**February Diary Dates:**

**We would like to remind all parents and guardians that the school will be closed to pupils on the following dates 13th, 14th, 17th and 18th of February for Staff Development and Mid-Term Break.**

Always remember that a copy of this newsletter can be downloaded from our website [www.steugenesps.com](http://www.steugenesps.com) at any time. We encourage our parents, grandparents and extended families to like and follow our Facebook and Twitter accounts to be kept up to date with all our exciting news at St Eugene’s PS.

Newsletter 06

February 2020

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| **Fri**  **7th** | Road Safety Workshops with Ronan from Sustrans |
| **Wed**  **12th** | Intergenerational Workshop with Gloria Perry.  Yang Sue delivering Chinese New Year Workshops to P3-7. |
| **Thurs**  **13th** | Staff Development Day – **SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS** |
| **Fri**  **14th** | Staff Development Day – **SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS** |
| **Mon 17th & Tues 18th** | **MID-TERM BREAK** |
| **Wed 19th** | Friends of St Eugene’s Meeting at 7pm. |
| **Thurs**  **20th** | P1-3 Shared Education Event at St Patrick’s PS Newtownstewart. |
| **Mon 24th** | School Photographer at 9.30am |
| **Wed 26th** | P6/7 Forest School Trip to Bangor |
| **Sat 29th** | Confirmation in St Theresa’s Church, Sion Mills |

**ADMISSIONS TO RECEPTION AND PRIMARY ONE**

We are delighted with the number of applications we have received for 2020/2021. A gentle reminder to those that have applied to bring your child’s birth certificate to the school on or before Friday 7th of February. If you or someone you know has missed the deadline for making an application, it is not too late to apply. Our Admissions Criteria and Prospectus can be downloaded from our website [www.steugenesps.com](http://www.steugenesps.com) or alternatively contact the school to arrange a visit. Parents/Guardians will be notified of their child’s place on the 28th of April 2020.

**ADMISSIONS TO POST-PRIMARY FOR P7 CHILDREN**

Parents of children in P7 recently completed their Transfer Form to apply for a Post-Primary School place. These forms are now with the Education Authority and Parents/Guardians will be notified of their child’s place on the 30th of May 2020.

**GRANDPARENTS’/CATHOLIC SCHOOLS’ WEEK ASSEMBLY**

Thank you to those of you who joined with us in celebration of Catholic Schools’ Week on Friday 31st of January – our thanks most especially to our Grandparents, whom we were particularly celebrating. The Assembly was a lovely occasion for our school community and we hope that all of you who attended had an enjoyable morning.

**INTERGENERATIONAL WORKSHOP WITH GLORIA PERRY**

Those participating in the Intergenerational Sculpture Workshop with Gloria Perry will now have all received an information letter about the event. If you have not returned your reply slip, we urge you to do so as soon as possible, as Gloria needs to know the information about the adults attending in order to prepare the base for the sculpture. Adults attending – please don’t forget your white t-shirts required for the art work!!!

**CONFIRMATION**

Our Primary Seven children are busy preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Confirmation will take place this year in St Theresa’s Church, Sion Mills on Saturday 29th of February at 11am. A letter will go home with our P7 children in due course outlining the arrangements for their special day.

**FRIENDS OF ST EUGENE’S COFFEE MORNING**

The F.O.S.E will be meeting again on Wednesday 19th of February at 7pm. This meeting will be to make arrangements for their next event. The Friends of St Eugene’s are organising a Mad Hatter’s Coffee Morning on Saturday 7th of March between 11am and 1pm. The event is to raise money for our school and we would love to see as many members of our school community there as possible. So far this year F.O.S.E have used the money that they have raised to buy equipment to improve Wi-Fi within the school for our pupils, to provide hospitality at the opening of the Trim Trail, to buy cups, mugs and saucers for the school to use at events and over the mid-term break they will be paying to have our school hall repainted. The Coffee Morning will be a great opportunity to see our freshly painted hall and enjoy a cuppa and craic with our community. Further details will follow from the group.

**AFTER SCHOOL PROVISION**

We are delighted to see so many of our boys and girls enjoying our After School Clubs. Please find the timetable below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2:15 – 3:15PM** | **3:15 – 4:15PM** |
| **MONDAY** | **2:15 CLUB**  *P1 – P2* | **FILM CLUB** *P3 – P7* |
| **TUESDAY** | **GAME SKILLS** ***P1 – P3*** | **GAME SKILLS** *P4 – P7* |
| **WEDNESDAY** | **2:15 CLUB** *P1 – P2* | **DRAMA CLUB** *P3 – P7* |
| **THURSDAY** | **2:15 CLUB**  *P1 – P2* | **ART CLUB** *P3 – P7* |

Pupils staying for Game Skills with Robbie on Tuesday afternoons will need PE gear to take part, the first session will run from 2:15 – 3:15 for pupils in P1-P3 and the second session will run from 3:15 – 4:15 for pupils in P4 –P7.

**PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO DRAMA CLUB NEXT WEDNESDAY 12TH OF FEBRUARY.**

**PERIMETER FENCING**

You may have seen on social media that our perimeter fencing is now complete. We are very pleased with the work carried out and it is always lovely to see improvements being made to our school. This project was paid for by the Department of Education. We are currently in the process of having secure outdoor bin storage constructed – this work is also being carried out on behalf of the Department of Education and is at no cost to the school.

