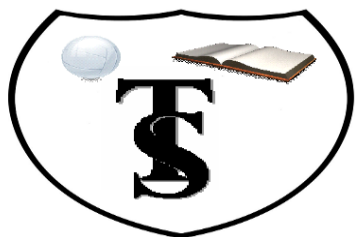


St. Teresa's Primary School



60, Tullyherron Road, Mountnorris. Co. Armagh BT60 2UF

PRINCIPAL: Mrs. Sinead Mc Court

Tel: 028 37 507397

Fax: 028 37 507397

Email: info@stteresas.tullyherron.ni.sch.uk

Website: www.stteresastullyherron.com

Dear Parents,

9th September 2021

A big welcome back to everyone, I hope you all had a very enjoyable and relaxing Summer. A special welcome to all our new pupils entering the Reception and Primary One classes this year. I hope that we will all continue to work together to ensure that all the children feel safe, secure and happy in school.

After consulting the Department of Education's most recent COVID guidance we have agreed to continue with most of the arrangements that were in place at the end of the last school year. The guidance has recommended that educational settings are no longer required to operate a system of formal protective bubbles, this has allowed us some flexibility with our daily school routines. All adults will be encouraged to socially distance on and around school grounds and we continue to ask that you wear a face covering whilst on school grounds. We feel it is in all our interests to continue with the arrangements that worked so well last year in reducing the COVID transmission rates in our school. It is vitally important that we continue to be vigilant in light of the current infections rates.

The Department of Education's guidance outlines the latest isolation periods which have been updated from 16th August. Children will only be required to isolate if they have tested positive for COVID19 or are displaying COVID symptoms. Close contact isolation periods have now changed and children are now asked to take a PCR test if they have been identified as a close contact. If they test negative and are not displaying any COVID symptoms they may return to school.

I have attached a summary of this information which outlines current isolation periods and a flowchart has also been posted on our website, regarding close contacts for your information (further information is available on: www.nidirect.gov.uk).

In line with our safety-first approach, if your child is unwell, we would advise that you keep them off school until they feel better. I realise that this will present challenges to families, but I feel it is in the best interests of the whole school community if we can reduce transmissions of illnesses in the school. It is vitally important that if your child(ren) displays any symptoms of COVID19 (continuous cough, high temperature, loss of smell/taste) they MUST not attend school or travel on school transport. If a child displays COVID19 symptoms in school we will isolate the child in a designated area (child will be supervised by an adult) and contact parents. You must then follow PHA guidance. Please ensure that your contact details are up to date and you have plans in place to deal with such an event. Hopefully this does not occur but it is better to be prepared.

Please keep the school informed by a telephone call on the first day of absence and regularly thereafter. If a child arrives in school and is ill, parents will need to be contacted to take their child home.

It will be very important that we continue to work in partnership to ensure that we respond appropriately to positive cases and close contacts.

A list of our school holidays and closures for 2021-2022 are included in this Newsletter as well as some of our procedures and routines for this school year.

Payments to School Secretary

In order to maximise the safety of everyone in our school community and to limit footfall and a potential spread of the virus, we request that all money which needs to be paid for School dinners/Afterschool should be placed in an envelope each Monday morning and sent in to School with your child. Please put details of money enclosed on the outside of envelope.

Home School Links

In order to maintain our good home-school links, should any parent wish to speak to a member of staff, we encourage you to contact our School Secretary Nicola who will arrange for your child's teacher to contact you. Nicola is in the office every morning from 8.30am to 9.30am.

I would like to remind parents to visit our school website www.stteresaspstullyherron.com to keep up to date with news items, relevant documents and events. We also encourage parents to download the school app (details can be found on the website) so you can receive updates throughout the year.

We are continuing to use the Seesaw App this year, it is very important that parents scan the Family Code and Home Learning Codes that were sent home on Monday 6th September. This will ensure you are connected to your child's new Seesaw Account for the coming academic year.

This year we are inviting Local Businesses to sponsor our school website to help with our school funding and to purchase some new ICT resources. The Local Business will donate £50 and we will include your Business Name on the ticker tape at the top of our School Website Homepage for one year. We will provide you with a letter of receipt which you can include for your accounts.

Thank you to our parents Caitrona Loughran and Pauline Ward who sponsored our School Website last year.

School Dinners

School Dinners have been available from Wednesday 1st September for pupils entitled to Free School meals and other pupils who wish to avail of them, the cost is £2.60. A Dinner Menu will be displayed on our School Website each month and a copy will be given to all pupils who regularly take a school dinner. This year pupils will eat their school dinner in the Dining Room seated in their class groupings. Children will eat their lunch in a nominated classroom in their class groupings.

As we promote Healthy Living children may only bring in fruit for Break-Time, fruits such as, Grapes and Strawberries should be cut into small pieces and only water must be contained in the water bottles.

As we have a pupil who suffers from a specific food allergy we request that that our pupils do not to take any food containing Nuts or a Nut product for snacks or lunch into school.

Information, advice and online application forms for free school meals, school transport and uniform grants for 2021/22 are available on the Education Authority website (www.eani.org.uk).

It is very important that you register your child(ren) for free school meals even if they take lunch as the school receives extra funding from the Department of Education for children who are eligible for free school meals.

School Uniforms

All our pupils are looking extremely smart in their new school uniforms, we request that pupils wear their school PE tracksuit on Monday, Tuesday and Friday and their full-School uniform on Wednesday and Thursday. All children must wear plain black footwear (shoes or runners) with their Full- School uniform, girls should wear bottle green socks or tights and children are permitted to wear their own coloured runners with their P.E. uniform. A school coat should be brought into school.

