

# September Newsletter 2021.

## ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



10, Annaghmore Coalisland, Co. Tyrone. N.I. BT71 4QZ

Principal: Anne Mc Guinness

Web Site: [www.stpatrickssannaghmore.com](http://www.stpatrickssannaghmore.com)

Telephone : (028) 87740661

Email: [info@stpatrickssps.coalisland.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stpatrickssps.coalisland.ni.sch.uk)

### Welcome.

Welcome to our new school year of 2020/21! Hopefully, this year will be truly memorable for us all in positive ways and together we can make it: ***"The best it can be, every day in every way!"***

I hope you have all survived the challenges of the last school year and together we can move forward into the new school year with a renewed sense of optimism and hope for every child who enters through our doors .

### Our Mission Statement.

*"Inspired by our faith in Christ,*

*St. Patrick's Catholic P.S. will provide:*

*A happy, secure and caring learning environment*

*Which promotes all to be the best they can be*

*Full of optimism, ambition and with a love of learning.*

*Working in partnership with our community*

*We will ensure St. Patrick's P.S. makes a difference."*

Welcome to the new Primary 1 cohort of 2021/22—all 27 of them and we wish them 7 years of happiness and learning, fun and development as they move through their primary school career with us.

We say a heart-felt 'Goodbye' to our out-going Primary 7 of 2020/21 who will certainly remember their final years with us and who will be fondly recalled as our 'Most Resilient Graduates!' We wish each one of you girls and boys every success and blessing as you begin your secondary school careers.

We welcome back all our pupils into their new year groups under their new teachers and although routines will be 'different' together we will make this year as big a success as we possibly can by making you the centre of all that happens. Class bubbles will continue as they, alongside enhanced hygiene and cleaning measures, successfully kept our school safely open last year. So, here we go...

### Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August:

**Group 1 of Primary 1 and Primary 7 pupils only attend today.** P7 pupils are all asked to bring their break and a packed lunch on 31<sup>st</sup> August, please.

**All other classes and Group 2 of P1 begin Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September.**

### **Home Learning**

School bags are back along with homework going home in them, once again – let's hope it stays this way!

The website links to Home Learning pages will remain live in the event of the need to return at short notice, to Blended/Remote Learning.

Please note, if a child is absent from school, staff will not be providing online work as they will be teaching all day. You should ring into the school and request a call back in the event of a long term sickness.

### **Return of text books**

We would appreciate return of any text books that any child may have at home, please. Over the various lockdowns many resources especially reading/novels have become 'lost.'

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### **Daily Routines— School Day: Same as for last term with a few little changes.**

#### **Parents and Carers.**

Updated directive from DE has stated that we should maintain the current measures in place for all parents/carers coming to the school. This includes **minimising at all times the number of adults meeting at the school gates** and putting in place measures to reduce this. Therefore, **we will have staggered Start and Finishing times from the start of the new term.**

#### **Start & Finish Times: To maintain reduced contact between class bubbles and also**

**Traffic:** This has always posed serious challenges for health and safety of children arriving at the same time to St Patrick's PS. One successful change due to COVID was introducing staggered start/finish times. This provides us with great opportunities to improve the safety for all at the start/end of the school day. The following will be the new starting and finishing times each year group for 2021/22:-

Year Group	Drop off	Collection
P1	9:05am (from Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> September)	See letter sent out.
P2 Mrs Quinn	9:10am	1:50pm
P2 Miss McGahey	9:15am	1:55pm
P3	9:20am	2:00pm
P4	9:20am	3:00pm (Lower gate front yard)
P5	9:15am	3:00pm (Top gate as usual)
P6	9:10am	2:55pm (Lower gate front yard)
P7	9:05am	2:50pm (Top gate as usual)

**P1 – P3 will enter through the bottom gate** and use the crossing on the school yard to go into the main building.

**P4 – P7 will enter through the top gate and follow the footpath** past the kitchen and pitch to the rear of the schools and to their classrooms.

**Family groups** only come in at the first start time for the family concerned.

Parents/carers are asked to drop their child off and move on to allow for others to park. **Please do not come into the school when dropping your child/ren off or when collecting them again.** Staff will go to the gate to collect classes in the morning and will send your child to you at the gate when you arrive to collect them in the afternoons. All adults are asked to wear a mask and not to delay at the gates or hold conversations with other parents. This is to reduce groups gathering.

**If you need to speak to a member of staff, please ring in and ask for an appointment or a call back.**

**No adult is to go directly to any classroom at any time and all parents/carers should remain off the school premises until arrangements have been made for them to attend a meeting.**

You should **contact the Secretary, Mrs Conway, (028 8774 0661)** and she will assist you.

