



**Week beginning Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024**  
**Newsletter**

[www.stmaryspsportaferry.com](http://www.stmaryspsportaferry.com)

**GREEN DAY**

To coincide with St Patrick's we will be hosting a special Green Day on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March. On this day, our pupils can come to school dressed in their own clothes or wear anything green. A contribution of £2 per child or £3 per pupil is requested for Trocaire.



**PRIMARY 4/5/6/7 Story Writing Competition**

As part of our work for World Book Day we celebrate the work of many authors, whose writing appeals to all different age groups. We enjoy and marvel at the wonderful worlds to which we are transported in our imaginations.

With this in mind we are setting our P4-P7 children the challenge of opening their imaginations and writing a 500 word story based on the theme "Once Upon a Dream".

This is a competition and we will have prizes for class winners and an overall winner. Completed entries should be given to class teachers by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March.

Where will your dream take you in your story?  
Good luck and let your imagination run wild!



**BLOSSOM AND BLOOM**

The School Council in collaboration with The Eco-Council are proud to launch our 'Blossom & Bloom' project. They are asking all our pupils to help brighten up our indoor and outdoor areas whilst learning about 'Gardening and Growing' along the way.

All pupils are asked to donate an outdoor plant OR outdoor flower OR packet of flower/vegetable/herb seeds OR some bulbs. Just bring these items into school and the councils will help organise, distribute and encourage all classes to get planting as we move through Spring and into Summer.

If any of our parents, grandparents or friends of St. Mary's are interested in helping with the maintenance of our outdoor areas, gardens and vegetable plots, please leave your name at the office and Mr Gilchrist will get back to you.

**HOMEWORK TASKS AND HOME SUPPORT**

It is important that we, as a schooling community, continue to maintain the highest standards of practice, in particular with completing and returning assigned homework tasks to school. As a school we value your continuing support and your ongoing contribution towards our home to school partnership. We, therefore, would like to take this opportunity to remind all parents to continue to monitor their child's completion of assigned homework tasks and to ensure that your child returns all homework tasks to school on the correct days. As always, we expect all homework activities to be completed to a high standard and for this to be presented in a neat and tidy manner. It is also important for classroom organisation that the correct books are returned on time so that staff are not continually chasing up homework and reading books.



We would also appreciate it if pencil cases could be replenished with handwriting pencils, colouring pencils, rubbers, sharpeners etc.  
We thank you for your continuing support.



**WEEKLY MONEY SUBMISSIONS**

Please ensure that you send your child in with any monies for dinners, After Schools or Breakfast Club in a clearly marked envelope with all correct information on what the monies is for. This must be given to your child's direct teacher. For any siblings we ask that you send a separate envelope for each sibling to your child's teacher and do not send in a family envelope. This will reduce confusion and aid communication for our school office. We request that this is sent in each Monday morning.



**TROCAIRE**

As we have every year, St Mary's will be fundraising for Trocaire throughout Lent. Trocaire is the Irish word for compassion and for 50 years it has put the compassion of Irish people into action. This year the theme is exploring water justice. We will be learning about Malita and her village from Mandiwas in Malawi. The effects of the climate crisis is felt the greatest in the global south, even though these countries have done the least to cause this situation. Each class will collect money to help support Trocaire in these campaigns by holding class raffles, there will be other opportunities for donating money through activities such as colouring competition, a bun sale and sponsored skip a thons. We are aware that times are difficult and are grateful for any donation during this time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.



**AFTER SCHOOL CLUB**

Clubs continue throughout this term.  
Clubs can also be paid for weekly at £2.50 per session attended.

You can register your child by sending in an overall or weekly payment in an envelope with your child's name clearly stated at the front and which days you wish your child to attend.

**JUDO AFTER SCHOOL**

Peegy will be in the school from Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to deliver After Schools Judo. You need to go to <https://www.teamo.chat/club/register/psj> to register your attendance.

**IRISH DANCING AFTER SCHOOL**

Deirdre is still attending the school every Wednesday afternoon between 2.00pm - 4.00pm for any pupil who may be interested in learning Irish Dancing. Cost is £2.50 per session.

**BREAKFAST CLUB**

Remember, you don't necessarily need to pre-book. Just turn up from 8.00am and a warm welcome and satisfying breakfast awaits. The cost is £2 per person attending.



**PUPILS OF THE WEEK**

During this month of February our focus in on Looking out for the needs of others. This week our Pupils of the Week were;

|    |        |
|----|--------|
| P1 | Oisin  |
| P2 | Laylah |
| P3 | 'Ari   |
| P4 | Aidan  |
| P5 | Oisin  |



|                             |                       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| P6                          | Lee                   |
| P7                          | Enda                  |
| Playground Supervisor Award | Leo (P4)<br>Kobi (P5) |



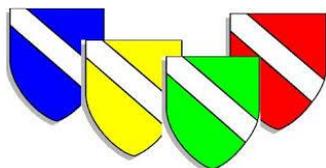
### HOUSE TEAMS

We have re-introduced our weekly House point count and plan to announce House Team winners of the House Team Trophy before the Easter holidays. Our weekly House team winners will also earn extra play time.

