

ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



Tel No: 02844 830810



Principal: Mrs S McArdle

4 Ballynahinch Road
Crossgar
BT30 9HS

12 November 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

We hope you and your families are all well. As we move further into the term I wanted to give you an update of some of the things that will be happening in our school.

Next week is anti-bullying week. This is a very important week in our school calendar and forms part of our preventative curriculum for safeguarding.

The theme for this year's week is 'One Kind Word'.

During next week, we will be sharing anti-bullying resources with the pupils including lesson plans and videos to help them learn more about bullying and then reinforce the message that bullying behaviour is not acceptable. We will teach children about what to do and who to tell if they are worried about being bullied or feel they know someone who is being bullied. We will be promoting the message that saying kind words to others is very important for us all.

We will begin next week with Odd Socks Day! A day dedicated to celebrating our individual differences. Each child is encouraged to wear an odd pair of socks into school, these can be plain or bright, whatever the children choose. Girls can wear them over tights even.

I am absolutely delighted and very proud to announce that our school has won Sumdog's Northern Ireland National Sumdog Maths Contest. 1225 children took place in this competition with many large schools involved. However, our primary 7 class have won it and our primary 4 children have come 6th place.

This is an absolutely fantastic achievement for our school and the children have won as a result of their determined effort and commitment to achieve. They not only have taken part during the school day but have

also devoted a lot of their time at home as well to ensure they won. Many children completed 1000 questions. Oisin in primary 7 got 9th place and Alexander in primary 7 got 10th place overall which is an additional achievement. The primary 7 children had promised to make me very proud of them and they certainly have! Congratulations to primary 7 and primary 4 and their very proud teachers and support staff.

We have recently purchased some new outdoor play equipment for the children to use and there was great excitement when the children saw them all set up at the side of the school. This includes a mud kitchen with lots of utensils, potion bottles, bug hotels and a water feature. We also have 2 water butts so we are currently collecting rainwater to use with this new equipment. We hope the children enjoy using the new equipment whilst learning about the natural environment at the same time.

Our primary 7 children are beginning their transfer tests this weekend and we wish them all well. They have worked so hard to date and we are so pleased with the progress they have made. A special thank you to Mr Miskelly and Miss Heaney for preparing the children so well.

This week we have been collecting food donations as a school to help and contribute those less fortunate in our community. We have chosen Kilmore Food Bank as they do an amazing job all year round providing to the community. If you still wish to donate, please do so early next week before the donations are sent. Thank you to everyone for your generosity.

I want to extend a huge thank you to our PTA for the amazing fundraising to date this year. We have been raising money for a new interactive whiteboard for one of the classrooms. To date £1650.79 has been collected. We still need £1049.21 to reach our target of £2,700 but hope our next event will reach it. Thank you so much to all the parents for your donations which are as always much appreciated.

Crossgar community are hosting a Christmas event on Friday 3 December from 7-10pm in the War Memorial Hall with Santa. There will be a grand draw at this event to raise funds for the three primary schools in Crossgar. There are fantastic prizes to be won. We will be having a tea / coffee and hot chocolate stall at this event. We hope to see you all there.

Next Friday (19th November) is Children in Need Day. We would love to see all the children coming to school in pyjamas on this day and would like to support this event by asking for £1 cash donations to be brought in on the day.

We are aware that covid-19 has had a great impact on many children and we are ensuring wellbeing is a focus again for this year. We already have some support programmes in place including YMCA Building Solutions for 6 weeks (for individual children), Reach Programme (P5 & 6) and Healthy Little Minds for classes across the school will take place in December.

We are hoping to also facilitate some counselling or therapy sessions for children to further support them in the near future.

On 1st December at 1:30pm we are hosting an Open Day for any children due to start primary 1 next year. We are delighted to welcome families back into our school again and look forward to meeting all the children on that day.

For Christmas this year, we want our children to perform for an audience again. We know this is a very special time for you and your child. Unfortunately, we are unable to have our traditional Christmas concert in St Colmcille's High School but want to give the children an opportunity to perform it to their parent.

Instead we plan to have each class perform separately just for parents in their class bubbles within school hours in our main hall. Class bubbles will be at different times which are set out below.

Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate other adults due to social distancing. We hope you will be able to come along to our school hall on the times allocated to see your child perform.

Here are some dates to remember: -

Monday 15 th November	- Odd Socks Day
	- PTA meeting
Friday 19 th November	- Children in Need pyjama day
Wednesday 1 st December	- 1:30pm Our School Open Day
Wednesday 22 nd December	- School closes for Christmas at 11:30am

Christmas performance dates:

Friday 3 December -	Santa Run Daily Mile (wear Christmas jumper)
Monday 13 th December 1:30pm	- P5/6 Christmas performance
Tuesday 14 th December 1:30pm	- P3 Christmas performance
Wednesday 15 th December 10am	- P2 Christmas performance
Thursday 16 th December 10am	- P1 Christmas performance
Thursday 16 th December 1:30pm	-P4 Christmas performance
Friday 17 th December 10am	- P7 Christmas performance

We hope your child enjoys all of the planned events leading up to the Christmas holidays and I want to Thank You all for your ongoing support.

Yours Sincerely,

S McArdle