

Newsletter – September 2017

Welcome back! We are all absolutely delighted to be back to school. We hope you all had a safe and happy summer holiday this year. We welcome all of our P2 – P7 pupils who returned ready to learn and all looking so smart as well. A very special welcome goes out to our Primary 1 pupils who will be joining the St. Joseph’s family over the next week. We look forward to catching up with you all as well making new friendships in the coming year. On behalf of all our staff I would like to wish you and your families a happy, healthy and successful new year.

Pauline Fleming Acting Principal

2017/2018 Staffing

We are delighted to have Miss Beatty back with us this September in Primary 2. Mr Gallagher joins us this year in Primary 6. He will be working in my class while I take on the role of Acting Principal in the absence of Mrs Wylie. We welcome Mrs Dunniece who will be working on Thursdays in Mrs Crilly’s Primary 1 class. We are delighted to have so many new members of staff and we look forward to working with them this year.

Post Inspection Update

This year the school will have our follow-up inspection. 2016/2017 was a very successful year in terms of school improvement in Quality Learning and Teaching in Literacy, Numeracy, ICT and Special Educational Needs. The improvements made in the classroom were backed up by the significant improvements in standardised scores in Literacy and Numeracy tests carried out in May. We are absolutely delighted to have significantly reduced underachievement across P3 – P7. We are delighted with these improvements and recognise the areas for improvement in this academic year. The August School Development Days have already provided staff with training in the following areas:

- CCEA Officers provided training to all staff in the effective use of Assessment for Learning strategies, in particular, “Effective Feedback” and “Marking for Improvement”. This is something we will be developing in Literacy and Numeracy this year to help sustain improvements made.
- GL Assessment provided training in the effective use of standardised data from Progress Test English and Progress Test Mathematics. This will allow teachers to effectively target set for all pupils for the coming year.

In the next few weeks the leadership team and coordinators will be developing School Development Plans for parents and pupils to share with you.

Once again we intend to keep you informed at every step of this post-inspection journey, either through the newsletter or letters from myself or the chair of Governors.

Curriculum Meetings

Each year in September we hold curriculum meetings for P1 – P6. These meetings are very important as they give you a chance to meet the teacher as well as find out about what lies ahead for your child. We will hold our curriculum meetings first thing in the morning after school drop off at 9.15am – 9.45am. We hope that at least one parent can attend as these are extremely important meetings and vital information is shared about the year ahead. The meetings will be held in the assembly hall and the dates and times of the curriculum meetings are:

Thursday 14 September at 9.15am	P6
Friday 15 September at 9.15am	P5
Tuesday 19 September at 9.15am	P3
Wednesday 20 September at 9.15am	P2
Thursday 21 September at 9.15am	P4

Our **Primary 1 Curriculum Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday 10 October at 6pm** here in the school assembly hall.

Year Group Newsletters

Our year group newsletters proved to be very popular with you last year and we will continue to share these with you on a half termly basis. The newsletters give you a flavour of what is happening in Literacy, Numeracy and ICT as well as other learning areas in your child’s year group. They will be sent out at the beginning of each half term. P1 – P6 year groups will receive their first newsletter at their curriculum meeting and P7 will be sending theirs out in the coming days.

We need your prayers for a very sick pupil in our school. He is currently in hospital being extremely brave and we are all so proud of him. We want to see him back to school soon safe and well. Please pray for him and his family at this time. Thank you.

‘Being the best that we can be’

Wellbeing Week in St. Joseph’s!

This year we will hold our very first “Wellbeing Week” here in St. Joseph’s! Health and wellbeing is something that is very much relevant in today’s busy lifestyles so we thought it would be a good idea to have a week devoted to the theme. It will involve pupils, staff and parents.

For pupils the week will involve:

Pupils will have only reading and mental maths homework this week along with special “Wellbeing Homework” We will have mindfulness sample classes for P4, P5 and P6 classes on Wednesday 27 September.

The week concludes with a School Development Day which the children have off so it will allow families to complete some of the wellbeing activities.

For parents on Monday 25 September from **1pm – 4pm**, we will have the Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Association in school delivering a talk for parents on Healthy Lifestyles followed by Blood Pressure checks. Please come along to support this event.