The House Points for this week were:

| House Colour | This Week |
|--------------|-----------|
| Red          | 185       |
| Blue         | 171       |
| Green        | 249       |
| Yellow       | 232       |

The Green Team earned extra play time.



We presented Gold House Point certificates to Cara and Jesse in Primary 4 and Niamh and Meah in Primary 7 for achieving 100 House Points since the start of this school year.



### MATHLETICS

A Platinum Mathletic certificate was presented to Ethan in Primary 5.



### SCHOOL DINNERS

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 and days on which they wish to have school dinner

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Monday    | Golden crumbed fish fingers, baked beans & garden peas, chipped potatoes; homemade flake meal biscuit.                     |
| Tuesday   | Beef ragu Italia, sweetcorn, diced carrots, coleslaw, rice, salad; mandarin orange sponge & custard                        |
| Wednesday | Chicken Curry & Naan Bread, garden peas, baton carrots, boiled rice; artic roll and peaches                                |
| Thursday  | Roast chicken, stuffing & gravy, fresh vegetables in season mashed, oven roast potato; homemade brownie & orange wedges    |
| Friday    | Chicken goujons & sweet chilli dip, spaghetti hoops, corn on the cob, chipped potatoes; fruit muffin & apple/ orange juice |

#### **BREAK**

##### **Tuesday**

Toast 30p

##### **Wednesday**

Toast 30p or buttered bagel 50p

##### **Thursday**

Toast 30p

##### **Friday**

Toast 30p or homemade buttered scone 50p

Also available daily!

Apple/ Orange juice 40p; Milkshake 40p; water 50p; Selection of fresh fruit 25p

### LABEL YOU ITEMS OF CLOTHING

As we begin a new school term I remind all to please make sure that all items of your



child's clothing, in particular school jumpers, are labelled with your child's name clearly on display.



**CONTACTING THE SCHOOL/ ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

If your child is absent from school, or you need to contact the school, for whatever reason, please contact the school, either by telephone on 028427 28278 or by e-mail at [info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stmarysps.portaferry.ni.sch.uk) If there is no-one in the office to take your call, please leave a message on the answering machine stating the nature of your call or 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.



**DO I NEED TO KEEP MY CHILD OFF SCHOOL?**

We have had a number of phone calls and enquiries about pupils sickness and whether a child should be attending school with a suspected illness. The chart below has been issued by PHA regarding some common illnesses that pupils may experience, particularly at this time of the year.

| Do I need to keep my child off school?                        |   |  |  |   |  |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Chicken Pox</b><br>Until all spots have crusted over       | <b>Conjunctivitis</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed | <b>Diarrhoea &amp; Vomiting</b><br>48 hours from last episode                      | <b>Glandular Fever</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed | <b>Hand, foot &amp; mouth</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed | <b>Impetigo</b><br>Until lesions are treated & healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotics |
| <b>Measles or German Measles</b><br>4 days from onset of rash | <b>Mumps</b><br>5 days from onset of swelling   | <b>Scabies</b><br>Until after first treatment                                      | <b>Scarlet Fever</b><br>48 hours after commencing antibiotics                          | <b>Slapped Cheek</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed          | <b>Whooping Cough</b><br>48 hours after commencing antibiotics                                 |
| <b>Flu</b><br>Until recovered                                 | <b>Head Lice</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed      | <b>Threadworms</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed | <b>Tonsillitis</b><br>No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed     | <b>HSC</b> Public Health Agency   |  |

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE DIARY**

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February**  
P7 Swimming

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March**

Green Day  
First Confession

**SACRAMENTAL DATES FOR 2024**

The following dates have been agreed for the sacraments for next year:

**First Confession:**

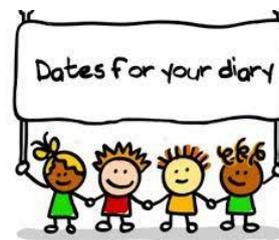
*Celebration of Sacrament - Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024*  
10.30am in St Patrick's

**First Communion:**

*Celebration of Sacrament - Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024*  
at 10.00am

**Confirmation:**

*Celebration of Sacrament - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024*  
at 12.00noon in St Patrick's



**CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING**

If you have any concerns regarding the safety of your child please contact Mrs Breen (Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection) or Mr Denvir (Deputy Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Child Protection).

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK**

Each week we will be introducing a different whole schooling community "Thought for the Week." Should you wish to, this is an opportunity to reflect on the words and relate to how they might influence or impact upon us. During this period of lent our themes will be relating to this time.