Please label your child's uniform-sweatshirts, jumpers or cardigans.

Homework Routines

Our Class Teachers will begin setting Homework Tasks from Monday 13th September.

We very much encourage all our pupils to read every evening and to revise Literacy and Maths Facts especially High Frequency Words, Times-Tables/Number Bonds etc.

As with previous years we will be utilising some online learning forums such as Mathletics and Accelerated Reading for pupils to complete as part of their homework routines.

Reception/Primary 1/Primary 2 Afterschool Club

This Afterschool Club is an excellent facility for parents and pupils as it enables one pick-up at 2.35pm or the Primary 1 and 2 pupils maybe eligible to travel home on the school bus. It is also a good social opportunity for pupils to engage and play with their class peers and develop friendships.

This Club commenced on **Monday 6th September 2020** for Reception, Primary 1 and Primary 2 pupils from 1.35pm to 2.35pm. For Primary 1 and Primary 2 pupils it will cost **£2.50** per day, **£12.50** for the week. For Reception pupils it will cost **£3.00** per day, **£15.00** weekly, as they will remain in school from 1.00pm to 2.35pm. We do not receive any funding from the Department of Education to provide this service to parents and if there are only a few children attending the Afterschool it is difficult for us to finance, it will only continue for the rest of this school year depending on pupil numbers attending. Further information will follow at the end of September.

Drop off and Collection Routines

The School Bus will be arriving at the school in the morning at **8.20am**. In order to give the children travelling on the bus adequate time to enter the school premises and to stagger arrival times we would like children travelling by car to arrive at school from **8.30am- 8.45am**.

Punctuality will be key to ensure that this system is effective.

Primary 3 – Primary 7 children must be left at the school gate where the children will be met by a member of staff.

Reception, Primary 1 and Primary 2 children may be escorted to the Foundation Classroom Entrance where they will be met by members of staff. Adults entering school premises must wear a face mask. An older sibling may also accompany their younger brother or sister to the classroom.

The School Bus will be leaving school in the afternoon at **2.20pm**. Children who travel by car should be collected between **2.25pm – 2.35pm**. It is strongly recommended by DE advice that all pupils should wear a face covering while travelling on the School bus.

Please again adhere to social distancing guidelines at these collection times.

Traffic Management

To ensure the safety of pupils, parents, staff and vehicles, parents and carers can help us achieve this by adhering to the following guidance:

- **Park away from the school entrance.**
- **Do not stop in the middle of the road to drop off or collect your child/children.**
- **Do not exceed the school speed limit of 5mph when either moving off or passing the school during drop off or collection times.**

Instrumental Lessons

We are extremely fortunate to be able to provide musical tuition to our Primary 3 to Primary 7 pupils this year. Pupils may receive tuition from a specialised Music Teacher and learn to play either the Violin or the Guitar during weekly music lessons and work towards a music qualification. The lessons are an addition to the curriculum so will include a cost for the year. If you would like your child to begin or continue these lessons in the next school year please contact Mrs Mc Court by **Friday 10th September**.

Healthy Kidz and Relax Kidz

Healthy Kidz Coaching will continue to be provided this year to all pupils by Mark Mc Kinley each Tuesday, **commencing on Tuesday 7th September to Tuesday 19th October**. The cost is **£1.50** per child per session and **all 7 weeks need to be paid up front via the following link:**

<https://healthy-kidz.com/product/healthy-kidz-pe-at-st-teresas-ps-tullyherron/>

Families with more than 2 children in school to receive a unique discount code which is: **48XZC3F4**

We will also be introducing the **Relax Kidz** programme to all pupils commencing in October 2021, further information will follow.

Both the Healthy Kidz and Relax Kidz programmes will contribute greatly to the Health, Well-Being and development of Resilience in our pupils during this school year.

I would like to thank you for your commitment and support in ensuring a safe return to school for our pupils and staff. We will continue to review the situation, be flexible with our approaches and learn as we go forward as we endeavour to deliver high standards in all that we do. As we begin another school year we do so with much excitement but also with some apprehension. We hope the children will be able to experience a full year of face to face teaching and create lots of joyful memories.

Yours Faithfully, Sinead Mc Court

Below is list of the School Holidays and other dates for this School Year 2021-2022:

Flu Vaccination	Monday 4 th October, All Parent Consent Forms need to be returned by Friday 1st October 2021.
Halloween Fun Day	Friday 22 nd October - Pupils wear their Halloween Costumes and each class will have Halloween Fun Activities
Halloween Holidays	Monday 25 th October - Tuesday 2 nd November 2021 (Inclusive)
Christmas Holidays	Begin on Tuesday 21 st December @ 10.30 am - Wednesday 4 th January 2022 (Inclusive) School re-opens on Thursday 6 th January
Mid-Term Break	Tuesday 15 th February - Friday 18 th February 2022 (Inclusive) School re-opens on Monday 21 st February 2022
St. Patrick's Celebrations	Thursday 17 th March and Friday 18 th March 2022 School re-opens on Monday 21 st March 2022
Easter Holidays	Begin on Holy Thursday 14 th April @ 10.30 am - Friday 22 nd April 2021 (Inclusive) School re-opens on Monday 25 th April 2022
1 st May Bank Holiday & 2 nd Bank Holiday	Monday 2 nd and Tuesday 3 rd May 2022 & Thursday 2 nd & Friday 3 rd June 2022

