

St. Catherine's Primary School

Principal: Mrs. Bridget Wilders B.Ed. P.G. Dip.Ed. P.Q.H

Email: bwilders592@c2kni.net



JUNIOR SITE

Phone: (028) 7138 2272

Fax: (028) 7138 2139

Strabane

Co. Tyrone

BT82 8HT

SENIOR SITE

Phone: (028) 7138 2614

Fax: (028) 7138 2482

Download Our **FREE** School App

St. Catherine's PS, Strabane



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Monthly Newsletter : February 2020

Check us out on our website: www.stcatherinesps.co.uk

BREAKING NEWS

We have been nominated in THREE categories for Families First NI Education Awards....

1. Best School (St. Catherine's PS)
2. Best Teacher (Mrs S.O'Kane)
3. Best Headteacher (Mrs B.Wilders)



We are delighted that parents nominated us and regardless of outcome feel totally honoured to have got the nominations. Thank you all. Many of you have made positive comments on the Families First website which goes towards deciding the overall winners. These comments/ compliments mean more than GOLD to us and our little children....so thank you...it is nice to feel so appreciated.

As a result of this, for a little treat to make our children feel so special, school will close on Friday 7th February for a HALF DAY treat! Our children are so excited as they too feel the compliments and the joy. Dinners/ lunches will take place as usual on this day. Children should be collected from school at 12.45pm on this day. Enjoy!



P.T.F.A.

We have a PTFA (Parents, Teachers, Friends Association) whose members work so hard to raise funds for our school in order to best support our little children. We invite everyone that is available to come along and join our wee group. The work of the PTFA involves mainly fundraising activities for our wee pupils so that we can provide the little extras for them in school!!! Everyone is welcome! Your child's school needs you!! Our next PTFA Meeting this school year will take place on **Thursday 13th February at 7.00pm in Junior School** Assembly Hall. We look forward to seeing you there!



Collecting children early from school

We fully understand and support the fact that from time to time parents have to collect their children earlier from school due to medical appointments. Or other exceptional circumstance. We respectfully request that if appointments can be arranged out of school hours, that parents do. However if it is unavoidable please write a wee note to the class teacher in the morning to let her know that your child will be collected earlier and your child will be ready. Thank you so much in anticipation of your understanding in this matter



Safeguarding Request

We respectfully ask that parents and visitors do not use Mobile Phones while in the school building. This is for Child Protection and Safeguarding Reasons.

Many thanks!

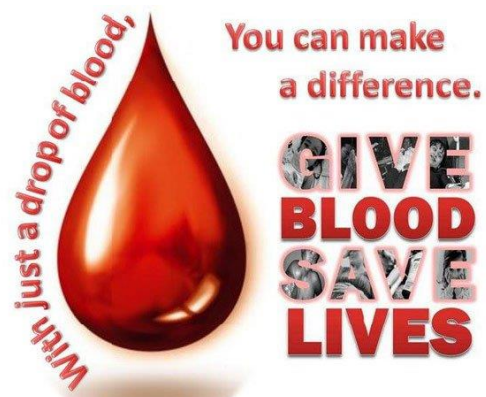


Blood Donation Sessions

Where? Presbyterian Church Hall, Derry Road, Strabane

When? Thursday 20th and Friday 21st February

What time? 1.30pm-4pm & 5.15pm-8pm



The benefits of drinking WATER

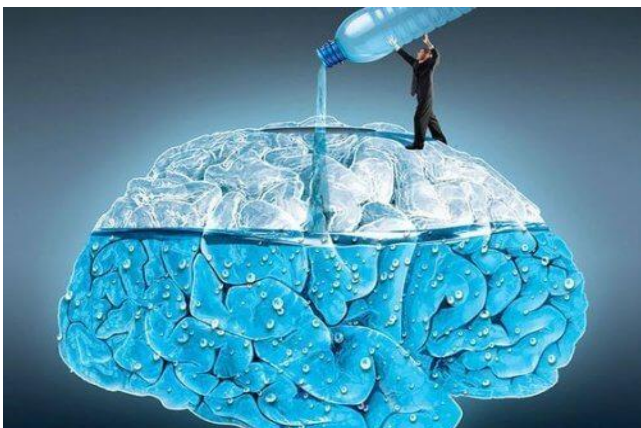


Research tells us that it is good to keep our brain hydrated at all times. The BEST hydration drink for us and our children is WATER.

