

# SAINT COLUMBAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

## *February Newsletter 2020*

[www.stcolumbanspsbelcoo.com](http://www.stcolumbanspsbelcoo.com)

Twitter - @StColumbans76

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> February:	Walk to school
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February:	Internet Safety Day
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February:	Cumann na mBunscol Quiz
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February:	Grandparents Assembly
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> February:	School Closed
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February:	Parent Internet Safety talk
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March:	Primary 6 Information Session
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> March:	First Penance

**School Closures:** Monday 17<sup>th</sup> - Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February (mid term)

**Grandparents Assembly:** Our special Grandparents Assembly will take place on **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February at 10.00am.**

Grandparents are an integral part of all of our school community and play an ever more important role in handing on both knowledge and experience of faith to children, who are the key stakeholders in our Catholic schools.

Our assembly therefore will be an opportunity to thank Grandparents for all they do and also to remember those that are now with God in heaven. Children are asked to bring in a photograph of any Grandparent who has died.

I hope as many Grandparents as possible will join us and stay for a cup of tea afterwards.

**Safety:** We ask all to take extra care when dropping off and collecting children at the school. Please leave space for the Mullaghduin bus to pull in and for the Lattone bus to reverse into the school grounds. Please also be mindful of the speed limit outside the school.

**Internet Safety:** As a follow up the pupil internet safety talk last month we will hold an information session for parents of all pupils in the school. This will take place on **Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm**. Both talks will be provided by the PSNI.

As a follow up to this talk Charlie O'Connor has kindly agreed to provide practical advice to parents on monitoring ICT usage at home.

We encourage the parents of all pupils to attend this important evening.

**Policies:** At present we are reviewing our Anti Bullying and Positive Behaviour Policies. As part of this process we are consulting parents through the enclosed questionnaires.

**I ask that you fill this out and return to the school before Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020.**

A draft policy will be issued on the school website before a final approved policy is available later in the year.

**Primary 6:** A couple of parents from the Primary 6 class have contacted myself regarding the Transfer procedure next year. I feel more parents in the P.6 class may want information / clarification on this issue. Mrs Gallagher and myself will therefore provide an information session regarding the transfer procedure for Primary 6 parent.

This will take place on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at 4.00pm.

**Topics for February:** Primary 1 - Help! Emergency!  
Primary 2/3 - Antarctica (thanks for all the milk cartons. The igloo looks fantastic.  
Primary 4/5 - The Vikings  
Primary 6/7- Unsinkable

**Phone Numbers:** This is the time of year some people may have changed their phone. Please let the school know if your home, work or mobile telephone number has changed so we can update our records.

**Mathletics:** We encourage all pupils in Primary 2 – 7 to continue to log on regularly to Mathletics. Pupils should aim to achieve a certificate each week.  
A class competition will run from Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March. The best class will receive a prize. Average scores will be used so classes with smaller numbers are not disadvantaged.  
The winning class will receive a prize as will the individual pupil who achieves most points in this period.

**Accelerated Reader:** Many pupils in Primary 4, 5, 6 and 7 reached their target in AR last term receiving a token for a free hot chocolate in the Custom's House. There is only one week left before the end of this target period. There has been a big push within classes for all pupils to reach their target points, with a special reward given to the most successful class.  
An end of Term 1 audit revealed that 83.4% of our children raised their reading age from September 2019. The figures show that some children increased their reading age by 1 month to as much as 2 years and 4 months which is incredible!  
The statistics prove that the Accelerated Reading programme is a wonderful tool to help word recognition, word attack skills and their understanding of the written text. Well done to all our pupils and you as parents and guardians for encouraging our children to use the programme effectively with the positive outcomes being seen.

**Walk to School:** Our next designated walk to school morning is Friday the 7<sup>th</sup> February.  
We will meet at the bandstand at 8.40am and we encourage as many parents and pupils as possible to join us.

**Confirmation:** This will take place in St Mary's Church Arney on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 6.00pm.

- First Communion:** This will take place on Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> May in St Patrick's Church Holywell.  
First Penance is on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> March.
- Soccer:** Well done to our boys team who reached the county indoor soccer final recently in the Lakeland Forum.  
They were unlucky to lose the final 1-0
- Hair:** A case of head lice has been reported to me **today**. I ask that you please check your child's hair tonight and, if necessary, treat thoroughly with any lotion recommended by a chemist or doctor. Please check your child's hair on a regular basis.
- Swimming:** The Key Stage 2 Swimming Programme continues on Thursdays in the Lakeland Forum Enniskillen.
- Child Protection:** The Designated teacher for Child Protection is Mrs Martina Meehan. The Deputy Designated Teacher is Mrs Anne Murray.
- School Uniform:** It is important that each child comes to school neat and tidy. We are proud of our school uniform which reflects the individuality of our school and offers to all children a common form of dress.  
Full uniform includes school jumper, light blue polo shirt and a navy skirt or navy trousers.  
School uniform must be worn each day unless special clothing is required e.g. for field trip.
- School Visitors:** We would ask all visitors to the school to make appointments to see teachers either before the school day or after 3.10pm. Teachers are not permitted to leave their classes to speak to parents during the school day.

**Dinner:** The daily cost of school dinner is £2.60 per day (£13.00 per week). We would ask that money for the week be brought in on Mondays.

Free School Meals: Some children may be entitled to free meals. An application form may be obtained from the Education Authority Western Region, School Meals Department 1 Hospital Road, Omagh, Co Tyrone, BT79 OAW. Telephone (028 82 411411)

We are continuing to promote the Munch Box Challenge (a lunch Box initiative) during lunch time. We as a school are working together with the Health Promotion Department to promote healthy eating habits and improve oral health in children. Children taking lunch may bring one treat in their lunch box.

**Party invitations:** We ask that parents do not to send party invitations to school for circulation- this may cause distress to some children.

**Attendance:** The Department of Education is looking at attendance very closely at present. Good attendance is vital for every child. *'Every day matters.'*

We get a monthly report of all children's attendance.

**If a child's attendance falls below 85% we are obliged to refer them to our Educational Welfare Officer.**

If your child is absent please send a note or fill out the absence note in the homework diary. This is important as all absences must be coded on our system.

**All children who walk to school or travel by car should use the small pedestrian gate. We ask that you do not use the main gate in the interest of the health and safety of all.**

**I ask that in the interest of pupil safety P.1 and 2 parents collecting children at 2.00pm also use only the pedestrian gate.**

**Only staff cars should enter the school car park.**

Please do not park in the bus lay-by at the front of the school- this area is now clearly marked. Parking here presents a hazard for children boarding buses and prevents buses from pulling in.



*Indoor soccer team*