



Newsletter

Monday 12th March



St. Joseph's Primary School

Message from the Chair of the Board of Governors

Over the last number of months the Board of Governors continues to meet regularly and welcomes the appointment of the School's Vice Principal, Mr McDowell, and we wish him every success in his new position. With the welcome return of Mr Donnelly, the board are very pleased to note the stability of the senior staffing management team.

I wish to bring to your attention recent communication from the Department of Education who welcomed the ETI report for St Joseph's that "demonstrated the capacity to identify and bring about improvements in the interest of all learners". The Department congratulated all those involved with the school for the hard work and commitment to effect those improvements. A sentiment that the Board of Governors echo and we are overseeing the action plan setting out how we will continue to sustain improvements.

We will be shortly issuing to all parents the school's Annual Report and hope all the teacher/parent meetings are a success.

Thank you for your continued support.

Parent/teacher meetings

The annual parent-teacher meetings for all pupils will take place in the school this week. To facilitate these meetings, all classes will finish each day at 2pm.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be in St Colmcille's on Tuesday 13th March at 18:30. Pupils should attend wearing their full school uniform.

Parent workshop on Behaviour Management

This workshop on 13th March, from 13:00 to 14:00 in the school hall, is geared towards parents/carers of children (Nursery-Year 3) and aims to give them the opportunity to discuss issues they may encounter when trying to understand and address some of their children's behaviours. It will provide an opportunity for parents/carers to share experiences and to obtain basic advice from Social/Emotional/Behavioural professionals within the RISE NI Team.

Citizen of the Month

Every month the achievements and efforts of individual children in each class are recognised in Assembly with our special Citizen of the Month presentation. Congratulations to all our current winners for February - Rudy(P1A), Matej(P1B), Cormac(P2A), Rebecca(P2B), Kayla(P3A), Eva(P3B), Niamh(P4A), Eleanor (P4B), Oskar(P5A), Gianna(P5B), Gouri(P6A), Darragh(P6B), Colm(P7A) and Martha(P7B).

PTA news

The remaining events planned for 2018 are:

- The PTA are holding a table quiz in the Parochial Hall on Friday 23rd March at 8pm. Why not put together a team and come along for a bit of craic and the chance to win prizes. Tickets are £5 per person and can be purchased at the door or via an online link which will be available soon. Check out the PTA Facebook page and the class WhatsApp groups for more detail soon.
- The PTA will be supporting the Art of Caring exhibition from 12th to the 15th April. This event contributes significant funds to the PTA every two years, so your help would be greatly appreciated.
- The Community Fun Day on Saturday 16th June.

School Crossing Patrol

There will be no School Crossing Patrol at the junction of the Sandown Road and Upper Newtownards Road on Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th March. Please ask your child(ren) to be very careful if crossing at these lights during this period.

School Council

The School Council met on Tuesday 27th February. The new behavioural rule for the school was agreed - 'Put belongings away neatly'. It was also decided that during Lent the sponsored activity will be a 'Dance with Duffy Day.' Sponsor forms about this will be sent out this week. The P7s have requested that their homework for the week is given out on a Monday. Proposals from the Eco-Council for a possible

school garden/playground were also shared and included: growing sunflowers and ivy; raised beds for flowers or vegetables; an outside reading area; and decorating the fence in the infant playground, once the work to the heating system has been completed. The next meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 27th March.

Fundraising for Trocaire

The pupils' School Council are organising a sponsored 'Dance with Duffy Day', which will take place on Thursday 22nd March. Each family will receive one sponsorship form this week and we would ask pupils to try and seek sponsors (friends, family, relatives, etc...) to support them. We do appreciate your support, but please remember that, like every other fundraising event organised by the school, this is a voluntary donation.