In our school we promote the drinking of water for Brain Hydration purposes. We accept that children may bring water bottles to school to drink water and hydrate their brains even during class. We however, do NOT encourage any other hydration drink during class time except WATER. Children may have various juices for their lunch but for Brain Hydration during class time WATER is the one!!

The benefits of WATER are;

1. Your brain will work faster
2. It will boost your concentration
3. It helps balance your mood and emotions
4. Drinking water helps you sleep better at night
5. Your memory will improve if you drink water during the day.
6. Water is very good for your skin.



Trocaire

Working for a just world.

Thank-you for supporting Trocaire global gifts with us at Christmas.

Together we raised £380. Your generosity will help to change lives.

We bought many gifts: homes, water, chicks, school kits, and seeds

February Mid Term Break

School will be closed from Monday 17th February until Friday 21st February inclusive for the Spring Mid Term Break.

School will reopen as usual on Monday 24th February.

Have a lovely Mid Term Break enjoying quality time spent with family and friends!



Have you changed your mobile phone number and do we know about it?

It is vitally important that we have up to date contact numbers for our parents/ carers in the event that we need to contact you regarding your child. If you have not updated your mobile phone number with us please do so by letting the Clerical Staff immediately. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.



Celebrating our School and Family Atmosphere with Pride.

Many thanks to all Grandparents, Parents and Family Members / Carers who attended our Grandparents Assembly on Friday! Our Grandparents Assembly is always so important and special to us all. We give thanks for our Grandparents who are here with us and also for our Grandparents who are in heaven. The importance of family values, role of family and the generations cannot be underestimated!



CONCUSSION AWARENESS – WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

Dear Parent/ Guardian

The Department of Education has requested that all schools should write to parents/guardians to highlight the need for you to keep all organisations informed if your child receives a concussion injury.

Concussion is a brain injury which is usually caused by hitting the head or a fall. It can happen at any time, anywhere: for example during sports, in the school playground, or at home.

Concussion must always be taken seriously and it is vitally important that any child/young person suspected of having concussion should immediately be stopped from continuing whatever activity they are doing and be assessed by a medical professional for diagnosis and guidance.

A second injury when a child has concussion can be extremely serious and may even be fatal. It is vitally important therefore that medical clearance is sought before your child returns to school/play. Children should not resume physical activities such as Physical Education (PE), sports or games until permitted to do so by a medical professional.

Concussion may also affect your child's ability to learn at school. This must be considered and medical clearance should be sought before the child returns to school. As symptoms vary from child to child, a graduated return to school programme may be needed.

If your child suffers a concussion in school or outside school, it is vitally important that you keep all people/organisations with responsibility for caring for your child informed so that they are aware of the potential dangers and any restrictions that may apply to the activities your child is permitted to do.

The 'Recognise and Remove' leaflet produced by the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is available on the Department of Education's website <http://www.education-ni.gov.uk> and provides guidance on the signs to look out for.

Keeping everyone informed about concussion is in your child's best interests and parents/guardians have a key role in making sure that information is passed on to their child's teacher, sports coach, youth leader or other care provider. #keepingsafe



Prayer of the Month February

Prayer For the Family

Lord, we thank you for our family
For the talents and good things that you have given
each of us

Please guide us, protect us and equip us

This day and every day

As we grow together in Your love

Family Prayer

Amen.



PATHS Programme in St. Catherine's

(Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)

PATHS Quote of the Month February

Today and everyday is a good day to Do Turtle or use the Control Signals to calm down. Remember, you can make a good decision to stay calm and in control.



Crawlers to walkers babblers to talkers... talking is as important as walking



Sing a rhyme anytime
Start your child learning
for a lifetime!



Superhero Week – 3rd – 7th February 2020

Help us join primary schools across Northern Ireland and get our school's Superheroes to assemble for Autism NI's Superhero Week running from 3rd -7th February 2020, to help raise awareness of Autism in school and at home and earn points for your House!

To take part each pupil will be given five Superhero Tasks to do at home. Then, on day five, our school will hold a Superhero Dress-Up Day with each pupil coming to school dressed as their favourite Superhero! They will bring in £1.00 to donate to Autism NI.

They will earn 10 points for their TEAM Houses for each completed task!!