**SHARED EDUCATION**

P1-3 will continue to meet with their friends from St Patrick’s PS and Newtownstewart Model PS on a monthly basis. The next session for P1-3 will take place on 20/02/2020 and will this time be held at St Patrick’s PS. P6/7 will begin their project with a Forest School Trip to the Clandeboye Estate in Bangor on Wednesday 26th of February, a letter about this trip will be sent out in due course. We are aware that this clashes with the Intergenerational Celebration Event in Sion Mills and we are currently working on a solution to the situation.

**RELAX KIDS**

Our younger boys and girls have started a new programme of Relax Kids with Shannon each Wednesday. All pupils in our school will benefit from these sessions, our older children will commence sessions later in the term. Relax Kids teaches our children about confidence and calmness – essential life skills. We thank the McHale Foundation for providing the funding for this programme.

**SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER**

The photographer will be in school on Monday 24th of February at 9.30am. If you have a younger child at home and would like to have them photographed with their sibling, please arrive for 9.30am and the photographer will do their best to accommodate you.

**EMERGENCY CLOSURES**

We are now in that period of the year when snow can become a factor in school. Should any adverse weather (such as heavy snowfall) impact upon the school then a decision to open or close will be made by considering these factors…

Can pupils and staff access the school building safely? Can pupils and staff be evacuated in an emergency? In an emergency, could the Emergency Services access the school? Is the area designated for disembarkation from transport safe for pupils? Are there enough members of staff able to make it to work for a suitable pupil: teacher ratio?

Such decisions are not taken lightly and we inform you our parents as soon as we have made an adequate assessment of the situation. We will continue to use social media to keep parents informed if closures are necessary.

**ATTENDANCE**

PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS: A morning phone call to the school office is required if your child will be absent. A note is then required for the class teacher on your child’s return to explain the reason for absence. Please note that arriving in late (after registration closes) is recorded as an absence for that session of the day**.** We urge all parents to avoid being left in a situation in which an absence is recorded as ‘unexplained’. Holidays should not be planned during Term time as these will also be recorded as unapproved absences. The EWO (Education Welfare Officer) is able to access our Attendance Data and will make contact with parents of children who have unexplained/unapproved absences or poor attendance.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 100% attendance | 0 days missed | Excellent |
| 95% attendance | 9 days of absence = 1 week and 4 days of learning missed. | Satisfactory |
| 90% attendance | 19 days of absence = 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed. | Poor |
| 85% attendance | 28 days of absence = 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed. | Very Poor |
| 80% attendance | 38 days of absence = 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed. | Unacceptable |

**SAFEGUARDING PUPILS AND STAFF**

Parents are reminded that we operate a safe handover policy at our green pedestrian gates in the morning, we appreciate your co-operation with this policy. If you need to visit our school office to pay a bill or make an enquiry you should use the bottom buzzer and wait for Mrs Gallagher to grant access. Parents must not proceed beyond the office unless invited to do so by a member of staff, this is for your safety as much as the safety of our children.

We would like to remind parents that it is best to make an appointment to see your child’s teacher by telephone if you have any concerns, as it is not always possible to accommodate a meeting on the spot.

**HEAD LICE**

This is a reminder to check your child’s hair on a weekly basis for head lice. While head lice are an annoying problem, it is not a danger to your child’s health, so there is no need to panic. When a case has been confirmed, it becomes very important for you to check your family for lice immediately and treat as appropriate. Please know that anyone and everyone can get lice. Getting lice has nothing to do with whether you are clean or dirty, rich or poor, it only has to do with the fact that you are human. In an average school year, more children will “contract” lice than the common cold. If you find any live lice or eggs, it is absolutely necessary to treat each “infected” person, and notify the school so that we can effectively and confidentially monitor the situation*.* These outbreaks end much more quickly when there is proper communication between parents and school.

**NUT AND COCONUT FREE SCHOOL**

You will be aware that we have a child in school with a severe allergy to nuts and coconut. This child can suffer a life threatening reaction if he comes into contact with these products or someone else who has consumed these products. We have a duty of care to safeguard this child and we ask for your full co-operation with this matter. **Nuts or coconut or products containing nut or coconut must not be sent into school**. In the event that these items are found in a child’s possession, we will have to send them home unopened. We ask that parents exercise extreme caution when packing lunch boxes and snacks. We are always very appreciative of items sent into school for staff but please be aware that we can no longer accept food gifts such as chocolates or home baking that contain these products.

**FURTHER GUIDANCE ON NUT AND COCONUT**

* All those that work, visit and are educated at St Eugene’s PS must avoid bringing items that contain peanuts, almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, brazil nuts, cashew nuts and/or pistachios to our school.
* It is essential that no items containing coconut are brought on to the school premises this includes coconut milk, coconut water, creamed coconut or desiccated coconut.
* Coconut can be used as an ingredient in baking, ice cream, breakfast cereals and confectionary and we ask that all members of our school community examine food labels carefully.
* Coconut oil is used in baking and cooking. It is cold-pressed, and therefore unrefined, it should be avoided by people allergic to coconut and those around anyone with an allergy.
* Oil and extracts of coconut are used in some cosmetics and toiletries especially in soaps, hand gels, shampoos and hair conditioners. The risk posed by these products is unknown as far as we know, however, we ask our school community to be vigilant about using products containing coconut oil/extracts prior to coming on to the school premises.