

Welcome to our first Newsletter of the academic year 2020/2021. This year we return to school under very different circumstances, but despite this I am sure you will all agree that everyone is very glad to be back. I wish to thank you for your continued support as we navigate our ‘new normal’ and extend my thanks to the entire school community for the success of our full return throughout last week. Remember that the reopening document is still available on our school website, should you need to consult it as we move forward. Remember that a copy of this newsletter can also be downloaded from our school 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 up to date with all our exciting news at St Eugene’s PS.

Newsletter 01

September 2020

**ARRIVING EARLY AT SCHOOL**

The Breakfast Club is an excellent morning service and suits many of our working parents and also those parents who find it easier for their child to eat breakfast at school. We are delighted to be able to continue to offer our Breakfast Club each morning from 8.15am. The cost remains the same at £1 per day and the club is open to all children from Reception to P7.

To keep in line with COVID-19 restrictions and provide maximum safety for our children the Breakfast Club will be run within the protective bubbles this year. Children attending will enter the main building by the side door, have their temperature checked and then proceed to their individual classrooms where breakfast will be served.

There will be a selection of toast, pancakes, cereals and juice available with the last serving at 8.45am. Due to the service being provided in the classrooms it will not be possible to serve after 8.45am. Children arriving between 8.45am and 9am may use the service for supervision and the cost remains £1.

We ask that parents do not proceed beyond the pedestrian gate due to COVID-19 restrictions. Children will not be permitted into the building prior to 8.15am as staff will be arriving, sanitising and setting up for service.

**SCHOOL LUNCH**

Each family should now have received a copy of our new school lunch menu. If you have misplaced your copy and wish to consult the menu, you can view a copy online at [www.steuegenesps.com](http://www.steuegenesps.com). **School lunch is priced at £2.60 per day**. Children bringing their own packed lunch should bring a lunch box that can be wiped down each day, we encourage children to try to carry their lunch box and flask without the use of bags. Remember that fabric/canvas bags are unsuitable as the virus can survive on these type of surfaces for up to 72 hours.

**SCHOOL MILK**

School milk will be available from Monday 14th of September. If you would like your child to take milk, please send a clearly marked envelope with full payment to school on or **before Thursday 10th of September** so that Mrs Gallagher can place your order. The price of school milk from 14th of September until our Halloween break is £5.80.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Each class will have two sessions of physical education per week, this is on top of daily energetic outdoor play at break and lunch time. On PE days children should come to school wearing their compulsory PE uniform. PE uniform is a pale blue polo shirt and navy jog bottoms or leggings, your child should also bring a hooded top or jumper as well as their waterproof coat. Children should only wear laced trainers if they can tie them themselves. Please see the days that your child will need to wear PE uniform each week below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Miss Gormley’s Class | Tuesday and Thursday |
| Mrs Connolly’s Class | Wednesday and Friday |
| Mr Gormley’s Class | Tuesday and Thursday |

**HOMEWORK**

Homework will begin for all classes on Monday 14th of September. We will operate on a rotational basis of an ‘A’ and ‘B’ homework pack. Children will receive their homework pack for the week on a Monday and must not return it to school until the Friday morning, where it will be quarantined over the weekend. The following week the children will receive their ‘B’ pack and follow the same system. In the event of a class group having to isolate or a local lockdown we will be setting up an online learning platform for children to access remotely if required.

**MEDICATION**

****If your child requires medication during the school day, it is the duty of the Parent/Guardian to make sure:

* That it is *in date*
* That your *child’s name* is clearly marked on all items
* That it is in a *small ‘lunchbox’ type container with a secure/clip lid*, labelled with your child’s name
* That the *prescription label from the pharmacy* is visible on all items
* That you have enclosed a *signed, written note* clearly advising of dosage instruction.

NB – remember the school can only keep blue inhalers on the premises. All other colours must be kept at home. If these need to be administered during the school day, you must make arrangements to come to the school to do this. Please be aware that we cannot store or administer any non-prescription medication for safeguarding reasons.

**CREDIT UNION**

The Credit Union will continue to collect savings this year. Families wishing to join can obtain a registration form by telephoning Mrs Gallagher at the office. Savings will be collected from the school each Tuesday morning, beginning from Tuesday 15th of September.

**ATTENDANCE**

PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS: A morning phone call to the school office is required if your child will be absent. Due to Covid-19 restrictions a phone call will be sufficient this year, we do not require a note on return as DE guidance recommends limiting items being transferred between home and school.

We understand that children may be absent from school more than usual due to restrictions around Covid-19, children presenting with a new continuous cough, a temperature above 37.8, or loss of sense of taste and/or smell must not attend school until they have been tested and receive a negative result. Parents can obtain a test for their child by contacting the NHS 111. It is important to keep Miss Gormley informed if your child presents with symptoms so that she can advise you about returning to school. Please remember that we are following DE guidance and must continue to do so to protect our children and staff. Verbal abuse or refusing to comply will not be tolerated, we are a community which prides itself on mutual respect and must remember that ‘we all must do it, to get through it’. We thank you in advance for your co-operation during these difficult times.

In the event that your child or a member of your household tests positive you must inform the school straight away. Your details will be kept confidential and we will never name a child or member of staff to anyone other than the PHA. All members of our community will be notified of a positive case via text. Those who have been identified as being in contact with the infected person will receive guidance on what to do next, such as isolating and/or seeking a test.

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

Our P5 children will celebrate their First Holy Communion on Saturday 26th of September in St Theresa’s Church, Sion Mills, at 11am. The children must be in their seats by 10.45am at the very latest. Parents attending must wear a face covering whilst inside the Church unless medically exempt. Mrs Connolly will be working very hard with the children to make sure they are well prepared for the Sacrament. We wish the children the very best as they finally get to enjoy their special day.

Fr Canning has provided two provisional dates for children in our current P4 class who will receive the Sacrament during this academic year. The provisional date for First Confession is the 4th of February 2021 and the provisional date for First Communion is the 17th April 2021.

**THANK YOU**

We are incredibly lucky to be part of a community that supports our school so well. In June our Friends of St Eugene’s group purchased Café Scoop vouchers for our P7 leavers, these complimented the leaving gift bags so well, along with other kind offerings from some of our families within the school. These gifts were really well received and we thank you for your generosity.

The Victoria Bridge Community Group has donated a beautiful hamper to our staff for the staffroom containing some delicious treats and essentials such as tea and a selection of coffees. This was warmly welcomed on what is a difficult time too for staff adjusting to the new normal that we find ourselves in. The Community group have also kindly arranged for fruit deliveries for the next four weeks to be enjoyed by our boys and girls, this makes such a difference to the day of a child knowing the have a healthy snack to eat mid-morning.

**CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD BYES**

Firstly, we would like to offer our congratulations to Mrs McDermott who is expecting her first child with her husband Malachy in December, this is such lovely news and we are incredibly excited for her. Mrs McDermott intends to work on until early December before taking maternity leave, however, this could be subject to change at short notice. Given the current circumstances we ask parents to be particularly careful when sending children to school as Mrs McDermott is now classed as clinically vulnerable. Please also be on the lookout for signs of chicken pox, measles and slapped cheek as these can cause complications for both expecting mothers and their unborn child. If in doubt contact the office for advice.

Good-Bye and best wishes to Mrs Flanagan from our school canteen who has decided to retire. Mrs Flanagan has been part of our school staff for many years now and she will be sorely missed by both pupils and staff. We hope that she has a long and happy retirement and can enjoy the extra time now with her grandchildren.