******CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF EDUCATION AT ST EUGENE’S PS.**

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.

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**REMOTE LEARNING**

You will be aware that our Minister for Education has announced that schools will continue to operate remotely until at least the 8th of March. Please remember that our January Staff Development Day has now been moved to Friday 12th of February, which is the Friday before the mid-term break. This means that there will be no remote learning provided on this day. Pupils will also benefit from a ‘catch-up day’ on Thursday the 11th of February. It is hoped that children can finish off any outstanding work on this day and go into the mid-term break free from school work. We recognise that the children and indeed the grown-ups are exhausted at this point and we encourage you to take a full break from school work over mid-term in order to re-energise for the second half of the term, which begins on Monday 22nd of February.

At St Eugene’s PS, we know that a flexible approach is necessary to best support you, our parents and carers at home. Whilst ideally we would like children to log into their Seesaw accounts each morning ready to receive their daily tasks and instructions from teachers in school, we realise that this is not always practical for parents and carers at home. You may need to submit work after hours or at weekends and this is perfectly okay with us, work will be marked and feedback will be given when the teacher is next online, during school hours. We remind you that you can only do your best. If you find you are experiencing difficulties please contact your child’s teacher, who will do their very best to help and support you.

We thank you for an amazing month of remote learning, we now have 100% online pupil engagement, which is incredible. We are so proud of you all and everything that you have achieved. One thing this pandemic has taught us, is how important our circle of learning is and how we all play a part in the education of our children. We have seen first-hand the importance of working together to achieve the best for our children

Our Remote Learning Policy is available on our school website for reference: [www.steugenesps.com/files](http://www.steugenesps.com/files)

**WELL-BEING WEDNESDAY AND FREE CHOICE FRIDAY**

Our well-being initiatives have had a great response and we will continue to use these in our weekly schedule. On well-being Wednesdays children are invited to check in live with their teacher and see their friends online. On Friday mornings our live assemblies are a great way for the children to see others from across the school and celebrate the weekly achievements, birthdays and much more. Free-Choice Fridays encourage our boys and girls to pursue another interest away from the screen on Friday afternoons and provide much needed respite for parents and pupils alike.

**HOME LEARNING PACKS**

A few parents have expressed the wish for hard copies of some of the activities that we upload to Seesaw, with some finding activities ‘fiddly’ on screen. We hope to have hard copies put together in packs and ready for collection for each of our classes on Friday 12th of February. Children should still log into Seesaw and be guided by their teacher, we hope that this will make things a little easier for you. A text will be issued when the packs are ready for collection.

**SUPERVISION FOR THE CHILDREN OF KEY WORKERS**

School remains open for the children of key workers and also those children who fall into the vulnerable category as determined by the DE. We are pleased to inform you that we no longer need to collect a weekly form from those already using this provision. We will assume that hours and days remain the same for you, if you need to make any adjustments or your circumstances change please contact Miss Gormley via email.

If you require the use of this emergency provision for the first time, we ask that you email Miss Gormley [lgormley873@c2kni.net](mailto:lgormley873@c2kni.net) by the Thursday of the previous week so that a form can be issued to you.

Whilst we are more than happy to support our key workers, we request that you follow the DE directive and only use this service if you have no other safe childcare. Numbers have been creeping up, with over 20% of our enrolment now attending, as numbers grow so too does the risk of transmission of Covid-19. Whilst we can take steps to reduce the risks, we do have to make you aware that it is impossible to make the provision covid-secure. Vulnerable children and children of key workers must attend school in their uniform and bring a mid-morning snack and packed lunch. The EA is issuing payment to parents of children in receipt of Free School Meals. Please do not send your child for supervision if they are in any way unwell, if our keyworker bubble bursts this could result in no in-school supervision being possible for a period of 10 days.

