

St Patrick's Primary School

13 Castlewellan Road, Ballymaghera, Hilltown, BT34 5UY

Principal: Mrs Geraldine Smith

Phone: (028) 406 30061

Email: info@stpatricks.hilltown.ni.sch.uk

Web: www.stpatrickspshilltown.com



Progress Through Partnership

18th February 2024

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to spring term! Thank you for your support over the last term, it is vital that we work together to help your children achieve their best. Please have a look at our website to get an even bigger picture of what is going on in our school.

We would like to express our sincere condolences to Mr Trainor and his family, whose mother, Mona, passed away on Sunday 4th February. A number of P.7 students showed their respect on behalf of the school community, forming a guard of honour at Mrs Trainor's funeral.

Lent in St Patrick's

Over the coming weeks we will be working on developing our children's knowledge of Lent and how we are on a journey in the weeks before Easter. We will be fundraising for a number of charities, especially Trocaire and every class will have a Trocaire Box to collect any money the children might be able to donate. During Lent a year group will be attending Mass on Tuesday mornings. This week Mr McConville's Primary 7's will be attending.

Improvements to school grounds

Over the last few weeks, we have had some disruption to our outside play routine due to grounds maintenance works going on. Currently a new gas compound is being built for heating two of the mobile classrooms. Also, over the Christmas holidays a tree that was dead, fell across the small yard. Unfortunately, the tree situated beside it is also dead and we are waiting for the EANI to arrange for its removal. Everything we do is in the best interests of our children, and we will continue to update you with information as soon as we can.

Reading, homework and presentation

We will be continuing to focus on reading, homework and presentation. Parents as you know your children need your help with listening to reading and checking and signing homework on nightly basis, so please get in touch if there is ever a problem with this. Please continue to support your children in reading and bringing their reading and library books to school every day. Thank you!

We are also focusing on behaviour and would like to commend all those children who display high standards of respect for each other and the adults in our school. Well done children, your beautiful manners and behaviour are a credit to your parents and families! We will be giving extended break times for the classes who show lovely manners and respect throughout the school over this term!

Transfer to Post Primary in Year 8

The Year 8 admissions portal closes at 12 noon on 22nd February 2024. Please click the link to complete your application for Year 8 admission <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions/post-primary-admissions-guide>

Downpatrick Hurling Blitz

Well done to our hurlers who took part in the Final of the Cumann na mBunscol Indoor Hurling Blitz, in De La Salle school, Downpatrick. After games against Carrick, Kilclief, Castlewellan, Portaferry and Maghermayo, the boys qualified for the final. Despite a great game of hurling, they were narrowly defeated by a solid Portaferry team. Well done Daithi, Joseph, Tadhg, Danny, Connor, Harry, Ronan and Danny Joe!

Early Closure on Monday 4th March

Please note, school will close at 12:30pm on Monday 4th March for staff training. There will be early dinners and all children should be collected from school at 12:30pm.

Internet Safety Week

The PSNI visited our school on Wednesday 7th February as part of Internet Safety Week. The children enjoyed asking the police lots of questions and learned a great deal about how to stay safe when using the internet! Please have a look at the school website for more information about the workshops. Many thanks to our local community police for giving up their time to visit us.

First Penance

Congratulations to our Primary 4 children who received the sacrament of First Penance 24th February. It was a very special ceremony, with our children singing and reading beautifully. Well done boys and girls and thanks to their teachers Miss Fegan and Mrs O'Hare. Well done to our P.5 and P.6 choir children who supported our P.4 children with the singing!

Sacramental dates/class times reminder

First Holy Communion will take place on Saturday 27th April at 10:30am and Confirmation will take place on Friday 10th May at 4:00pm.

Altar Server Training

Our groups of altar servers are continuing training and it certainly is heartening to see our Catholic traditions alive in our school community.

Attendance

Please contact the school either by email or telephone if your child is absent. A letter explaining absences should be sent to school on your child's return. Reasons must be reported to the school office.

School App

Please make sure you have an updated version of the school app. If you are not getting regular notifications, please delete the app from your devices and download the app again, selecting the relevant onscreen options. Please let us know if your mobile number or email address changes by emailing the school at info@stpatricks.hilltown.ni.sch.uk.

Bus Lay-by

Please DO NOT park or turn your vehicle in the bus lay-by or along the front of the school. This area must be kept free of all traffic to ensure our children's safety. The pedestrian gate is open to facilitate children walking to and from school and is not for children getting dropped off or picked up by car. Please respect these rules. The lower church carpark should be used for parents/guardians to drop children off and pick children up.

Dropping Off and Picking Up

Thank you for following the one-way system on entering and exiting the church carpark. Please DO NOT STOP or wait in the YELLOW BOX at the top of the carpark. This is a major safety risk, and it inhibits staff, support agencies and other families arriving on time. Please park in a space to drop your child to school and remind your children they should not climb on or over the walls at the Parochial House. Your children's safety is our priority!

Safeguarding and Child Protection Team

In St Patrick's we believe that an ethos of caring permeates all our activities. All staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks and are informed of school procedures regarding child protection issues. Our safeguarding team consists of Mrs Reavey (Designated teacher), Ms McNeill (Deputy designated teacher) and Mrs Smith (manager). Please contact the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher if you have any safeguarding concerns, through the school office on 028 40630061 or by emailing info@stpatricks.hilltown.ni.sch.uk.

Kind regards

Geraldine Smith
Principal