

Holy Family P.S. Newsletter

September



2008

Welcome

We welcome all our children and parents back to school life. We extend a special welcome to all new children throughout the school and we wish our 72 leavers every success as they move on to second level education.

The School Day

School starts at 8.55am. Children may come into the yard from 8.45am. Teachers are busy in their classrooms in the morning; however there will be teachers on duty in the yards or school building from 8.45am. On wet mornings, all children are supervised indoors. P5, 6 and 7 in the canteen and P1, 2, 3 and 4 in the hall. ***Punctuality is very important so I would urge everyone to make every effort to have their children in school on time, this means before class begins. If children are persistently late, you will be contacted to ascertain what can be done to improve the situation.***

Developing Independence

Last year I addressed the issue of developing independence in our children and I asked everyone to do their best to drop children off and ensure they have appropriate coats/hats etc in case weather is a bit cold. I must commend the parent body for the response given to this. Unless the weather is very inclement, we will be asking the children to go outside in the morning, for exercise and fresh air, again this year I would ask parents to please drop the children off or if it is wet bring them to the hall and reinforce their development of independence, by leaving them to it. Many thanks. We would expect children from P5, 6 and 7 to be able independent in these matters.

New P1 Classes

We welcome our 78 new pupils into our 3 Primary One classes. They will go home at 11.45am for the month of September. From *Wednesday 1st October*, they will remain in school until 1.45pm and will have lunch or school dinner at 11.45am every day. I would urge all P. 1 parents to make sure that both the children and the school know who will be collecting their child *every day* as confusion only causes distress.

School Uniform

Throughout the year all children must wear the appropriate school uniform.

Girls' uniform

Navy skirt/pinafore or plain navy joggers
Navy fleece/cardigan with school crest
Blue polo shirt with school crest OR
White shirt and school tie

Boys' uniform

Navy trousers or plain navy joggers
Navy fleece with school crest
Blue polo shirt with school crest OR
White shirt and school tie

Please note the school sports kit is not a substitute for school uniform and should not be worn as such. All children are expected to adhere to the school uniform at all times. The school sports kit is p.e. attire and changing for p.e. is encouraged particularly among the older children as it promotes personal health and hygiene.

In the interests of safety we discourage the wearing of jewellery. We are in possession of a number of items of uniform which have been donated to the school which are in perfectly good order. Anyone who would need some items of uniform is more than welcome to have a word with myself and we will do our best to help you out.

Pupils' Names on School Uniform

Please ensure that all uniforms and bags/lunch boxes are marked clearly with your child's name. Children do tend to lift a jumper and pull it on without checking names but if all items are properly labelled then sorting mix-ups is easy.

The School Lane

Last year parents were generally very good about not bringing cars up the school lane and this has certainly helped this difficult situation immensely. I am aware of the parking problems on the streets and we are trying to do something to alleviate this issue, please be patient. To the very small minority of parents who choose to ignore the school's policy on this matter, please be considerate to the children and all other parents who make the effort to find parking spaces and walk up the school lanes. Please

respect our decisions. To the many who do - thank you

School Security

The safety and security of the school and the children is of the utmost importance. Unfortunately the school suffers as a direct result of continuous trespassing and vandalism as well as anti social activity within the school grounds and on the roofs. I would encourage everyone to be vigilant and report any intruders or unsavoury activity to the proper authorities.

Child Safety

All visitors to the school and classrooms are now expected to sign in and are issued with an identification badge for the duration of their visit. This procedure is in place to enhance child safety. This year, if a child needs to leave school early for any reason, they should bring a signed note to their teacher so that he/she knows in advance that they will be leaving school early. The child must be collected by the parent or appointed adult who must report to reception and complete the 'Signing Out Register'. The office staff will then arrange for the child to meet you or your appointed person at reception.

Medication

Teachers and other staff do not administer medicines of any sort in the school. If a child needs to take any medication, parents may come to the school to administer it at an agreed time or give the medicine to the class teacher with a written/ signed permission note.

