**January Diary Dates:**

The staff and Governors at St Eugene’s PS would like to wish all of our families and wider school community a very happy new year. We are delighted to see all of our pupils back at school safe, well and full of enthusiasm for the term ahead. It is just six weeks until mid-term break, but there is a lot happening in this time. Please pay particular attention to the diary dates for this half of term.

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 05

January 2020

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| **Tues**  **7th** | Admissions Portal opens on EA website for applications to Reception and P1. |
| **Wed**  **8th** | Swimming resumes for P5-7 and continues until the end of January. |
| **Thurs**  **9th** | Gaelic resumes for P6/7 with Fiachra McNulty. |
| **Fri**  **10th** | Holy Cross College visiting our P6/7 class. |
| **Wed**  **15th** | Stay and Play for prospective parents and children, 9.45 – 10.45am.  Friends of St Eugene’s Meeting at 7pm. |
| **Tues**  **21st** | Strabane Academy visiting our P6/7 class. |
| **Thurs**  **23rd** | P1-3 Shared Education Event at Newtownstewart Model PS. |
| **Sat**  **25th** | Transfer Test Results for P7 children. |
| **Thurs**  **30th** | Admission Portal closes on EA website for applications to Reception and P1. |
| **Fri**  **31st** | Post Primary Transfer Application meetings with Miss Gormley for P7 Parents. |
| **February:** | |
| **Sat**  **1st** | Service of Light in St Theresa’s Church, Sion Mills for our P7 children and their families. |
| **Thurs**  **13th and Fri 14th** | Staff Development Days – pupils do not attend. |
| **Mon 17th and Tues 18th** | School Closed for Mid-Term Break. Reopening on Wednesday 19th of February |

**ADMISSIONS TO RECEPTION AND PRIMARY ONE**

The online Admissions Portal is now open for children due to start Reception or P1 in 2020/2021. You can apply at any time up until 12 noon on Thursday 30th of January 2020. If you are experiencing difficulty you can **contact the EA Helpdesk on 028 9598 5595.** The EA are also running an Admissions Clinic to offer support with the online application, this takes place on Tuesday 14th of January between 10 am and 12 noon, in Strabane Library. We will also do our best to help you here at St Eugene’s PS and should you have any questions, please contact our school office.

**STAY AND PLAY FOR NEW CHILDREN**

We are delighted to be holding a Stay and Play event on Wednesday 15th of January from 9.45am – 10.45am. This event is for children due to start Reception or P1 in 2020/2021 and their parents. This is sure to be a great morning and is an excellent opportunity for you and your child to visit our school and meet with other parents and children. Staff will be on hand to answer any questions and offer support with the Admissions Portal if necessary. We look forward to welcoming you all. If you are aware of any parents this would apply to, please make them aware of this event and encourage them to contact the school.

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

Parents of children in P7 will soon be asked to complete a Transfer Form to apply for a Post-Primary School place. This form will be completed at a meeting with Miss Gormley on Friday 31st of January, you will soon receive an individual time slot for this meeting. The school must return the forms to EA by the 05/02/2020, therefore, it is extremely important that you attend this meeting. One of the local school’s Open Evening isn’t until 30/01/2020 this is why the date has been set for Friday 31st, however, if you are in a position to complete your Transfer Form prior to this date please indicate this when you receive your time slot and we will do our best to accommodate you.

**CHRISTMAS SHOW**

A separate letter of thanks has been sent out about our fabulous Christmas production of Shrek and the True Story of Christmas. Please check your child’s school bag if you have not received this letter.

**AFTER SCHOOL PROVISION**

We are delighted to be able to provide a range of after school clubs again this term, with the addition of a new Drama Club with Mr Gormley. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated teaching staff here at St Eugene’s, who are prepared to stay on after school and share their time, skills and talents with our boys and girls. The success of our clubs is also down to you, our children and parents, without your backing our clubs would simply not be viable. **The clubs will resume next Monday 13th of January**.