We will also have Vivienne Bannon from Envisage Now providing a talk for parents on mindfulness and children. This is especially relevant for parents of pupils in P6 and P7 but all parents are most welcome to attend. This will take place on **Wednesday 27 September at 7pm**.

For staff we will have NICHs in school offering full health checks for staff along with a wellbeing themed SDD on Friday 29 September. We will also have our Opening Year School Mass on Thursday 28 September at 10am in St. Patrick’s Chapel. We invite our entire school community to celebrate with us.

Lots more details in future Friday Notes!

If any parents would be available to come in and offer health/wellbeing talks to pupils or other parents please contact Mrs Fleming as soon as possible to arrange a date. We would love to have you involved!

Afternoon release for P4 – P7 Teachers

P4 – P7 teachers will continue to have PPA time (Planning, Preparation and Assessment). Teachers from P1 – P3 as well as our learning support teachers take P4 – P7 classes on two afternoons per week, normally Tuesday and Thursday. This time is beneficial to teachers as well as pupils. The release teachers use their talents to deliver a different part of the curriculum eg art/music/ICT. We will let you know the details in the coming weeks.

CCMS Official Opening

CCMS Catholic Council for Maintained Schools has moved premises from Holywood to Lisburn (just above the library) and we are absolutely delighted that our choir and folk group have been asked to perform at their official opening ceremony on **Friday 22 September**. This is a great honour as schools, educationalists and invited guests from all over Northern Ireland will be present to see the amazing talent we have! Keep an eye on Twitter for photos of the event!

Oh yes it’s the Pantomime...Oh no it isn’t

I know it’s hard to believe that we are even thinking of Pantomimes and the sun is still shining but we want to give you advance notice of the date and cost. The Panto this year is “**Peter Pan**” and the whole school will be going **Thursday 7 December** (Further details will be sent out closer to the time). The cost per pupil is £14. You can pay the full amount straight away or pay in instalments but the full amount needs to be paid before **Friday 20th October 2017**.

Coming and going to school

The doors of the P1 and P2 classrooms will continue to open at 8.45am in the mornings. Parents can drop off their P1 and P2 children directly into the classroom where the teacher will be supervising until 9am when the school day begins. P3 – P4 children can be dropped off from 8.45am when morning supervision begins. Please remember that only children attending Breakfast club can be dropped off before 8.45am.

Office Update

You may have noticed that Ms Gibson is flying solo at the minute in the office. This is until we appoint a new secretary. We would ask that children are informed of their pick up/cool kids arrangements before they come to school to help alleviate the interruptions to the school teaching day. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

'Being the best that we can be'

St. Joseph's House System

Our House System will continue this year with children in P4 being allocated a new house in line with their sibling, if necessary. Each house will have a house colour and each child will wear a coloured badge to indicate their house. Teachers, classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors will be able to allocate house points throughout the week. Mrs Crilly as our PDMU coordinator will collate the points and award House of the week. Each house will have a house colour and each child will wear a coloured badge to indicate their house. Pupils in P6 and P7 will have the chance to apply to be Vice-Captains and Captains of each house. The first house meeting of the year will take place on **Wednesday 6 September.**

Break

This year we will be continuing to offer fruit and milk for break. The price will remain the same as in 2016/2017. Fruit will cost £1.50 per week and milk £1 per week.. This means that the total cost of milk and fruit per week is £2.50.

The time taken for teachers to collect money for break, swimming, badminton etc on a Monday is impacting heavily on teaching and learning time. For this reason we are asking that as far as possible break money etc is paid termly at the start of the term. The cost for each term is as follows:

Term 1

Fruit only	£22.50
Milk only	£15.00
Fruit and milk	£37.50

Term 2

Fruit only	£16.50
Milk only	£11
Fruit and milk	£27.50

Term 3

Fruit only	£18
Milk only	£12
Fruit and milk	£30

If you would like to pay for the year you can do so as well at the start of the year with the following process:

Yearly fruit only:	£57
Yearly milk only	£38
Yearly fruit and milk	£95

For those pupils bringing their own break to school this can ONLY be fruit, bread sticks or yogurt (frubes). Children MUST only bring water to drink during the school day/class. No juices are permitted.

Pottery at Island Arts Centre!

We are so lucky to have an Arts Centre right on our doorstep with a fully equipped ceramic/ pottery studio for hire.

