**Update 13th April 2022**

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Please find below information relevant to the coming weeks.

**First Holy Communion**

P.4 pupils will make their First Holy Communion on Saturday 14th May at 11am in The Good Shepherd Church. Further communications will follow.

**Assessment**

Our school will be carrying out its end of year assessment procedures from the week beginning 9th May. This applies to P.3 – P.7 and a detailed schedule will be sent to you nearer the time. It is important that your child completes these assessments as they give us essential information for planning next year.

**School Trips**

School trips are being organised at the moment. Educational visits are permitted as long as the current Covid regulations are adhered to and thorough risk assessments are carried out. Your child’s teacher will be in touch soon with details if they have not already done so.

**Sports Day**

We will not be able to have a sports day this year where all of the children come together to enjoy a day of outdoor competition and activities. However, each class will spend a ‘fun’ day outside, competing against their classmates in a range of events. We won’t be able to have parents at these days but we will, of course, post photographs on our website. We hope that next year, we can return to a full day of sports where parents will be welcome to attend.

**P.7 Farewell**

Once again, alternative plans will have to be made for this year’s Primary 7 pupils before they leave us in June. Their school trip takes place on June 13th and we will also organise other events to make their final weeks in St Malachy’s P.S special and memorable. There will be a Mass for the P.7 pupils and their parents to mark their time in St Malachy’s P.S coming to an end – details will follow.

**Holidays 2022 - 2023**

We have arranged our holidays for next year, please see attached.

**Staffing for 2022-23**

Mrs McAnulty will be returning to school before the end of the third term. We will keep the parents of the P.2 pupils in this class informed of the precise date of her return when we know it. Mr Barry will not be returning for the next academic year. We will inform you of his official retirement closer to the time. As you know, Miss Frame is also retiring at the end of June.

As you can see there is some fluidity in the school’s staff at the moment. We hope to appoint a new Vice Principal before the end of this academic year. Mr Kearns remains in situ for Mr Barry.

We have looked at the breakdown of classes for next year and realised that due to the numbers in each year group, there is only one possible option which will allow us ten classes in the main school. This option includes four composite classes. This cannot be avoided – we do not have the staff, budget or the rooms available to offer an alternative.

We are finalising the classes in which teachers will be next year and where the children will be placed. When arranging composite classes, we follow the policy of CCMS and use the children’s chronological age to guide. We also consider the pupils’ journey through school to date and how often they have been in a composite class. We try to ensure balance between time in a straight class and time in a composite class so that every child is afforded equal opportunities.

Parents will be informed of their child’s class and teacher for next year along with their child’s report on Friday 17th June.

**Nursery/P.1/P.7**

Parents will receive notification of the outcome of Nursery and P.1 applications on Thursday 28th April. You can access the information via the EA online portal.

Parents of our pupils in P.7 will receive notification of the outcome of their applications to post-primary on Saturday 21st May via the EA portal.

**School Development Plan**

Due to the ongoing difficulties caused by the pandemic during this academic year, St Malachy’s P.S worked from a one-year transition plan rather than a three-year plan. With the situation now being more settled, we will be producing a three-year School Development Plan to commence in September 2022.

I have gathered and collated the information submitted by questionnaire last year and this will be used to shape our plan. I will consult with parents further on different issues as we work through the plan.

When we return after Easter, your child will bring home a copy of our Anti-Bullying Policy. We need you to read this, ensure you are happy with it and offer input and feedback before it is ratified by the Board of Governors.

In last year’s questionnaires, I also sought your opinion on the current school uniform. The majority of parents who responded, indicated that they would like a change. Before moving forward with this, I will consult formally with parents before the end of the year. This will be to get a definitive result on parental wishes regarding a change.

Should a significant majority wish a change in uniform, the process will begin. This will involve seeking further input from parents before a decision is made on colour, cost etc. This process takes time.

**Malachy McGeeney Trophy**

Our P.7 boys’ team has qualified for the semi-finals of the Malachy McGeeney Trophy. The semi-finals and final will be played in Armagh Athletic Grounds on Wednesday 27th April. We hope to be able to bring other pupils and parents to support the team. As soon as we know if this is possible, we will be in touch. The talent and conduct of our pupils throughout the competition has been outstanding.

**50th Celebration**

Term three will see a lot of preparation for our 50th anniversary. We are having our open evening on May 26th and we hope you will be able to join us. Please spread the word to any past pupils or parents who might be interested in calling into the school that evening. Details are posted on the website and further details will follow next term.

**Term Three**

Term three is an extremely busy term in a primary school. There is a misconception that primary schools are ‘on the wind-down’ from Easter – nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, all staff are working at full capacity to make sure the children achieve their maximum potential, that they remain happy and content and that they feel ready and secure about moving forward. We will continue to need your support throughout this term. The next few weeks are the culmination of the planning, preparation and hard work that has gone into your child(ren)’s journey at school this year. We have needed your support throughout this time and we will continue to need it.

Our observations have shown that some children find it more difficult to adapt to change due the pandemic. Transition from one class to the next, will be handled sensitively and gently. We will be alert for any children experiencing difficulty and we will ask for your assistance in managing this – should it occur.

We are looking forward to the final term of a busy and successful year. The end of this year will be emotional for our P.7 cohort and for some long standing, valued members of staff who are leaving us.

We hope that everyone has an enjoyable Easter and takes time to relax and prepare for the weeks ahead.

Should you need clarification on any of the information contained above, please don’t hesitate to contact me by phone or email.

Something to bear in mind!



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Pauline McEvoy

Principal