Pupils staying for Game Skills 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 find our After-School Club 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* |

**P1 AND P2 - 2.15 CLUB**

There has been a lot of confusion with this club over the past term with children and staff not knowing if pupils are due to stay on for the club or not. It is a good idea to keep your child in a routine and have set days to stay or stay on all days in order to avoid upset at home time. If your child does not regularly stay and you wish to avail of the club, please send a note inside your child’s homework diary so that staff are aware of your child’s plan for home time. We thank you for your support with this matter.

**TIN WHISTLE**

Tin Whistle with Mr Devine continues for P4-7 this term. The cost of this half-term is £6. Please ensure your child brings their tin-whistle to school every Tuesday.

**MILK**

Milk will cost £11.20 from now until the end of March. If your child has been taking milk and no longer wants it this term, it is important that you let Mrs Gallagher know in order to avoid being charged for unwanted milk.

**SWIMMING**

The last swimming session for P5-7 will be Wednesday 29th of January. This will complete the 15-week block. Well done to our boys and girls for all their great efforts at the pool so far!

**GAELIC COACHING**

Gaelic coaching will resume for P3/4 and P6/7. Children in P3/4 will need PE gear on Wednesday mornings for their weekly session with Ryan Mayse. P6/7 will need their PE gear on Thursday mornings for their weekly session with Fiachra McNulty.

**SHARED EDUCATION**

P4/5 have now completed their 30 hours of Shared Education and have enjoyed their sessions with our partner schools. It is the turn of our P6/7 children next, the teachers from these year groups at our 3 schools are busy planning and preparing, more details will follow before their sessions begin in March. 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 23/01/2020 and will this time be held at Newtownstewart Model PS.

**FRIENDS OF ST EUGENE’S PS (F.O.S.E)**

The F.O.S.E will be meeting again on Wednesday 15th of January at 7pm. The group has a number of exciting events lined up for 2020 and are always on the lookout for new members, if you or any member of our school community are interested in getting involved leave a message at the office with Mrs Gallagher and we will put you in touch with the group.

**EMERGENCY CLOSURES**

We are now entering that period in 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 |

**SERVICE OF LIGHT**

Fr Canning will lead our Primary Seven pupils and their parents in a service of light at Mass on Saturday 1st of February, in St Theresa’s Church, Sion Mills. This is an important part of the preparations for Confirmation and all Primary Seven pupils are expected to attend. Whilst this short service is primarily for P7 pupils and their parents, all members of the school community are welcome to attend.

**INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT**

Each year a number of our Primary Six children are invited to participate in a sculpture workshop with local artist Gloria Perry. This project is organised in conjunction with our cluster schools group which includes Sion Mills PS, St Theresa’s PS, Glebe and St Columba’s PS, Clady. This year the workshop will take place on Wednesday 12th of February from 9.30am – 3.00pm approximately. Places are limited to just six children, all of whom must be accompanied by a grandparent, aunt or uncle for the entire day, to create a sculpture under the guidance of Gloria. Those taking part will then be required to attend a celebration event in Sion Mills PS later in the month, to showcase their art work. If you would like your child to take part in the workshop and have guaranteed attendance from a grandparent, aunt or uncle please notify the school. In the event that more than six of our Primary Six children are interested we will have to select names at random.

**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.

**NUT AND COCONUT FREE SCHOOL**

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. We are currently preparing a comprehensive guide on allergies and this will be sent home to you in due course.

**STUDENT TEACHER**

We are delighted to welcome Miss Emer Mc Aleer to our school to complete her Teaching Practice. Emer is a third year Student at St Mary’s University College and has completed a one-day visit to the school already. She will visit us again on Friday 17th of January before commencing her eight-week placement in Primary One and Two on the 3rd of February. We look forward to having Emer in school and supporting her in any way that we can as she completes her Teacher Training.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND MID-TERM BREAK**

You will be aware from our Holiday list that the 13th and 14th of February have been allocated as Staff Development Days, please remember that the school is closed to pupils on these days. The Mid-Term Break is Monday 17th and Tuesday 18th of February. School will re-open to pupils on Wednesday 19th of February and the Breakfast Club will be available from 8.15am.