



Week beginning Monday 13th September 2021 Newsletter

www.stmaryspsportaferry.com

It has been a busy and challenging week this first full week back in school. No-one ever wants to make a decision to stop our pupils attending school and we are extremely thankful to our wonderful schooling community for your continuing support and co-operation. This is one positive that we will all take from this last week.

As we map through these next few weeks we may face similar challenges and we know we'll get through this together. As always the children keep on smiling and bouncing back with their resilience, enthusiasm and willingness to learn.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND UNIFORM GRANTS

We have been notified that a number of our parents who may be eligible for a free school meals or uniform grant have not yet submitted their grant application. More details on how this can be done are available on the poster at the end of this newsletter.

COVID-19 Update

As you may be aware the Chief Medical Officer issued a letter to all schooling communities on Friday. This letter can be found on our school website at

<https://www.stmaryspsportaferry.com/news/letter-from-chief-medical-officer/?a>

We have been informed that PHA will now be taking over responsibility for contact tracing and we await more details on how this will be rolled out.

We still remind all parents and guardians to be extra vigilant with symptoms of Covid and take the appropriate action and to inform the school if Covid is affecting your family.

If unsure I ask you to contact the school directly, either by telephone, email at info@stmaryspsportaferry.ni.sch.uk or private message on messenger through the school Facebook page. These accounts are monitored outside of normal school hours.

In addition to this we would continue to ask for and appreciate your patience and understanding with staff. Staff that have been identified as close contacts may need to isolate in line with PHA guidance, in order to continue to keep our schooling community safe. This is out of our hands and although we will endeavour to reduce staff absences, this may not be avoided.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If your child is absent from school, for whatever reason, please contact the school before 9.00am, either by telephone on 028427 28278 or by e-mail at info@stmaryspsportaferry.ni.sch.uk. If there is no-one in the office to take your call, please leave a message on the answering machine stating that your child will not be in school that particular day. When your child returns to school please give a written confirmation for their reason of absence. This is also needed, even if you have contacted the school already.

COMMUNICATION



Over the last week we have come to rely on our School app and messaging service and over 90% of our parents are receiving the relevant communication. If you are continuing to have any issues with this service, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Contacting the School

If contacting the school about any queries or



issues, please remember that the first point of contact is by phone to the school office: 028 427 28278. School e-mail is info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk
We will pass on messages to your child's teacher when received and get back to you as soon as possible.

PE Timetable

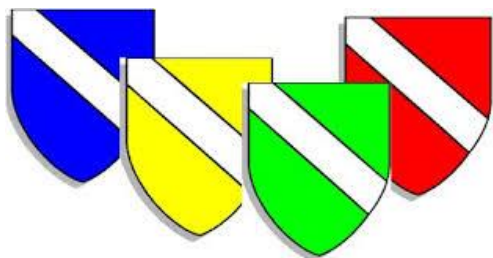
The PE Timetable for this incoming week is stated below. These days will also be added to the calendar on our school web site. On these days your child can come to school in their PE uniform or in black plain tracksuit bottoms and school jumper and polo shirt.

Monday	P5 and P7
Tuesday	P1, P3 and P6 (Swimming)
Wednesday	P2 P4 and P7
Thursday	P3 P5 and P6
Friday	P1 P2 and P4



House Teams

Your child has now been told what house colour team they are a member of and we will be publishing the weekly totals, for each House teams, from next week.



Dinners

The dinner menu for this week is as follows;

Monday	Savoury Mince & Onion, Fresh Baton Carrots, Broccoli Florets & Mashed Potato <i>Chocolate and Orange Sponge & Custard</i> Or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink
Tuesday	Breaded Cod Fish Fingers, Baked Beans, Sweetcorn, Mashed Potato <i>Swiss Roll & Custard, Fresh Fruit</i> Or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink
Wednesday	Roast turkey, Gravy, Herb Stuffing, Cranberry Sauce, Fresh Carrot & Parsnip, Fresh Savoy Cabbage, Dry Oven Roasted Potato, Mashed Potatoes <i>Homemade Rice Pudding & Pears</i> Or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink
Thursday	Breast of Chicken Curry with boiled rice, naan bread, French Green Beans & Tossed Salad <i>Flake meal Biscuit & Mandarin Orange</i> Or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink
Friday	Hotdog, Sauté Onions or Beef Fajita, Carrot and Cucumber Sticks with Homemade Garlic Dip, Peas, Chips or Baby Boiled Potato <i>Raspberry Ripple Ice Cream & Fresh Fruit Salad</i> Or Ham/ Cheese/ Jam Sandwich / Biscuit/ Drink



Dinners 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.

NUT ALLERGIES

There are a number of pupils in our school with nut allergies. I therefore remind all to be mindful when packing your child's lunch or break that you ensure there are no traces of nuts contained in any of the products or spreads used.



Free School Meals and Uniform Grants

Are you waiting on expected approval for a Free School Meals or Uniform Grant application for your child/children? Please read below.



You Must Apply Every Year

You must reapply every year and include all children for whom you have parental responsibility and who will be full-time at school or Regional/FE College.



Not heard from us? Check your junk mail

If you have applied more than four weeks ago but have not received confirmation that your child/children will receive Free School Meals and Uniform Grants then please check your email including your junk folder



Applied within the last four weeks

If you have applied in the past four weeks you will receive an e-mail from us shortly. It can take up to four weeks to process an application. Thank you for your patience.

www.eani.org.uk/fsm



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
- ✓ **Wear** a face covering where necessary
- ✓ **Practise** 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 or if they have been identified as a close contact
- ✓ **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** follow the advice given if you have been contacted by the PHA Contact Tracing Service
- ✓ **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 and in post-primary schools/ settings
- ✓ **Do** encourage and supervise your child to carry out a COVID-19 test if they have been invited to participate

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