Bring & Buy Sale

As part of our fundraising efforts for Trocaire, P7 will be holding the annual Bring & Buy Sale on Tuesday 27th March in the school hall. As usual, we depend upon your generosity to make the event a success. If you have any old toys, games, books or DVDs that are in good working condition please send them in with your child. On the day, we will have some fun stalls and a raffle, and any items that can be offered as prizes (Easter eggs etc.) will be welcomed. We will also have a 'Bun Stall' and all contributions will be gratefully received. It is always an excellent day, and is waited for with great anticipation by the P7 pupils, who will manage the day, and the younger pupils who get to spend your hard earned money supporting a great cause. Please provide your child with a plastic bag and some small change with which to buy their bits and bobs on the day. All proceeds raised from the event will go to Trocaire's 2018 Lenten appeal. Any items that you wish to offer should be brought to school and left in the staffroom, or with any P7 pupil.

Where there's P7, there's drama

On Friday 3rd March both P7 classes, led by Mrs Duffy, took part in 'The Belfast Festival of Speech and Drama'. We are delighted to report that all the hard work over the last few weeks, in preparation for this event, paid off handsomely, resulting in a second and third place for P7B and P7A respectively.

Clubs

There will be no after-school clubs this week due to the parent/teacher meetings. The current block of clubs will conclude on 23rd March.

Two amendments to the Extra-Curricular Activities Policy are:

- parents of children in receipt of free school meals are entitled to make an application for a waiver in fees for after-school clubs (this amendment will be highlighted in the school newsletter); and
- all external coaches will be subject to the successful completion of the Access NI vetting process.

Complaints Procedure

Please note that from April 2017 the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman ('NIPSO') has been able to consider complaints against the Board of Governors of a grant-aided school: Section 64(4)(a) and Schedule 3 of the Public Services Ombudsman Act (NI) 2016. The school's Complaints policy, which has been recently emailed to you and is available on the school's website, has been revised to reflect this development.

Reading volunteers

If any parents/grandparents would be willing to spend 20-30 minutes per week supporting children in reading, please pass on your details to the office. The process will involve undertaking an AccessNI check. We do find that the reading support given by parents to children has been invaluable, and would like to build up a team of volunteers that can be called upon, when required.

Communication

Please check your email settings to ensure that our messages arrive to your inbox and are not redirected to your spam/promotions folder.

The Larder

During Lent, St Vincent's de Paul will be collecting for The Larder, a food bank attached to St Christopher's in Mersey Street. Every Friday, a representative from St Vincent de Paul will collect from the school the donations that the pupils have made during the week. If you are able to help, please send your contribution into your child's teacher.

School dinners

The school dinner menu can be found on the school's website - we are currently on week 3.

Music fees

The 2nd term music fees for the pupils receiving weekly tuition from the School of Music tutors are now due.

Missing watch

If anyone has found a pink and red Swatch watch, please hand it in to the school office as it belongs to one of our P6 pupils..

Now here's an answer

In the last newsletter we asked:

*On a farm there were some hens and sheep. Altogether there were 8 heads and 22 feet.
How many hens were there?*

The answer is:

There were 4 hens and 4 sheep.

Now here's a problem

Kevin and Laura are having a snowball fight. They make small snowballs and large ones. A large snowball weighs 50 grams more than a small one, and two small ones weigh 100 grams more than large one. Can you tell how heavy is a large snowball?

Dates for Your Diary

Monday 12th March - Friday 16th March	Parent/teacher meetings
Tuesday 13th March	Sacrament of First Reconciliation at 18:30 in St Colmcille's
Monday 19th March	School Development Day 4 (School closed for pupils)
Sunday 25th March	'Do This in Memory Of Me' at 09:30 in St Colmcille's
Thursday 29th March	School finishes at 12:00
Friday 30th March - Friday 6th April	Easter holidays
Wednesday 18th April	First Communion Parents' Meeting at 19:00 in the Parochial Hall
Sunday 22nd April	'Do This in Memory Of Me' at 09:30 in St Colmcille's
Monday 7th May	Early May Bank Holiday
Tuesday 8th May	School Development Day 5 (School closed for pupils)
Sunday 13th May	First Holy Communion for P4A at 11:30 in St Colmcille's
Sunday 20th May	First Holy Communion for P4B at 11:30 in St Colmcille's
Monday 28th May - Tuesday 29th May	Mid-term break
Friday 29th June	Last day of term (12:00 finish)