**October Diary Dates:**

It is hard to believe that we have completed our first month back at school. We are so proud of how well our children have settled and of the progress they are making. I would like to thank the entire school community for making my first month as Principal such an enjoyable one. The support I have received has been so encouraging! Thank you to everyone who attended our Welcome Assembly, it was a lovely way to mark the beginning of a new school year. 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. Please note our holiday list is on the back of this Newsletter.

Newsletter 02

October 2019

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| Tues8th | After School Game Skills with Lisa from DCSDC begins: P1-3 & P4-7. |
| Fri11th | First Let’s Play session begins with Miss Cooke, P1-3 @ 2:15pm.  |
| Fri11th  | P4/5 Shared Education trip to Walls of Derry and the Tower Museum.  |
| Fri18th  | P4/5 first Shared Education session at Newtownstewart Model PS.  |
| Wed23rd | Miss Gormley holding Parent-Teacher interviews for P1/2.  |
| Thurs24th  | KS2 Gaelic Team will attend Blitz at St Theresa’s PS, Glebe. Halloween Fancy Dress. |
| Fri25th  | **SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS**Mr Donnelly & Mrs Connolly holding Parent- Teacher interviews for P3-7.INTERVIEWS FOR P6/7 TEACHER. |

**PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS 2019**

Teachers will be meeting with parents this month for our annual Parent-Teacher interviews. It is vital that you attend to discuss your child’s progress at school and any concerns that there may be. Miss Gormley will meet with Parents/Guardians of children in P1 and P2 on Wednesday 23rd of October. Mrs Connolly and Mr Donnelly will meet with Parents of children in P3 – P7 on Friday 25th of October. **Please note that the school will be closed to pupils on the 25th as this is an Exceptional Closure date**. Mrs Gallagher will be taking bookings for Parent – Teacher interviews from tomorrow Tuesday 8th of October, please contact the school office to book your time slot.

**HALLOWEEN BREAK**

The last day at school for pupils during this half of the term will be Thursday 24th of October. Pupils will be off school on Friday the 25th of October for an Exceptional Closure, they will remain off school the following week for mid-term break and will return on Monday 4th of November. We hope that our families will have a safe and relaxing break from school.

**HALLOWEEN FANCY DRESS EVENT**

Children are asked to attend school on Thursday 24th of October in Halloween fancy dress. Those children attending the Gaelic Blitz in St Theresa’s PS should bring their costume to school to change into for the festivities, which will begin at lunch time. We ask that no ‘weapons’ are sent to school such as pretend knives or guns and we encourage parents to be mindful of ‘sinister costumes’ by making sure that your child’s fancy dress is age appropriate.

**LET’S PLAY PROGRAMME**

Parents of children in P1-3 will have received information about our Let’s Play programme with Miss Cooke. This is a great new initiative running within the school which aims to develop Language and Literacy as well as Mathematical skills through play. The programme will run on Friday afternoons between 2.15 and 3.15, with the added advantage of enabling our younger children to avail of the bus on a Friday and it also means that parents of older children no longer have to do a double pick-up on a Friday afternoon. Please return reply slips to book your child’s place.

**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. Tomorrow, Tuesday 8th of October will be the first GAMES SKILLS CLUB with Lisa from Derry City & Strabane District Council. This club is paid for using our Extended Schools budget and we encourage all pupils to attend. Pupils 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* | **FITNESS CLUB** *P3 – P7* |
| **THURSDAY** | **2:15 CLUB**  *P1 – P2* | **ART CLUB** *P3 – P7* |
| **FRIDAY** | **LET’S PLAY** *P1 – P3* |  |

**GAELIC COACHING**

We are fortunate to welcome Fiachra McNulty back to school this year to deliver Gaelic Coaching to our P6/7 class. The coaching sessions take place every Thursday morning and PE Gear is required. These sessions are part of our PE curriculum and should only be missed under medical advice.

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

St Eugene’s PS is very fortunate to have such a dedicated team of Governors who work tirelessly behind the scenes to manage our school and ensure that our children’s interests are always at the heart of any decisions that are made. Last week Miss Cliona Brennan was elected as our new Teacher Representative. You will recall that in our September Newsletter you were informed that there is a vacancy for a **Parent Representative** on our Board of Governors. Elections for our Parent Representative will take place later this month, time is running out! If you are interested, please let Miss Gormley know so that your name can be registered for the Ballot process.

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

F.O.S.E 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 later this month.