School Mass

We will be celebrating the start of the new school year with a school Mass on Tuesday 23rd September in the Church of the Assumption, at 9.30 am. I would like to warmly invite all parents/guardians, grandparents and friends from the community to join with us in this celebration.

Milk Money

We would encourage payment of school milk on an annual basis which costs £23.25 per child for the year. Please note annual payments can only be accepted up until 17th September, payable at the secretary's office. This payment is up to 26th June. It is also possible to order milk per half term. The cost of milk to Halloween is £3.90 also payable until 17th September.

School Dinners / Dinner Money

Key Stage 1: £11.00 per week, £2.20 per day

As a result of the Nutritional School Meals initiatives school dinner provision for Key Stage 2 is traditional school dinners with a 4 weekly menu which is circulated in advance. There is a choice of dinner each day and the emphasis will be on a healthy balanced diet. Payment procedures for Key Stage 2; children must bring dinner money each day to the canteen and pay for dinner on a daily basis, each day the price will be the same. Payment cannot be taken for dinners in advance and it cannot be paid at the secretaries' office. Kitchen staff would appreciate it if the children could have accurate change with them. £2.20

Promotion Of Healthy Eating

This year we will be continuing to develop healthy eating habits amongst the children, Last year we operated a healthy eating programme two days per week, Monday and Thursday. This is set to start again on Monday 8th September. We would ask that the children's break be a piece of fruit and drinks be water or juice based only, no sweets, crisps, bars etc and no fizzy drinks on Mondays or Thursdays. This has encouraged healthy eating last year and therefore the benefits are obvious to us all. It will only work if you the parents support the programme, we must all be collectively responsible. On Mondays and Thursdays we would also ask you to reflect this approach in lunch boxes also. Undoubtedly there may be hurdles at the start, but please support this programme for the good of all our children.

School Money Envelopes

We have ordered school money envelopes which are very useful for parents to use when sending money to the school. They are specifically made for school use and a pack of 40 envelopes costs £2. We are simply passing them on to you at the cost price. They are very convenient and can be purchased at the office. They have proven to lower the rate of children losing money and therefore becoming distressed.

Cultural Diversity

Over the last couple of years there has been a steady increase in the number of children entering the school for whom English is an additional language. In fact a lot of these children do not speak English at all. It must be very difficult for these children and their families. I know the main body of children in the school make every effort to make these children welcome and help them settle. I would ask that everyone continues to do their best to help all foreign families settle into the community of our school.

Keep Baby Katie Awake Campaign

This is a campaign which is in place to try and help a very young child whose family are part of our school community school. The child suffers from a rare illness which requires her to travel to Chicago to receive pioneering new treatment in an attempt to keep this little girl alive. The fundraising campaign have organised an national non uniform day across N. Ireland to raise funds to help cover the costs of medical help in America. We will be taking part in this non uniform day which will take place on 19th September. I would ask all children to take part and donate £1 to the fund. If anyone wishes more information visit www.keepbabykatieawake.com

Transfer Tests

Please take note of the dates for the Transfer tests even at this early stage of the school year. Test 1 Fri. 7th November and Test 2 Fri. 21st November. On both mornings the school will not be open to receive children until 11.15 am

Annual Sponsored Walk

This will take place towards the end of the month more information later.....

School Website

A school website is under construction at the moment. It is being designed to provide everyone with continuous information about school events and activities. I will provide details in the near future

School Closures

We are enclosing our annual holiday list. There may be need to make minor adjustments+ to this list. If this happens you will be informed as soon as possible.

School Closures 2008/9

Halloween	Thursday 30 th and Friday 31 st October 2008. Monday 3 rd November.
Holy Day	Monday 8 th December.
Christmas	Monday 22 nd December [closing at 11.00am]-Tuesday 6 th January. Re-opening Wednesday 7 th January
Half Term	Thursday 12 th February & Friday 13 th February. Monday 16 th February.
St. Patrick's Day	Monday 16 th March & Tuesday 17 th March
Easter	Thursday 9 th April [closing at 11.00am] - Friday 17 th April Re-opening Monday
May	Monday 4 th - Friday 8 th incl. Monday 25 th May.