There has been a great deal of research about the importance of art in child development. We believe in St Joseph's that few art mediums kindle growth and skills in children in the way that clay does.

We have witnessed first-hand how invaluable the experience of working with clay is for sensory development, motor skills, self-esteem, self-expression, problem solving skills, discipline, and pride. Clay also has a uniquely therapeutic quality that seems to settle and calm children; it retains their attention for hours.

Each class attend for three sessions and build on their skills each year bringing home a piece of finished pottery for you to treasure. The classes cost £2.00 each which covers, clay, studio hire and firing of the art in the kiln. The first classes to go will be **Miss Clarke's P3 class** and **Mrs Hanna's P6 class**. Their dates are:

- **Tuesday 26 September**
- **Tuesday 3 October**
- **Tuesday 10 October**

ICT Update

Last year we invested heavily in ICT hardware as well as staff training. This year we will continue with staff training with further iTeach training sessions for staff and in-house training. Mrs Gould, our ICT coordinator will be appointing new digital leaders from P6 (more details later) and in November we will host our very own "Coding Week." Look out for details in later newsletters!

Mindfulness

We are absolutely delighted once again to be able to offer a series of 4 mindfulness sessions to our P7 pupils. The purpose of the sessions is to develop relaxation techniques with pupils, to show pupils how to practise mindfulness and to provide pupils with the tools they need to manage their own anxiety. Vivienne Bannon will lead the sessions monthly from September until December with the first session on Wednesday 13 September. Pupils should bring a yoga mat/towel for comfort. If you would like any further information Vivienne's website can be found at this address: <http://www.envisagenow.zone>

Tweet Tweet!

Yes.... Our school twitter feed continues to be an extremely successful way of communicating with you as parents and celebrating our vibrant school. At this point we have over 410 followers! Our account details are **@stjosephlisburn**. If you haven't already done so please do follow us for live updates...there's so much to see!

‘Being the best that we can be’

Look Smart, Think Smart, Work Smart!

It is wonderful to see all of our pupils returning with lovely new school uniforms. As a school we take pride in our uniform. A few things to remember this year:

Black shoes at all time. Trainers are only permitted for PE and sporting after school activities.

Summer dresses can be worn until 30 September. From 1 October until Easter we would like to see all girls in full winter uniform.

Please ensure all items of clothing are labelled as it can be very confusing when changing for PE swimming etc.

Exciting PE Opportunities!

This term we will continue to use our local community to offer exciting PE activities to our pupils. Details as follows:

- P4 will attend Salto Gymnastics Centre from Tuesday 5 September for 6 weeks. A donation of £3 per session/£18 for the 6 sessions would be very much appreciated.
- P5 will attend swimming lessons in Lisburn Leisureplex from Friday 8 onwards. A donation of £2.20 per session/£24.20 for the 11 sessions would be very much appreciated.
- P6 will attend tennis at Wallace park from Wednesday 6 onwards for 8 weeks A donation of £2 per session/£16 for the 6 sessions would be very much appreciated.
- P7 will attend badminton at Lisburn Racquets’ Club from Friday 8 onwards. A donation of £2 per session/£22 for the 11 sessions would be very much appreciated.

PTA

We are so lucky in St. Joseph’s to have such a fabulous PTA...a committed group of parents who raise the much needed funds to help us deliver a full and enriched curriculum. Last year was our most successful year yet. We always need new members with fresh and exciting new fundraising ideas so if you think you could spare a few hours please do come along to the next PTA meeting will be very soon. We will let you know closer to the time.

Catering for Pupils with Special Dietary Requirements

The Education Authority currently provides **for special dietary requirements that have been medically prescribed**, including pupils who have allergies or are for ethical, religious or cultural reasons.

To guarantee the safeguarding of pupils with allergies, or any other special dietary requirement, the following steps should be taken:

1. Parents should inform the school of pupil’s dietary requirements and **must provide adequate information/evidence eg letter from GP/dietician**
2. Principal will inform Louisa, our school cook
3. Principal, Louisa and parent meet to discuss requirements and suitable food provision
4. Pupils dietary requirements are recorded and reviewed annually.

Please note, due to safeguarding reason we cannot heat food up in microwaves/ovens for pupils at lunchtime.

