

**Update 5th October 2023**

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We have completed our first month of the new academic year and our school community is settling well into our daily routines. Below is important information as we move forward towards half-term.

**School Development Plan/Industrial Action**

As part of industrial action short of strike, teachers can only meet with parents once in each academic year. If your child is on an IEP, you will meet their teacher more often to review the IEP. Should you have any concerns regarding your child’s progress, **please contact me directly** either by phone or email.

Schools have also been asked not to submit any form of school development planning. While nothing will be submitted, this does not mean, however, that the school’s progress and development will be halted.

Work continues and you will already be aware of some of the changes taking place.

Numeracy Scheme – We have introduced a new numeracy scheme throughout the school. It will take time for this scheme to embed and become familiar to pupils, staff and parents. From my own experience, I know it to be a robust and rigorous scheme and we will be depending on your support to help build our pupils’ confidence and competence in the new approaches and strategies this scheme employs. Further information on how you can find out more about this is contained below.

Guided Reading – by now your child will have been assessed (P2 – P7) and will have been placed in an appropriately pitched reading group. This year we will be ensuring that your child is reading for understanding. Because your child can fluently decode a page of text, does not mean they are ‘reading’ it. Unless they have full comprehension of what they have just decoded, further work will be required at their current level. Further information on how you can find out more on how to help with this is contained below.

Seesaw – you should have received our updated policy on the appropriate use of Seesaw.

**Curriculum Overview**

We have been instructed by our union not to furnish parents with a curriculum overview.

**Information Sessions**

As parents, you are one of the most important resources we have. Your support will make a huge difference to your child(ren)’s progress. In order to assist you in supporting your child’s learning, we will be hosting information sessions during the month of October. These sessions will take place during the school day and your child will be supervised while you attend. During these sessions, you will be given further information of the new numeracy scheme and how to support your child’s learning, how to help your child learn to read, our homework policy, our expectations of your child’s daily engagement and conduct among a variety of other pertinent topics. Detailed information, including dates, times and locations will follow soon.

**Parent /Teacher Meetings**

Parent/Teacher meetings for pupils in Nursery and P.2 – P.7 will take place in the week beginning 20th November. Our school will close on Monday 20th, Tuesday 21st and Wednesday 22nd at 1pm to facilitate these meetings. There will be no after school clubs on these days but arrangements will be made for the children who get the bus home. Your individual date and time will be communicated to you immediately after the mid-term break.

Parent/Teacher meetings for pupils in P.1 will take place in February. This will allow more time for your child to settle in and time for your child’s teacher to get an accurate picture of how they are managing their school day. Please be assured, if your child’s teacher needs to communicate with you before that, this will be done promptly.

**Uniform**

Our pupils are looking very smart in our new uniform and I would like to thank you for supporting the school throughout this change. However, already we have had to look for missing items of uniform. The search has been hampered by a lack of labelling. Please label every item of your child’s uniform.

A number of children are not adhering to the rule of black school shoes. Please note, trainers (black included) are only to be worn on the days when PE is taught.

**First Holy Communion**

P.4 pupils will make their First Holy Communion on Saturday 27th April 2024 at 11am in St Malachy’s Chapel, Carrickcruppen. Further communications will follow.

**Confirmation**

P.7 pupils will be confirmed on Wednesday 17th April in St Malachy’s Chapel, Carrickcruppen. We have requested an earlier start time of 2pm but this has not yet been confirmed. The Bishop will celebrate Confirmation this year so it will be a full Mass along with the Rite of Confirmation. As soon as a time is confirmed, it will be communicated to you.

**Child Protection**

Our Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Gráinne Doran. Mrs Karen Magee is our Deputy Designated Teacher and I, Mrs Pauline McEvoy, am a member of the Safeguarding Team. This information is regularly communicated to our pupils throughout the school year.

**Healthy Break**

Please remember our school has a healthy break policy. Your child should bring fruit or vegetables along with milk or water for their break. **We are also a nut free school so please check the foods you are sending in with your child for break and lunch. We have several children with severe allergies. If a child is found to have a break containing nuts, it will be removed from the classroom and returned to the child’s schoolbag.**

Some children are bringing an opaque water bottle into school containing juice or a fizzy drink. Drinks brought in for lunchtime are at your discretion but only water can be brought into class. A child found with juice or a fizzy drink in their classroom bottle, will be asked to return it to their bag.

**School App**

The school app will be rolled out before the mid-term break. An information sheet detailing how to download and use the app will be sent home shortly.

**Arrangements at Home time**

We would appreciate if parents would not congregate in the middle of the yard where our classes line up before being dismissed. Parents are calling their children over to them before they have had a chance to line up. This makes it very difficult for the teacher to keep track on who has left and, more importantly, who collected them. Please allow your child’s teacher to release the children to you safely.

Thank you once again for your continued support. It is deeply appreciated by every one of us.

Le meas,

Pauline McEvoy

Principal