Introducing the SOOC Programme

The SOOC (Shaping Ourselves and Our Children) Programme is a short course for mums, dads, grandparents, guardians and carers of young children and it's FREE. Plus you can actually get a GENEROUS CHILDCARE allowance for attending the course if needed! What an advantage! Please read the information below. If you would like to sign up for the 5 sessions then you can contact Sharleen directly at the number on the poster or you can complete the attached registration sheet. Please indicate if you would like to avail of the childcare allowance also!



Details about SOOC at St. Catherine's!



Learn how life at home shapes our children!

A short course for mums, dads, grandparents, guardians and carers of young children. And it's **FREE**



- Information on child social and emotional development
- Understand how children develop self esteem and confidence
- Supporting children's understanding of others
- Communication skills and behavioural management
- Learning through play - interactive play day with kids (Day 4)
- Diversity - understand how biases and prejudices are shaped

For parents /grandparents /guardians / carers of young children

Venue: St Catherine's Primary School, (Junior Site)
Date: Tuesday 25th Feb, 3rd, 24th, 31st March & 7th April
Time: 6:30pm-9:30pm (meal provided)
Generous Childcare allowance (if needed)
Contact school to book your place

The project is supported by the EU's
PEACE IV Programme managed by the
Special EU / Community Body

Peace 
Northern Ireland - Ireland

 Special EU Programme Body
Peace for Children: Special EU / Community Body
Special EU / Community Body

Speech Feis

Gentle reminder: Speech Feis begins on Thursday 27th February and will close on Monday 2nd March. Children will receive their entry cards with all the competition details in due course. If anyone is unsure about the arrangements please have a wee word with your child's teacher who will be only too happy to clarify.

Staff will be supporting children in school by practicing the poems with them in class. Please assist them at home also!

The whole idea of participating in Speech Feis is to allow children the chance to build resilience and overcome anxiety when it comes to speaking in front of others...the more they do this, the more accustomed to it they get and the more confidence they can build over time!

Past pupils have reported that as a result of entering and preparing for Feis they felt better able to speak in front of an audience and felt better equipped in life even as far as to say they could get on better with job interviews etc as they were able to overcome the "butterflies in their tummies!".

We are so proud of all their children and their talents/ strengths. Regardless of independent adjudicators, every child who has entered will receive a certificate from our school to celebrate their participation.

Let the Speech Feis begin!!



Safer Internet Day

11th February 2020

Theme: Together for a better Internet

Social media and the internet is in so many ways a wonderful resource, however it can be a real source of worry to parents and to ourselves here in school.

Frequently we are delivering the message to our students and staff advising them how to stay safe when using the internet or the many different social media sites they like to use. We encourage them to think, spot and speak out if they feel compromised in anyway about something they have seen, heard or read, or have been subject to via the internet.

During Anti-Bullying Week in November, All State and Reim Training Services delivered excellent Internet Safety Workshops to our Year 5, 6 and 7 pupils. These workshops were excellent and it was wonderful to witness how articulate our pupils were when speaking about their online experiences, and how the vast majority of them had a good understanding of how to stay safe online, and indeed how to behave online.

Despite this however, we are concerned about the increase in issues we are facing on a daily basis with regards to children using Messenger Aps, Social Media and Gaming. Children are engaging in group chats and whilst these chats can be used in a very positive way, they are also providing a channel for negativity, nastiness and bullying. At times, negativity is intended, and at other times, negativity can be perceived by the reader of the message- causing a whole array of issues which make their way into school and impact adversely on our pupils' learning.

As a school, we are also noticing so many adverse effects of over-use and misuse of the internet. We are witnessing a decrease in children's ability to focus, obsessions with behaviours of YouTubers and influencers and a worrying decline in children's mental health as a result of things they have seen online which they are simply too young to understand.

With this in mind, we would strongly urge parents to take action with regards to your child's online activity. The school can only educate them and monitor them whilst they are in our care. We have no control of their online behaviour when they are at home- that is entirely down to the parents and carers.

Please monitor their online activity regularly, limit their access to the internet especially during the week, speak openly about the chats that they engage in online and the groups that they participate in, do not allow them to access games or social media that is rated above their age to protect their own well being.

On Tuesday 11th February, our school will be participating in Safer Internet Day 2020. We will be using the Safer Internet campaign toolkit 'Free to be Me: Exploring Online Identity'. We will also be creating our own video which will explore what the internet means to our children.

As well as information on our school website, below are some really useful websites that give advice and guidance for parents.