**ADMISSIONS TO P1 AND RECEPTION**

The online Admissions Portal has now closed for children due to start Reception or P1 in 2021/2022. We thank all those who have applied and we are delighted to have received 19 first place applications. With 11 children leaving us from P7 in June, it is a great sign that parents are continuing to choose St Eugene’s PS for their child’s education. If you know of any families new to the area or anyone who has missed the deadline, please do encourage them to make contact with the school.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK & GRANDPARENTS DAY**

Thank you to everyone who took part in our celebrations last week. A special word of thanks to Fr Canning for his beautiful Masses throughout the week and also to Bishop McKeown for his Mass and online engagement with our schools. We finished the week with a lovely celebration for our Grandparents on Friday. I am proud of how we managed to still make time to do this despite operating remotely and I thank the boys and girls for their contributions. The Grandparents video is available on your Seesaw accounts and also on our Facebook page.

**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION AND KEY DATES**

Fr Canning has decided to keep the date for the First Communion as 17th April, however, this is subject to Covid restrictions and may have to move into May or June. The First Confessions will be scheduled for a few weeks before and will be done much more informally this year, possibly taking place in school.

Fr Canning has communicated that he and Fr Doherty have provisionally set a date for Confirmation, Friday 4th of June 2021 at 5pm. This will be a much nicer time of year for the Sacrament and we hope that restrictions will have eased significantly by this point.

**REMOTE LEARNING SURVEY**

We have been engaging in monitoring and evaluations of our remote learning practice here at St Eugene’s PS and have submitted our case study to ETI. Part of this process involves us finding out more about what our parents and carers think about our remote learning. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond, we are delighted with your responses. It was an anxious week for our staff as they are all giving their very best and hoped that this would be recognised in the responses. I would like to share our findings with you…

The Survey covered P1 to P7 we had 46 out of a possible 59 responses.

* **44 out of 46 gave Seesaw 4 or 5 stars as our remote learning platform.**
* **43 parents felt their child was receiving the right amount of work, 2 parents felt it was too much and 1 parent felt it was too little.**
* **40/46 parents felt feedback from teachers was excellent, 5 felt it was very good and 1 parent felt it was good.**
* **36/46 felt their child had made progress during remote learning, with 8 parents unsure and 2 feeling their child hadn’t made progress.**
* **All parents indicated that their child enjoys feedback from the teachers the most, followed by: Free Choice Friday, Well-Being Wednesday, Morning Greeting, Live Friday Assembly, Studyladder, Learning new ICT skills, with Mathletics as 9th place.**