**SHARED EDUCATION**

In September Miss Gormley met with the Principals of our Partner Schools for Shared Education to finalise plans for 19/20. Our teachers have been busy engaging in shared planning sessions with the staff from St Patrick’s PS, Newtownstewart and The Model PS, Newtownstewart to develop programmes for this year. P4/5 will have their first trip on Friday 11th of October to the Walls of Derry & Tower Museum. P1-3 will have their trip in the next number of weeks and P6/7 will begin their Shared Education Programme in Term 2.

**VOLUNTEERING AT ST EUGENE’S PS**

We are delighted to welcome volunteers to our school to enhance the experience of our pupils. This month we welcome past pupil of the school Mr Ryan Gillespie who will offer in-class support to P6/7. We also welcome Ms Dolores Loughrey who has recently retired from her role as Director of Primary Education at the University of Ulster, Dolores brings her wealth of knowledge to St Eugene’s PS, where she will offer Literacy support to a number of our pupils. We are delighted to welcome back our previous Principal Ms Bridget Devine again this year, Ms Devine will offer in-class support to children in P3/4/5. Finally, we welcome Miss Esther Cooke to facilitate our Let’s Play Programme. We are absolutely thrilled to have the support of these adults in our school, who will make such a difference to the education and experiences of our pupils. If you or someone you know has a talent that you think may be useful to our pupils, please do get in touch to discuss this with Miss Gormley.

**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 |

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.

**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.

**BEST WISHES TO OUR ‘SOON TO BE MRS MCDERMOTT’**

Many of you will be aware that our P1/2 Teacher, Miss Cliona Brennan will be getting married on Saturday 2nd of November 2019. I am sure you will all agree that she will be the most stunning Bride. We would like to wish her every happiness in her marriage to Mr Malachy McDermott. When we welcome her back after our Mid-Term break she will be Mrs Cliona McDermott.

**IN THE COMMUNITY**

We are so fortunate to have two thriving Community Groups on our doorstep. Have a look at what is going on in Victoria Bridge and Douglas Bridge this month…

**Victoria Bridge:** Stay and Play - Tuesday Mornings @ 10am. Children’s Halloween Disco – Friday 25th October 7 – 8.30pm

**Douglas Bridge:** Stay and Play – Friday 11th @ 10.30am. Quiz Night @ the Sportsman’s Inn – Friday 11th @ 8pm.

Douglas Bridge Community Group are also in the GREEN TOKENS SCHEME AT ASDA. When doing your shop please ask for a green token for Douglas Bridge.

**HOLIDAY LIST 2019/2020**

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| **FRIDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2019** | **EXCEPTIONAL CLOSURE****PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS** |
| **MONDAY 28TH OCTOBER – FRIDAY 1ST NOVEMBER 2019 (inclusive)** | **MID-TERM BREAK** |
| **FRIDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2019 @ 12:30** | **END OF TERM****CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS** |
| **MONDAY 6TH OF JANUARY 2020** | **STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY****(SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS)** |
| **TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY 2020** | **SCHOOL REOPENS TO PUPILS AFTER CHRISTMAS BREAK** |
| **THURSDAY 13TH & FRIDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2020** | **STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS****(SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS)** |
| **MONDAY 17TH & TUESDAY18TH FEBRUARY 2020**  | **MID-TERM BREAK** |
| **TUESDAY 17TH MARCH 2020** | **SCHOOL CLOSED FOR ST PATRICK’S DAY** |
| **WEDNESDAY 8TH APRIL 2020 @ 12:30** | **END OF TERM FOR PUPILS****EASTER HOLIDAYS** |
| **THURSDAY 9TH APRIL 2020**  | **STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY****(SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS)** |
| **MONDAY 20TH APRIL 2020** | **SCHOOL REOPENS TO PUPILS AFTER EASTER BREAK** |
| **FRIDAY 8TH MAY 2020** | **SCHOOL CLOSED****MAY DAY HOLIDAY**  |
| **MONDAY 25TH MAY 2020** | **EXCEPTIONAL CLOSURE****REPORT WRITING** |
| **TUESDAY 30TH JUNE 2020 @ 12:30**  | **END OF TERM****SUMMER BREAK** |
| **PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE ONE FURTHER DATE TO SCHEDULE FOR STAFF TRAINING.**  |

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

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| **TUESDAY 10TH OF DECEMBER 2020** | **CHRISTMAS SHOWS AT 10AM AND 7PM** ***PLEASE NOTE PUPILS WILL GO HOME AT LUNCH TIME ON THIS DATE.*** |
| **SATURDAY 29TH OF FEBRUARY 2020** | **CONFIRMATION (P7)** |
| **WEDNESDAY 11TH OF MARCH 2020** |  **FIRST CONFESSION (P4)** |
| **SATURDAY 9TH OF MAY 2020** | **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION (P4)** |