gates on the Ballyphillip Road.

**Be prompt to leave the area after drop off and pick up** to avoid unnecessary crowding, allowing all pupils to enter and exit the school safely.

At 2.00pm Primary 1/2/3 parents can wait for their child in the school yard outside of their entrance doors. Primary 2 pupils will be dismissed via the back entrance in the P2/3/4 Playground area and Primary 3 pupils via the back door entrance.

**It is important that parents remain socially distanced when waiting to pick up their child.**

At 3.00pm pupils P4 pupils will be dismissed via the main back door, P5 through the front door entrance in the “Old End,” Primary 6 via the main school door at the front of the school and Primary 7 via the back door in the “Old End.”

All pupils will either be met by an adult in the car park or make their own way home, if the appropriate, ‘Walk Home from School’ forms have been completed. These are in this pack and are also available from the school office and on the school web site.

**Parental/Carer access to school:**

Parents/carers should not enter the school building for any reason (other than by pre-arranged appointment). If you need to pass on information to any member of school staff or to your child, please do so via telephone or email to [pgilchrist570@c2kni.net](mailto:pgilchrist570@c2kni.net)

**Lunchtimes/ Snack:**

There is no Snack service available for Primary 3/4/5/6/7 pupils. 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.

School dinner service will begin on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September and each week the menu will be published on the school newsletter. Initially we are starting with a mixture of cold dinner/snacks being eaten in the classroom and a hot dinner in the school canteen.

Tuesday ( In Classroom)	Ham/ Cheese Panini / Ice Cream or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink (In Classroom)
Wednesday ( In Dinner Hall)	Roast Pork Dinner / Muffin or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink (In Classroom)
Thursday (In Dinner Hall)	Chicken Curry and Rice / Biscuit or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink (In Classroom)
Friday (In Classroom)	Hot Dog and Chips / Moose or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink (In Classroom)

**Dinner will cost £2.60 per day and must be paid at the beginning of each week in a clearly marked envelope with your child’s name, class, the amount included and the days on which they wish to have school dinners. Please try to include exact money as change will not be issued until later in the week.**

For those having a packed lunch, please send your child to school with their own packed lunch in a clearly labelled lunch box, which must be taken home each day and washed thoroughly. It is preferably to use a plastic lunch box. All contents of the lunch box will be placed back in the box and returned home for cleaning.

Children may bring a water bottle. This should be clearly labelled. There will be no opportunities to refill their water bottle during the school day.

### **Uniform:**

It is great to see many pupils in our new school jumper. Children will be required to wear full school uniform. We are planning for PE on two days per week and your child will be notified of their designated days during this week in school. On these days pupils can wear their school tracksuit on these days or come to school in plain black trousers and school uniform polo shirt and jumper.

### **Belongings:**

Please restrict what your child brings to school: packed lunch, snack, water bottle and a coat/jacket if required.

**No School Bags should be brought to school.** No toys, or other items from home should be brought into school. Once your child has brought in their stationery on the first day it will be kept at school.

### **Homework:**

Homework will begin on the week beginning 7<sup>th</sup> September for all P2-7 pupils. At the beginning of this and every week your child will be issued with a homework pack and this is to be brought back into school on the Friday of that week. Where possible answers will be provided for parents to check homework during the week and to sign all homework completed at the end of each week before returning to school. To allow for teacher marking and for quarantine of books, homework books will be issue on a two-week cycle. **Failure to return the books on Friday will mean that your child's work may not be checked by the teacher.**

Home reading books will be issued along with Homework packs and are to be returned along with Homework books. For pupils using the Accelerated Reader programme we aim to have 2 books home initially then new ones as required when a child has completed a quiz. The time limits will be relaxed to allow some quizzes to take place at home. The actual timing limits will be confirmed later.

### **House Points System**

We will again be operating a House Point System for Primary 3/4/5/6/7 this year and all pupils will be notified of their House Team during this week in school.

### **Jewellery**

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 re not permitted to remove or tape earrings for students.

### **Welcoming and Inclusion Ethos**

As part of our Welcoming and Inclusion ethos I would 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 can no longer 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.

### **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 the Schools NI app from the school web site as all text messages and communications will be issued through this.** Please also ensure you get messages and a test permission message will be issued to all this week to confirm access. Just respond by granting permission

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 your co-operation on these matters and we have committed to keep all of our operations are under constant review. Any change to this will be communicated to all.

I thank you in anticipation for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Gilchrist  
Principal

# EDUCATION RESTART



## Everyone has a role to play in keeping our schools safe and helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.

### Everyone should continue to:

- ☒ wash hands regularly
- ☒ cover coughs and sneezes
- ☒ practice social distancing
- ☒ follow the latest public health advice

### What should I not do?

- ☒ **Don't** send your child to school if they have COVID-19 symptoms
- ☒ **Don't** allow your child to use public transport unless you have no alternative
- ☒ **Don't** gather at the school entrance/gate
- ☒ **Don't** allow your child to share food/drinks with friends

### What should I do?

- ☒ **Do** let the school know if your child will be absent due to COVID-19 symptoms
- ☒ **Do** encourage your child to socially distance, if it is possible
- ☒ **Do** encourage good hand hygiene
- ☒ **Do** use alternative transport if you can
- ☒ **Do** walk or cycle if it's safe and appropriate to do so
- ☒ **Do** use park and ride or other car-parking facilities (if available) and walk the remainder of the journey to school
- ☒ **Do** avoid parking close to or at the school gates
- ☒ **Do** encourage the use of face coverings on school transport

Further information, including Frequently Asked Questions for parents and carers, can be found on the Department of Education's website at [www.education-ni.gov.uk](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk).



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