If you feel in any way we can offer you or your child any further support please do not hesitate to contact us, and if you would like to share these resources with other parents / carers please do so.

More information regarding online safety can be found at:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

www.internetmatters.org

www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-andresources/parents-and-carers

www.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety

www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>



**Safer
Internet
Day 2020** | Tuesday
11 February
Together for a better internet
www.saferinternetday.org



Year 7 Confirmation

Preparing children for the sacrament of Confirmation is a shared responsibility and we feel that it is vitally important that you are invited to become involved from the very beginning. Confirmation marks a time for children when they are preparing to move from one stage of their lives to the next. You as parents will have many fears and concerns about how your children will cope in the coming years with the choices they will have to make. Through your involvement in your child's Confirmation, you are being offered the chance to discuss with them their values, attitudes and beliefs. We want to reassure you of the important role you play in developing your child's faith.

Here are some practical ways to get involved:

- Bring your child to Mass on a Saturday evening/Sunday morning with the rest of your family.
- Help your child to learn the prayers which are being taught in school and discuss the Confirmation work they are doing in class.
- As a family light a candle and say a prayer each day with your child in preparation for Confirmation.
- Read together the story of Pentecost and talk about how the Apostles felt before and after receiving the Holy Spirit.
- Talk about your child's Baptism and Holy Communion – when and where they took place, who was there etc.
- Attend Masses and any special liturgies which are organised in connection with Confirmation.
- Help your child choose a suitable Confirmation name. If he or she chooses the name of a saint or family member, talk about the person whose name they have taken.

Confirmation Liturgy Team

Enkindling the Spirit

Saturday 11 January 2020
6.30pm Mass

Moved by the Spirit

Sunday 9 February 2020
10.00am Mass

Called by Name

Sunday 1 March 2020
12.00 noon Mass

Confirmation Retreat

Wednesday 4 March 2020
10am – 12.00 noon

Confirmation Practice

Tuesday 10 March 2020
7.00pm

Confirmation

Thursday 12 March
5pm
Bishop Donal McKeown



Year 4 Do This In Memory Programme

As you are aware our Year 4 Pupils and families will be celebrating the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on Saturday 30th May at 11am in the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

Every year our pupils and parents take part in the fabulous "Do This in Memory" Programme which helps prepare the pupils and their families for the big day in May!

PLEASE NOTE:

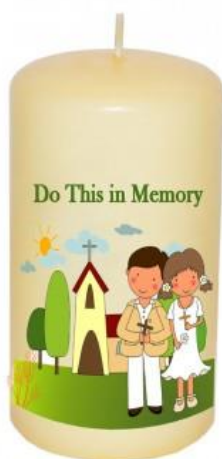
This term the main focus in Religion for P4 will be on preparing your child for receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. Your child will be working from a workbook called *Celebrate*. The cost to parents of this book is £3.50. We respectfully ask that this is sent in as soon as possible so that we can begin to use them. It would be appreciated if all monies could be brought in before 14th February.

Many thanks

Year Four Team

The dates for the masses for the Do This in Memory Programme are as below. We look forward to seeing all our Year 4 Pupils and Families at these very special masses.

DATES OF THE SUNDAYS OF DO THIS IN MEMORY 2019-2020



Enrolment Sunday
Sunday, 24 November 2019
Feast of Christ King
12.00pm

Saturday, 14 December 2019
3rd Sunday of Advent
6.30pm

Sunday, 26 January 2020
3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
10.00am

Sunday, 8 March 2020
2nd Sunday of Lent
12.00pm

Sunday, 5 April 2020
Palm Sunday
10.00am

Sunday, 26 April 2020
3rd Sunday of Easter
12.00pm

Saturday, 13 June 2020
Feast of Corpus Christi
6.30pm

Chinese New Year Celebration

As you are aware, we are very blessed to have Chinese Tutors who teach Mandarin Chinese Language and Culture to all our children from Years 1 -7.

We were the first school in Strabane to be able to facilitate this teaching and we are very proud of the fact that this gives our little children an exposure to Global Learning that they otherwise might not be able to get!

Every year we celebrate the Chinese New Year. Each Chinese New Year is dedicated to an animal. This year the Chinese People are celebrating the Year of the RAT!

This animal is seen as a sign of wealth and surplus in Chinese Culture! Rats are perceived as clever, quick thinkers; successful but content with living a quiet and peaceful life! In our culture we might differ a little in our way of thinking!!