Alternatively, **you can email the school and your enquiry** will always receive a response as soon as possible on the day it is received on:

[info@stpatrickps.coalisland.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stpatrickps.coalisland.ni.sch.uk)

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### **What pupils should bring to school...**

School bags are back in fashion, for now!

Pencil cases and all contents that fit into it

Water bottles

Lunch Boxes/bags

Full school uniform

A coat (bring daily)

**No pupil is allowed to bring a mobile phone or electronic device with them to school.**

**All personal toys must remain at home.**

**Please make sure every item belonging to your child has their name and Year Group clearly written on it. This is the only way we can return 'lost' items to their rightful owners.**

**Dinners** will formally begin Wednesday 1st September. (P7 are asked to bring a lunch with them on 31<sup>st</sup> August.) Please note, only Group 1 of P1 and Primary 7 pupils start on 31<sup>st</sup> August.)

ALL parents whose child/ren are entitled to free dinners must apply for them for this school year. Unless you have filled out the form on the EA website for free school meals, for 2021/22, then your child will not receive free dinners. Please remember, the school is simply an agent who supplies the dinner on behalf of EA. Any dispute must be made through them.

We receive a list of children entitled to free dinners; unless your child's name is on this list, they will not receive dinners and you must either pay for dinners or provide lunch for your child until you apply and your application is processed by meals division at EA and the school notified.

Dinners cost £2:60 per child a day - £13:00 for a full week.

**ALL dinner monies MUST be paid on a Monday morning (or on the first day of any school week) for dinners your child will be taking during that week.**

**WE WILL NOT ACCEPT DINNER MONEY during the week.**

Dinner Menu for September is on the website for September under Parent Area for your attention.

This is subject to change and you will be notified should this be necessary.

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**Morning Club:**

**THERE WILL NOT BE ANY MORNING CLUB THIS TERM.**

We must reduce mixing of classes as much as possible for contact tracing purposes should a positive case of COVID be identified.

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**Communication with parents/carers:**

**Newsletters** will be put onto the website and text message sent to tell you when it has been updated.

**Text Messages** will be sent out to all parents/guardians, individual classes or groups as necessary throughout the year. It is very important that we have mobile numbers that are current if you are to receive text messages from the school.

If you have changed your mobile phone over the Summer please make sure you ring or email the school with your new number and state your full name, child's name and class so we can update your contact details, please.

**Meetings** can be arranged by ringing into the secretary and making arrangements to meet with staff after 3:00pm in the hall. All visitors to the school must wear a mask, sanitise their hands on entry and sign into the school using the COVID19 Register available at the door. You are asked to **ring into the school from the gate and you will be met at the door by a member of staff** who will let you in.

**Collecting a child early** – Please ring into the school and inform the secretary the time you wish to pick your child up at and again ring into the office from the road when you arrive and the secretary will bring your child out to you at the gate.

**Late arrivals - ADULTS MUST NOT GO DIRECTLY TO ANY CLASSROOM** with children who arrive late to school. Ring into the school from the car and wait until the secretary comes out to collect your child at the gate.

**As part of Attendance Procedures, the times that children who arrive late or who leave early will be formally recorded on their attendance records on SIMS.**

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**COVID19 and school. (A Parent Poster of Dos and Don'ts from DE is on the school website.)**

- High standards of hand hygiene will continue to be maintained in all classes with regular washing of tables throughout the school day, as for last year.
- Children should be taught to practice coughing and sneezing into the crook of their arm or into a tissue which they then discard and wash their hands immediately afterwards.
- Avoid sharing food.
- If your child is unwell, they should remain at home until fit to attend school.
- If they show any signs of COVID, they should not attend school but a COVID test should be booked for them immediately through Direct NI.
- If identified as a close contact of a positive case, you must follow the NH advice and do not send them to school.
- If your child tests positive for COVID19, do not send them into school but ring or email the school as soon as possible to let us know so we can begin the contact tracing for the positive case at school.
- All adults must continue to socially distance at all times in schools.

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### **Buses**

Parents wishing for their child to travel on EA buses (yellow bus) need to have applied to EA for this. Go to [eani.org.uk](http://eani.org.uk) and look for Transport to locate application form. There is no EA bus at 2:00pm.

Trans Link is an independent company who simply provide a service; you pay daily/weekly for travel on this bus to the driver. All enquiries should be made to Trans Link directly about collection points and times.

Children travelling on either bus will arrive at school after 9:00am. If their class has already been taken in by the teacher, they should go straight to class.

At home time, children waiting on the bus need to go to cloakroom outside Mrs Quinn's room while waiting on their bus. (This provision will be starting Wednesday 1st September.)

**It is recommended that all children travelling by bus should wear a mask.**

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**Break** Every pupil will require a healthy break every day brought to school in a clear bag that can be discarded when contents are eaten. 'Healthy Breaks Initiative' is promoted fully at St Patrick's PS.

