**November Diary Dates:**

We welcome all of our pupils, families and staff back from the Halloween break. We are now into the second half of this term and it is sure to be a busy one! Plenty of dates for your diary, including Sacramental Masses, the Official Opening of our Trim Trail, Shared Education events, Our Open Day and Christmas Show to name but a few.

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 03

November 2019

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| Wed  13th | Book Fair leaves St Eugene’s PS. |
| Fri  15th | P4/5 spend the day at Newtownstewart Model for Shared Education. |
| Sat  16th | Enrolment Mass for P4 children and their parents – St Theresa’s Church @ 6.30pm. |
| Mon  18th | Mr Gormley joins our staff as our new P6/7 teacher. |
| Wed  20th | Official Opening of the Trim Trail. |
| Fri  22nd | P4/5 spend the day at Newtownstewart Model for Shared Education. |
| Thurs  28th | St Eugene’s PS host partner schools and their staff for a day of Learning Through Play.  Cyber Safety Workshop for KS2. |
| Sat  30th | Mass in St Theresa’s Church Sion Mills for P7 children due to be confirmed this year. |

**ANTI-BULLYING WEEK**

This week is Anti-Bullying Week. Throughout the week we will be educating our pupils that by making small, simple changes, we can break this cycle and create a safe environment for everyone, where everyone is heard. The theme this year is ‘CHANGE STARTS WITH US’. We ask that parents reinforce this message at home and remind their child/children to speak out and stand up for what is right. Please remember that each of our classrooms has a worry/thought box for children who want to bring an issue to the attention of an adult in a more discreet way.

**SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR**

The Scholastic Book Fair is currently in school and will be leaving again on Wednesday morning. The Book Fair always provides a wonderful selection of books for pupils at keen prices and might interest parents, especially with Christmas approaching. An information leaflet was sent home last week and pupils have already had a chance to browse the books available (set up in the hall). If you would like to purchase a book, you can send money in a clearly marked envelope to school with your child. Details of when the Book Fair is open to parents or anyone in the wider school community for purchasing have been posted on Social Media. Remember that the school will benefit from a % of the intake which we can then use to get reading materials for our pupils so any purchase made is supporting our school and pupils.

**MASS IN ST THERESA’S CHURCH, SION MILLS**

Fr Canning has arranged a number of special Masses in St Theresa’s Church, Sion Mills, for the children who will be receiving the Sacraments this year. The first of these Masses is for our Primary Four children and their parents on Saturday 16th of November at 6.30pm. The second Mass is for Primary Seven children and their parents on Saturday 30th of November at 6.30pm. Fr Canning is expecting all children in these classes to attend.

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF OUR TRIM TRAIL**

The Board of Governors at St Eugene’s PS, Victoria Bridge would like to invite all parents and families to the official opening of our fabulous Trim Trail at 2pm in the School Hall on Wednesday 20th of November. You will be aware that Mr Gallagher secured the funding for this equipment and that it is only fitting that he will be welcomed back on this day of celebration. F.O.S.E will provide the hospitality at the event and you will receive your special invitation this week, please respond asap so that we have the correct numbers for catering.

**AFTER SCHOOLS PROGRAMME**

We are delighted with the response to our after-school provision. We now have clubs running every day after school, this is all thanks to our fantastic staff who are offering these clubs in addition to the curriculum. Miss Gormley would like to thank the staff for their commitment especially during this time of Industrial Action with the Teaching Unions, when after-school clubs are no longer common practice. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated teaching staff here at St Eugene’s PS, Victoria Bridge. The success of our clubs is also down to you, our children and parents, without your backing our clubs would simply not be viable and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have shown. *Please note that our last Fitness Club with Mr Donnelly will be this Wednesday 13th of November*. We will let you know when a new club is confirmed for Wednesday afternoons.

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* | **FITNESS CLUB** *P3 – P7*  *(Last Class this Wednesday 13th)* |
| **THURSDAY** | **2:15 CLUB**  *P1 – P2* | **ART CLUB** *P3 – P7* |
| **FRIDAY** | **LET’S PLAY** *P1 – P3* |  |

**GAELIC COACHING**

Fiachra McNulty and Ryan Mayse continue to deliver Gaelic Coaching to our KS1 and KS2 classes. The coaching sessions take place every Wednesday (P3/4) and Thursday (P6/7) and PE Gear is required. These sessions are part of our PE curriculum and should only be missed under medical advice.