To mark this New Year we have a celebration with Senior Pupils in our school. This year the New Year Celebration will take place on **Monday 2nd March at 10am in the Senior School Assembly Hall!** Everyone is welcome! We also invite our Year 7 Pupils from last year back to receive certificates for their Mandarin Chinese Language Assessment that they completed at the end of Year 7. This is called their YCT 1 Assessment. We are very proud of these children and celebrate their bilingualism.



SOOC Programme Registration

Iparent/guardian of

.....(Pupil Name)

Class Teacher

Would like to register for the SOOC Programme with the first session beginning on Tuesday 25th February from 6.30pm-9.30pm (Meal Provided).

I will also need childcare and would like to claim the generous childcare allowance. Yes ☐

No

☐

Signed: _____

Sink or Swim Programme

Families Together



SINK OR SWIM

FREE 6 Week Programme for Parents & Carers

Do you sometimes struggle with parenting? Are some days better than others? Many parents feel exactly the same way!

Sink or Swim explores the realities of parenting, while sharing tips & tools on how to look after your own mental health.

Starts Monday 24th February 2020
St Catherine's PS Strabane
Junior Site
11 am - 1 pm

* Running every Monday 11 am - 1 pm for 6 weeks
All parents & carers welcome.
Refreshments will be provided.

To register call us freephone
0808 8010 722 or visit parentingni.org



ParentingNI



COMMUNITY
FUND

Important Choir Information



Dear Parents/ Carers,

We are delighted to say that our Senior School Choir has grown SIGNIFICANTLY since the announcement of Mary Poppins Jr.

As a result, we have had to revise our Choir Rehearsal Schedule once again!

Our main choir group will continue to practice every Wednesday, but this will be during the school day (2pm – 3pm).

I am however, asking for the soloists and small group singers for Mary Poppins to stay with me for extra rehearsals every Wednesday 3pm – 4pm. The ‘after-school’ children are as follows:

Eoin McCrossan

JD Gormley

Ronan Christie

Brodie McGillion

Lexie Clift

Madison Earley

Zoey Healy

Farrah Stewart

Lola-Mae McKane

Katie Leonard

Rebecca McAdams

Brooke Peoples

Leah Deans

Ciara Brown

Conor Cooke

Zac Hanlon

Caitlin Nelson

Ava Gillam

Oran McGavigan

Erin Duffy

Callum Brennan

Larissa Arkinson

Chloe Gallagher

Charlie McBride-Keyes

Kate McGranaghan

Kayla Moore



St. Catherine's Nursery & Primary School

February 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1.
2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
Autism Awareness Week: Be a Superhero!						→
	Extended Schools: Year 1 Yoga Year 6 Soccer Club 2-3pm SS Year 6 & 7 Netball 3- 4pm JS	P7 Shared Education 3.	P1 Health Checks Nursery GRTL Big Bedtime Read. Extended Schools: Year 3 Irish Dancing	P1 Health Checks Cancer NI workshops: SS Nursery, P5 – P7 Extended Schools: Year 7 Soccer Club 3-4pm JS	Cancer NI workshops: JS P1 – P4 Superheroes Dress up day. Half Day. All children go home at 12.45pm Admissions documents to be brought to first preference school Nursery & P1.	
9. Confirmation Preparation Mass: Moved by the Spirit. 10am	10. Derry Council Health Promotion Talks: Years 5 & 6. Extended Schools: Year 1 Yoga Year 6 Soccer Club 2-3pm SS Year 6 & 7 Netball 3- 4pm JS	11. Safer Internet Day.	12. Nursery GRTL happy Healthy Kids. Extended Schools: Year 3 Irish Dancing	13. Extended Schools: Year 7 Soccer Club 3-4pm JS	14.	15.
16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.
Mid Term Break						→
23.	24. Extended Schools: Year 1 Yoga Year 6 Soccer Club 2-3pm SS Year 6 & 7 Netball 3- 4pm JS	25. SOOC Programme JS Week 1 6.30pm – 9.00pm	26. Nursery GRTL Ages and Stages. Catherine Wegwarmer Coaching programme @ 10.30 am JS Extended Schools: Year 3 Irish Dancing	27. Speech Feis Extended Schools: Year 7 Soccer Club 3-4pm JS	28.	29.

Happiness is being among friends.