We asked you what was your biggest challenge: 80% of you found juggling home schooling with home life/ working to be your biggest challenge. 10% felt they had no challenges and other responses making up the final 10% included getting your child to concentrate, internet reliability and sharing devices. Our final question asked you what you would like to see in terms of remote learning going forward. We thank you for your feedback and take all your ideas on board. We would like to share these responses in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| P1/2 | * *I think you are all doing an excellent job. The work is marked so fast, and to leave a personal voice message on every pupil’s work, I think is fantastic. The children love hearing from you all and to see everyone on a Friday makes their day.* * *Thank you for everything.* * *I think it's fantastic* * *Overall we as a family cannot thank Miss Gormley and all her staff for making this process as easy and fun as possible for our children. The feedback is great and the continuation of topic work, spelling tests etc. have made this process as normal as possible. Thank you all for your continued help, support and dedication to our children every day including weekends! You are all superheroes!* * *No I think all the teachers are doing brilliantly to make this as simple and not as stressful for us and helping our children still learn* * *I think the staff are doing an excellent job at adapting to remote learning and are making every effort to stay engaged with pupils and parents. It is a stressful time for everyone but I do feel very much supported by St Eugene’s and the excellent leadership of Miss Gormley.* * *No St Eugene’s are going above and beyond for the children* * *The communication between the school and home is amazing and the feedback given for work submitted really makes the wee one’s day, they just love hearing from their teachers, thank you* * *Keep up everything that you are doing. The feedback means the world to us and the activities are fun and well-pitched. A perfect mix of the curriculum* * *I know this is hard for the staff and I think they are doing a wonderful job. I couldn't ask for much more.* * *As always St Eugene’s goes that extra mile and we appreciate it so much.* * *Free choice Friday is brilliant. It gives us a much needed break from the screen and some nice down time.* * *I think St Eugene's PS is doing more than a lot of other schools. I am very happy with the remote learning provision.* * *Keep up the great work. I can't think of anything St Eugene's PS could do better.* |
| P3/4/5 | * *Just thank you for making sure the children are able to learn from home.* * *I would like to say a massive thank you to Mrs Connolly. I had her tortured with questions about seesaw for a while and she answered them all quicker than expected. I would also like to see something on seesaw where I could comment on my child’s work. If this is available, I still have not discovered how to do it.* * *Feel stressed trying to catch up on work. I also feel blank is missing school so much and he is not getting the appropriate education from myself.* * *I would like "free Friday" to be just as it says, give the children & parents a complete break from screen time & activities on their devices on the Friday, jus have it as relax day because I feel it can be stressful working constantly on their devices all week, everyone needs a "days off" from screen time & more time to enjoy the great outdoors, or art, colouring, walking or even just family fun time spend after all hard work through the week.* * *I think the balance of each subject is just about right, if not slightly too much. I would prefer if the full day’s work was uploaded all together in the morning. I feel we are constantly checking seesaw in case any new activities are added. I also think the amount of screen time spent every day is worrying as some of the activity sheets have very small reading and writing on them. I like the idea of children being mentioned during Friday assembly for their hard work during the week and not only for Studyladder and Mathletics awards as sometimes it proves impossible to fit in these extra activities.* * *Thank you for everything. I really appreciate it!* * *I think video explanations/teaching on some topics particularly the new topics would be extremely helpful and motivating for pupils and maybe a live teaching session each week which could be recorded put on the journals for those who can’t attend.* * *Keep up the fantastic work. We all appreciate how hard it has been for all the staff at the school during these prolonged home schooling time periods. Thank you for all you do.* * *Everyone so supportive, kids love hearing the feedbacks,* * *I want to let Mrs Connolly and Mrs Preston know that the voice feedback is amazing. It means so much more than the written comments and really encourages us to keep working and keep doing our best. Thank you for this!* |
| P6/7 | * *Mr Gormley has been absolutely fantastic with my child, his daily feedback and recognition of her hard work and efforts has been brilliant. Mr Gormley is always available for any help required and is always quick to respond with constructive feedback and comments. Thank you for all your hard work making sure our children will be ready for their transition into Secondary Education.* * *No. I think the teachers are doing a great job with what they have to do. It must be difficult for them just and much as it is for us.* * *Mr Gormley has been excellent and always on hand with advice* * *Additional group teaching* * *The Collaborative Ultra platform requires an updated system on most of our devices which I cannot get and it also seems to have connection issues. Is there any possibility of using another platform such as Zoom?* * *You are all doing a great job and we all appreciate your efforts, dedication and endeavour. You should all be very proud of yourselves.* * *Honestly, I don't feel the teacher's at St. Eugene's can do much more under the circumstances.* * *Would like to see her read more. She is not interested in doing any. If I could get some actual reading books I think she might.* * *I feel there is a good variety of everything being covered. Thanks.* * *You are covering all areas of learning, I am satisfied that you are meeting my child’s needs educationally, physically and mentally! Thanks for as lol your hard work.* * *It’s all going swimmingly, much to my surprise. blank loves it. Will make suggestions as they come to us 🌈* * *Maybe a link for my daughter to have access to reading materials to suit her age.* * *St Eugene's are doing a great job during these difficult times. I am very happy with how quickly the remote learning was available to the children and the support from Mr Gormley.* |

As always we will keep you updated of any announcements and developments through our Seesaw App and text messaging service. Thank you again for your hard work and support. I hope that you and your family have a safe and happy half term break.

Stay Safe and God Bless

Laura Gormley