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**PE:** Directives state that PE is safe for class groups and it should be outside when possible. If the hall is available, ventilation will be maximised to follow regulations. On the days your child has PE they will wear their PE clothes into school as changing is not recommended at this time. Teachers will inform classes when they will be having PE. Coaches, if available this year, will take their sessions outside to decrease possible spread of infection. All necessary sanitising measures will remain in place including washing hands before/after PE and spraying equipment used after use by any group.

**Play:**

We will continue to maximise use of the outdoor play area for early years and in addition we will reopen use of the play room on a rota basis for these classes.

Once again, all possible measures currently in use to protect children and staff from spread of infection will be in use, including

- hand washing before/after using resources
- disinfecting all hard surfaces
- spraying toys and resources used
- maximum ventilation of the play room at all times
- leaving room empty and fully ventilated for at least 2 hours between groups on any day
- only 2 groups using the room daily

Play will continue in the classrooms as table top activities across all early year classes and activity-based learning will remain a feature throughout the school as a teaching and learning approach.

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**Flu Vaccine**

St Patrick's PS is scheduled to have whole school flu vaccine by way of nasal spray, on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November this year. It is essential that all children are vaccinated against flu to minimise the risk and complications of contracting both flu and COVID19. We urge all parents to sign the consent forms when they have been issued to you and return them as soon as possible thereafter. We need to keep our school community safe as possible and this is yet another way you can protect both your child and all other pupils and staff this winter and keep our school open and safe.

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**(Currently there are no dates for First Confession, First Communion or Confirmation. As soon as these become available from Canon Fee we will let you know.)**

**All school assemblies** will remain paused until further notice to reduce unnecessary numbers gathering in an enclosed space, as stated in updated guidance.



**Transfer - PPTC Entrance Assessment (GL)**

Any parent who is entering their child for the Transfer Procedure in November this year must complete their online application form for GL Assessment for both St Patrick's Academy and St Joseph's Grammar.

**Register by going to the website:- [www.pptc](http://www.pptc)**

**TIMETABLE 2021-22 Key Dates for Parents**

**Friday 24th September 2021 Deadline (2.00 pm)** for receipt of completed Registration Forms.

**Saturday 13th November 2021** Entrance Assessment.

**Monday 22nd November 2021 Deadline (2.00 pm)** for receipt of Supplementary Entrance Assessment requests.

**Saturday 11th December 2021** Supplementary Entrance Assessment.

**Wed 15th December 2021 Deadline (2.00 pm)** for registering claims for Special Circumstances.

**Friday 4th February 2022 Results** of the Entrance Assessment posted (first class) to pupils' homes.

**Tuesday 22nd February 2022 Deadline (2.00 pm)** for receipt of Entrance Assessment re-mark requests.

**Please note, Booster Classes for P7 Transfer pupils will start Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September and continue each Tuesday and Thursday until the test.**

List of dates will be given to pupils when they return.

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Finally, thank you for all your patience and understanding during what has become some of the most challenging days in education. All procedures will be kept under review as directives come from DE and the NI Executive regarding COVID19 and keeping our pupils and staff safe.

We are delighted to be welcoming your children back into the school again – it is they who give it life and meaning and although it will be different, we continue to have exactly the same mission today that we had 18 months ago:

***“To be the best we can be, every day in every way!”***

Every blessing and good wish to you all as we step forward into 2021/22.

**Our School Prayer.**

***Dear St Patrick,***

***Help us to make our school***

***A happy, caring and safe place***

***Where we can be***

***The best we can be***

***Every day in every way,***

***A-men.***

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**Dates for your diary: Days the school will be closed for pupils.**

**Term 1:**

**October:-** Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> (inclusive) (School Closed for all)

**November:-** Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> (Staff Only Day) & Friday 26<sup>th</sup> (Optional Closure for all)

**Christmas Holidays :-** from Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**January:-** Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January (Optional Closures for all)

**Term 2:**

**February:-** Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> & Friday 18<sup>th</sup> (Mid Term Break)

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> - Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> (Staff ONLY days)

**March:-** Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> & Friday 18<sup>th</sup> (St Patrick's Day and Optional Closure)

**April:-** Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> (Staff ONLY day)

**Easter Holidays:** Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April (School, Closed)

**Term 3:**

**May:** Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> (May Bank Holiday)

**June:** Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> & Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> (School Closed)

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> (Staff ONLY day)

**School Closes half day Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2022 for Summer Holidays.**

Above are the 'planned' closures to date for the school year. We will advise as time goes on if parent-teacher meetings may be possible at some stage this year as this remains under COVID19 advice.

We will be taking part in **Shared Education** this year with all classes and at present this will be remotely between the two schools. Once again, we will keep this under review and the possibility of going to each other's school may materialise as things change.