

News Sheet



December 2020

Christmas 2020

As we approach the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas, we reflect on what can only be described as a uniquely strange year. Thanks to the cooperation of the children and parents, we have had a relatively safe return to school since August. However, it is important that we do not lower our guard and that we continue with our efforts to keep the whole school community safe. At this stage, we are unsure if further restriction will be imposed in January, but we will endeavour to keep you informed of changes through the school app and website.

Many of our 'normal' activities have been suspended this term, but we have attempted to broaden the children's experiences this term. The EA peripatetic Literacy and music services have adopted and resumed. Primary 6 and 7 pupils have worked on collaborative lessons with staff from NewBridge and St Patrick's College.

Christmas & PTA Events

Thanks to the PTA for assisting with our Festive Forest Fun on Wednesday 9th December. The children had a great morning in Whyte's Estate, keeping within their bubbles. They even bumped into Santa in the forest and received a further surprise on their return to school - festive treats. We have rarely witnessed such excitement displayed by our children; though as a parent reflected that afternoon – "Thank you, the children really needed that."

Despite being unable to produce our usual Christmas plays, all classes have been busy rehearsing their own Christmas productions including Christmas carols, poems and reflections. Where parental permission allows, these are available to view on Twitter or the school website. Thank you to Pauline for organising the Christmas dinner for pupils and staff on Friday 4th December. This year, the dinner was organised over three sittings – it was much quieter than normal, but the bubbles were maintained.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in this difficult year and wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas. We pray for a brighter New Year.

Thinking of Others at Christmas

This term we took the decision not to burden parents with fundraising requests. At this time of year, we normally support St Vincent de Paul and Trocaire. We ask that you consider making a donation to these charities or a charity of your choice. Thanks to those parents who have already made donations.

Admissions & Transfer

Application to primary schools is now via the EA online portal which operates from 7th to 31st January at www.admissions.eani.org.uk/admissions

Parents of children due to start school in September 2021 should contact the school for further information on the application process. Please provide any parent considering St Francis' PS Aghaderg, with the school contact details.

The Newry grammar schools decided in May not to use Transfer tests for their selection process this year. The AQE tests will start on Saturday 9th January. The EA has also moved the Transfer process on to the online portal. Further details will be made available in January.

Dates for Your Diary

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| Wed 6 th January | Staff Training |
| Thurs 7 th January | School reopens |
| Fri 29th January | Closing date for P1 applications |
| Mon 15 th –Fri 19 th Feb | School Mid Term |
| Wed 17 th March | St Patrick's Day |
| Thurs 1 st April | Easter Holidays |
| <i>School closes at 11.30am</i> | |
| Mon 12 th April | School Reopens |
| Mon 3 rd May | Bank Holiday |
| Fri 28–Mon 31 May | Mid-term |
| Saturday 5 th June | First Communion* |
| Fri 25 th June | Summer Holiday |
| <i>School closes at 11.30am</i> | |
| <i>Dates for Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and Communion to be confirmed.</i> | |

School closes for the Christmas holidays on **Tuesday 22nd December at 11.30am**, the Ballyvarley, Glasker and Greenan buses will run a combined service at 11.30am.

Nollaig Shona agus bliain úr faoi mhaise daoibh

