



JANUARY 2022 Newsletter



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Principal: Mrs. Mary Bacheta

Dear families and friends

HAPPY NEW YEAR to everyone. We hope 2022 brings good health and happiness to us all. As always, we have hit the ground running and the boys and girls are busy learning and enjoying being at our lovely school.

Please take a few minutes to read through this newsletter and make a note of any relevant dates for your diary.

As we begin a new school term, the ongoing impact of the pandemic is never far from our thoughts. For every family the experiences and impact will be different but there is no doubt that it is continuing to affect our daily lives and routines in one way or another.

As a school, we have been lucky although we experienced a tricky patch just after Halloween with a high number of pupils and some staff absent. Thankfully it passed and everyone remained safe and well.

Moving forward, the current levels of transmission in the community appear to very high which may negatively impact us again, especially if we have staff shortages. This challenge arises due to the availability of substitute teachers being so limited, it was impossible to secure substitute teachers just before Christmas. It has been predicted that this situation will continue in the coming weeks and put additional pressure on schools. This is a concern but I want to reassure you that I will do everything in my power to keep the children in school and to avoid any form of remote learning. This will be a last resort for us and only when we cannot manage to ensure the health and safety of those involved.

The best place for our children is in school, receiving high quality face-to-face learning, connecting socially, building positive relationships and engaging constructively with learning.

If at any stage, we are forced to move to Remote Learning, The Department of Education has provided updated guidance.

In the meantime, I prefer to have a positive outlook and manifest positivity. Keep in touch with us, we are here to help.

Thank you in advance for your support in all that we do, we are grateful for it.

In addition to the above information, all schools have now been issued with CO2 monitors for the classrooms. This helps us to manage the ventilation which is recommended to avoid further spread of the virus. In response to the indicators on the monitors we are directed to open the windows and doors. It would be advisable if the children could add another layer of clothing such as a vest or t-shirt under their uniform. Body warmers are also a good option as they allow the children to continue to work without any hinderance. This is optional but something to consider especially on colder days.

THANK YOU from the parent committee. We were overwhelmed with the total (£961) raised in the recent Christmas Draw. A special thank you to Tony O' Connor who donated first prize of £100 and to the local businesses who gave so generously. The members of our Friends Committee work very hard behind the scenes and we want to thank them for their dedication and ongoing support. The money raised will be used to support the pupils and pay for resources as and when we need them. If you feel you would like to join the committee, please contact the office on 028 71341419 and we will pass on your details.

ADMISSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2022

It is now time to apply for a Playgroup and P1 place starting September 2022. Please get in touch if your child is eligible to apply. Also share with friends and family who have children of this age.

I have been showing prospective parents around this week and so many have made appointments based on recommendations from our families which is so lovely to hear. Thank you.

School Admissions 2022/23



Information for parents/guardians

Please see below key dates in admissions for year 2022/23. For parents/guardians the first date of note is the publishing of admissions criteria of schools on the EA website.

	Pre-School	Primary	Post-Primary
STEP ONE Admissions Criteria Published on Website	17 Dec 2021	17 Dec 2021	12 Jan 2022
STEP TWO Online Applications Open	10 Jan 2022	10 Jan 2022	1 Feb 2022
STEP THREE Online Applications Close	28 Jan 2022	28 Jan 2022	23 Feb 2022
STEP FOUR Notifications of Applications Outcome	28 April 2022 Stage One 16 June 2022 Stage Two	28 April 2022	21 May 2022

For more information on the admissions process please visit www.eani.org.uk/admissions

RELIEF CLEANER REQUIRED ASAP

We are looking to fill a temporary cleaning position. It would be 2.5 hours daily from 3.00pm to 5.30pm. The EA will oversee the paperwork for an immediate start.

Please get in touch with us if you are interested or share this with others who may be available to cover this position. Thank you in advance.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S WEEK

Catholic School's Week is celebrated annually. This year it will be celebrated in the week beginning the **23rd January 2022**. The theme of this year is '**Catholic Schools: Living Life to the Full**'.

To launch CSW Bishop Mc Keown will celebrate Mass at 10.00am on Thursday 20th January in St. Eugene's Cathedral via the webcam <http://www.steugenescathedral.com/webcam.html>

Please join the children in the school for Mass online if you are free to do so. The children will engage in a range of activities throughout the week as they explore 'Living Life to the Full'.

REMINDER FEBRUARY HALF TERM

School will close for HALF TERM at 12 noon on **Friday 11th February 2022**. We are off from **Monday 14th to Friday 18th February 2022**.

Children return to school on **Monday 21st February 2022**.

ECO AWARD

As we are working towards our ECO Flag, we try not send out paper copies of newsletters and other correspondence. The information we need you to know is sent out via the website on a regular basis. Please keep a close eye on this platform to ensure you are always up to date. This newsletter contains more general information and reminders for the whole school community.

SUSTRANS ACTIVE TRAVEL

We are proud to announce that we have been presented with the SUSTRANS Active Travel Silver Award. This is fantastic news and is a result of a whole school effort. A special thank you goes to Mrs Conway who is our Active Travel Champion and works hard to plan the programme and keeps us on track. We are now looking forward to reaching the Gold Award.

325 CLUB NEWS

I wanted to let you know that due to the increase in COVID cases, we may experience staff absences which may affect the availability of this club.

I want to alert you in advance that there may be occasions when I have to cancel this club at late notice. This will happen if there is insufficient staff to supervise it safely.

On days when there is adverse weather such as snow/icy conditions, this club may also need to be cancelled. Safety will be at the forefront.

Prompt collection at 4.00pm and 5.00pm is expected.

REMINDER-ADVERSE WEATHER/SNOW ARRANGEMENTS

Luckily, we do not experience too many days where we feel that we may not be able to open the school or that weather conditions may hinder attendance at school. To put it into context, children are expected to attend 185 school days so we are only talking about a very small number of adverse weather days when conditions may cause us an issue. We try not to dwell on these days but focus on all the other happy days we come to school.

In the event of adverse weather conditions, the most important factor is the Health & Safety of every member of our school community.

To ensure you do not feel under pressure or put anyone in a situation where children or adults are at risk, we would encourage you to carefully assess the weather conditions before making the journey to school. We understand that some families including staff live in areas where there are steep hills and untreated roads.

We do not want anyone to worry about the journey to school. We also understand that parents and guardians have the added pressure of needing to get to work on time. Unfortunately, we cannot predict or change bad weather but we can offer solutions to help us have a more pleasant experience.

Please note the following:

As far as is possible we will always try to open the school, however, on the rare occasion where it is deemed too dangerous, a message will be sent through the website and on Facebook at the earliest opportunity.

In the event of adverse weather, there is no immediate rush required to get to school. Children will be marked in for the morning session if they arrive in before 10.30am. Just contact the office to let us know. If you can avoid driving up the hill to the school, please do so as it can be very slippery, especially around school time when traffic is going in both directions. A later arrival will also mean you will miss some of the congestion.

Just an additional note on the above: I have tried to get the 'gritter' to come up and salt the hill and have been told that we need to have a larger number of road users to justify this. If you have time, I would encourage you to continue to put pressure on the local MLAs and council to afford us this much needed service.



FIRST CONFESSION-PRIMARY 4
Thursday 10th March 2022 at 2.00pm



FIRST COMMUNION-PRIMARY 4
Saturday 30th April 2022 at 11.30am in St. Columb's Church, Chapel Road

CONFIRMATION-PRIMARY 7
Sunday 3rd April 2022 (no time confirmed yet)



Thank you for your continued support in all that we do.

Mrs. Bacheta and staff