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

F.O.S.E met on Wednesday 6th of November and are delighted to welcome all new members to the group. The group has a number of exciting events lined up for 2019/2020 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. The F.O.S.E will be meeting again on Wednesday 15th of January. A letter will go out to all members this week to organise the Christmas Hamper which will be raffled in December.

**SHARED EDUCATION**

Shared Education is now in full swing for 2019/2020 and our children are reaping the rewards of this fantastic programme. Mrs Connolly’s P4/5 have been enjoying their weekly sessions at Newtownstewart Model PS. On Thursday 28th of November St Eugene’s PS will welcome our Partner Schools for a day of LEARNING THROUGH PLAY all children and staff in P1-3 will be involved in what is sure to be a very exciting event. On Monday 25th of November Mr Gormley will engage in a shared planning day with all P6/7 staff in our partner schools. The Shared Education events for P6/7 will begin in Term 2.

**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.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 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 |

***We appreciate that children do fall ill and it is not always possible to be at school every day, particularly in cases of vomiting and diarrhoea when you must wait 48 hours after the LAST EPISODE before sending your child back to school. We would like to make parents aware that we have had a number of children off ill with a vomiting bug. If your child complains of pains in the stomach or feeling unwell we ask that you keep your child at home as a precaution. We are a small school and have a duty of care to protect other children and staff from viruses, one sick child can have a huge impact on our school.***

**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.

**OPEN DAY 2019**

Do you know of any pupils in the local area who are perhaps old enough for Reception Class (children who have turned 4 since 2nd July 2019 or due to turn 4 soon), or any pupils currently at nursery or Playgroup and due to begin school next September?

The time for pupils to apply for places in Primary School is approaching soon. We would appeal to you to please let any parents know about our fantastic school and/or ask them to get in touch to arrange a visit and meet the staff and pupils. Or – let us know about any pupils who may be considering St Eugene’s for their child.

We will be holding an Open Day for prospective children and their parents on Wednesday 4th of December 2019. This is always a great way to showcase our school. We will be writing to parents soon to ask for your help in preparing for this event.

**CHRISTMAS SHOW**

You will be aware that the date for our Christmas Show is Tuesday 10th of December 2019. We will have two performances on this day, one at 10am and one at 7pm. Pupils will go home at 12.30pm in order to allow for preparations for the evening show. Rehearsals for our show will begin next week and we will let you know when tickets will be available. If you would like to donate a prize for our Christmas Raffle this would be much appreciated. Prizes can be dropped into our school office at any time.

**ELECTION CLOSURE**

Our school will be closed on Thursday 12th of December as the building will be used as a Polling Station for the Westminster Elections. This closure is completely out of our hands and is not an event that we had planned for, particularly given that this is the third time this year that Northern Ireland voters will go to the polls. School will be open as normal on the next day, Friday 13th of December when we will have our annual Christmas Dinner.

**PANTOMIME TRIP TO DERRY**

Thank you to everyone who has returned their permission slip and £10 for our trip to Snow White at the Millennium Theatre, Derry. This is required in order to secure the booking for your child. If you have not returned yours yet, please send this in with your child as soon as possible, as the cut-off date is fast approaching.

**LIBRARY VAN**

Due to essential maintenance the next date that the Library Van will visit our school is Wednesday 4th of December 2019. Please remember that this service is for the entire community and not just those connected with the school.

**IN THE COMMUNITY**

We are so fortunate to have two thriving Community Groups on our doorstep. Keep up to date with all events from our community groups on social media. Here are just some of the events happening in Victoria Bridge and Douglas Bridge this month…

**Victoria Bridge:**

* Stay and Play - Tuesday Mornings @ 10am.

**Douglas Bridge:**

* Stay and Play – Thursday Mornings @ 10.30am.
* The Yarners (Christmas Crafts) – Wednesday Mornings @ 11.00am.
* Christmas Shopping Trip – Wednesday 23rd of November.