PE Uniform

This term we have sourced a new PE Uniform. We are very proud of our school uniform and our pupils always wear it with pride. In fact, we receive many compliments when we are “out and about” in the public forum. With our school developing PE and providing an exciting new range of PE opportunities beyond the school we believe the PE uniform will provide them with a hardwearing kit for a number of years. Pupils will be able to wear this kit on any day they have PE as well as days when they are on school trips, swimming, badminton, tennis etc. In this way, there will be no lost uniform items which inevitably happens when children have to change for PE. I have really valued the wide ranging comments from you as parents...thank you for those. Our PE uniform has always been PLAIN navy bottoms with the blue polo shirt. This can now be complimented with our new St. Joseph’s top. Please do bear in mind the PE uniform is not compulsory in any year group.

Beat the Street

This year we will be participating in the “Beat the Street” initiative. Representatives from Beat the Street will be coming along to assembly next Friday to talk to all of the children. Further details in future Friday Notes.

‘Being the best that we can be’

Dates for your diary!

Mon 4 Sept	Mr Reid: Target Setting: SUB: Ms Gorman
Tues 5 Sept	Registration for After School Activities at 8.15am in the school assembly hall Mr Gallagher: Target Setting AM: SUB Ms Gorman Ms Hanna: Target Setting AM: SUB Mrs Gorman Ms McCambridge: Target Setting PM: SUB Ms Gorman Mrs O’Hare: Target Setting PM: SUB Mrs Gorman P4 at Salto Gymnastics Mrs Fleming at Lisburn Principals’ meeting at 2,15pm
Wed 6 Sept	House Meeting at 1.35pm Mrs O’Hare Acting VP Development Day: SUB: Mrs Gorman P6 at Wallace Park Tennis
Thurs 7 Sept	Mrs Gartland: Target Setting : SUB Ms Gorman Mrs McCambridge: Target Setting: SUB Mrs Gorman
Fri 8 Sept	Beat the Street at assembly ECO School: Adopt a space and add colour to your school day with plant life P7: AQE Closing date for applications P7 at badminton P5 at swimming
Mon 11 Sept	Maths word problem training
Tues 12 Sept	Mrs Connolly SENCO Development Day SUB: Ms Gorman
Wed 13 Sept	Beat the Street starts today Mindfulness Session 1 for P7
Thurs 14 Sept	P6 Curriculum Meeting at 9.15am Mrs Gould ICT Development Day SUB: Ms Gorman
Fri 15 Sept	P5 Curriculum Meeting at 9.15am Mrs Fleming at St. Patrick’s Prizegiving Ceremony
Mon 18 Sept	P1 pupils stay for lunch until 12.30pm Mrs Fleming at CCEA training Iteach Training Twilight for teachers 3pm – 6pm Live here, Love Here: Eco Club Litter Pick in school grounds and beyond
Tues 19 Sept	P3 Curriculum Meeting at 9.15am

Wed 20 Sept	P2 Curriculum Meeting at 9.15am
Thurs 21 Sept	P4 Curriculum Meeting at 9.15am Foundation Stage Development Day
Fri 22 Sept	CCMS Official Opening GL Assessment closing date for applications
Mon 25 Sept	Wellbeing Week Wellbeing talk for parents at 1pm followed by Blood Pressure checks Please come along.... P1 pupils: Full day until 2pm Zara Brady on Work Experience Board of Governors meeting at 6pm
Tues 26 Sept	Wellbeing Week P3 Miss Clarke and P6 Mrs Hanna at pottery in Island Arts Centre Mrs Fleming at Lisburn Principals’ Meeting at 2pm
Wed 27 Sept	Wellbeing Week Mindfulness Taster Sessions for P4, P5 and P6. Bring along a towel to lie on 7pm: Mindfulness for Parents Talk: Please come along
Thurs 28 Sept	Wellbeing Week Opening the school Year Mass at 10am in St. Patrick’s Eco Club: Book Swap from 8.30am – 9am in assembly hall
Fri 29 Sept	School Development Day: School closed for pupils

School Trips – Parent helpers needed!

We are appealing to you as parents to ask if any of you would like to put your name down on a standing list of parents available to accompany classes on school trips. If you are available, please let Julie know in the office and they will add you to the list. Thank you.



‘Being the best that we can be’