

ST FRANCIS' PRIMARY SCHOOL
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1st December 2016

Dear Parents/Guardians

It's Advent already and schools, just like homes, are very busy places as we prepare for Christmas. I would like to update you on events happening in school over the next few weeks.

Mrs Marley

You were informed in a previous letter that we intended making a presentation to Mrs Marley to mark her retirement. Anyone wishing to make a donation should do so by Tuesday 6th December. The presentation will be after the 10.00am Mass in school on **Thursday 8th December** (the Feast of the Immaculate Conception). If you know of any former pupils who would like to attend the presentation, please let them know the arrangements. Parents and parishioners are also welcome to attend the Mass.

Christmas Dinner

I would like to remind you that school will close at 1.30pm on Friday 9th December after the children's Christmas Dinner. You are asked to make arrangements for your children to be collected at this time. Unfortunately the Ballyvarley, Glasker and Greenan buses will **NOT** operate at 1.30pm. Children may wear a Christmas jumper on Friday, if they wish.

Christmas Draw & Hamper Appeal

Each year the PTA organise a Christmas Draw and hamper appeal. In previous years patrons at our Christmas Plays have been most generous making donations to the raffle. If you would like to make donations for the hampers you can select one luxury and/or two general items from the attached list and bring them to school from 8th to 12th December. Any surplus items will be donated to the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal (Last year YOUR generosity ensured that we were able to donate several hampers to this appeal). PTA members will prepare the hampers in school on Tuesday 13th December. Tickets for the Christmas Draw will be available from Tuesday 6th December and all tickets (sold and unsold) should be returned to school by Wednesday 14th December. Additional draw tickets can be purchased on the day.

Thank you for your support of the Halloween **Cash for Clobber** collection.

Christmas Gifts/Chris Cringle /PTA Party

This year we will again organise Chris Cringle in the classrooms, all gifts (£3-£5, marked as boy, girl or either) should be brought to school by Monday 19th December. Gifts will be distributed on Tuesday 20th December at the PTA party, it has been rumoured that a special guest may be appearing in school on Tuesday. Donations in lieu of teachers' gifts can also be made to the hampers or to a charity of your choice.

Christmas Play

The School Christmas performances of the **Key Stage 1 Christmas Play** and the **Key Stage 2 Carol Service** will be on

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| <u>Wednesday 14th December at 9.30 am</u> | KS 1 <i>Christmas Play</i> in school |
| <u>Thursday 15th December at 9.30am</u> AND At 10.30am | KS 1 <i>Christmas Play</i> KS 2 <i>Carol Service</i> in school |
| <u>Thursday 15th December at 7.00pm</u> | KS 2 <i>Christmas Play</i> in St Patrick's Church, Loughbrickland |

Admission on Thursday morning is to both shows, there will be a short interval between the KS1 and KS2 performances and thanks to the support of Pauline and the PTA refreshments will be on sale for patrons. As the seating capacity is limited **admission to the performances will be by ticket only. We may NOT be able to guarantee two tickets per family for any show.** Please indicate on the attached Reply Slip the number of tickets required.

Tickets cost:

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| | Adults | £3.00 |
| | Concessions (students 5-16 years & pensioners) | £1.50 |
| | Pre-school children (when seated on an adult's knee) | Free |

Down GAA Primary Schools' Draw:

Thank you to all who supported this draw and providing much needed funds for the school. Unfortunately we had no local winners; a full list of winners is available on the Down GAA website.

End of Term

The PTA Christmas Party will be on Tuesday 20th December when a special visitor will visit the classes. School closes for the Christmas vacation on Wednesday 21st December at 11.30am. This will be a non-uniform day. **Please note that NO buses will operate on Wednesday 21st December.**

Admissions

The closing date for applications to Primary 1 for the 2017/8 school year is on **Wednesday 11th January 2017**. Application forms are now available from the school and can be returned before the Christmas break. Parents of children due to start school in September 2017 are welcome to contact the school to arrange a visit; **we will try to accommodate visits from potential parents any time until the close of admissions on 11th January.** There will not be a formal open day; however every effort will be made to meet all prospective parents. If you know of anyone considering St Francis' PS please encourage them to contact us.

School reopens on Thursday 5th January 2017. It is hoped to have Mass in school for the Feast of the Epiphany on 6th January at 10.00am.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your support and wish everyone a happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Yours sincerely

Donal McNally
Principal



