

HOLY TRINITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENTS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2019

EVENTS IN MARCH

Friday 15th March – Dress up in green for St. Patrick's Day.

School is closed Monday 18th March for St. Patrick's Day.

Tuesday 18th March: Internet Safety Session for Parents. 1-2pm KS2 Hall.

ST PATRICK'S DAY

Many classes are preparing for our patron saint's feast day by learning Irish songs and dances. Some children in P2 have even been learning some simple Irish phrases! We will be taking part in St Patrick's Day celebration on Friday 15th March in school.

CONFIRMATION

On Friday 15th February the pupils from P7 received the Sacrament of Confirmation in Holy Trinity Church. Bishop Farquhar led the ceremony and the pupils were also joined by their parents and teachers. The choir and soloists were also present to provide music to accompany the beautiful ceremony. They performed extremely well on the day and their contribution greatly enhanced the occasion. All of the pupils participated enthusiastically and behaved with reverence throughout.

ICT NEWS

Our March eSafety Code is 'Mind your mobile.'

The children will be talking about internet safety when using a phone.

Children should not bring a mobile phone to school.

CLEVER CODERS!

P5MH are learning to code using Scratch. They have started a 6 weeks programme with Business in the Community called 'Time To Code.' **Scratch** is a free programming language and online community where you can create your own interactive stories, games, and animations.

Why not have a look at Scratch and see what you think!

<https://scratch.mit.edu/>

HIVE HACKERS

We are very privileged once again this year to be involved in the PwC 'Hive Hackers' coding initiative which engages children in programming activities. The P7 pupils have been involved in a 7 week programme which develops the skills of Coding; Sequencing, Loops, Debugging, Binary, Game Making, Digital Footprint and Interactive Story Making. They are very excited about the awards ceremony in The Waterfront Hall on Thursday 28th March 2019.

FIRST PENANCE

The Primary 3 children had their First Penance Enrolment ceremony on Thursday 14th February in Holy Trinity Church. It was a lovely service and all the children participated fully in the prayers and songs. We are now preparing for, and eagerly looking forward to, their First Penance which takes place on Wednesday 20th March at 1pm in Holy Trinity Church. This is a special day for the Primary 3 children and all family members and friends are warmly invited to come along to the service.

BELFAST GIANTS

Our P7 classes have been working in conjunction with the Belfast Giants, as they have enjoyed listening to the Giants when they attended a talk on Healthy Eating.

All the Primary 7 classes will be attending a Belfast Giants game on Friday 8th March to show support when they compete against the Glasgow Clan.

CANCER FOCUS NI

Cancer Focus NI will be visiting our school on Thursday 7th March to deliver health programme talks to our pupils from

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P1 to P7. The programmes include the following cancer prevention messages: healthy eating, sun safety, exercise and smoking. They are delivered in a very colourful and child friendly manner. KS1 classes will take part in storytelling sessions and interactive games, while KS2 classes will develop their decision making skills and take part in quizzes to consolidate their learning.

PREPARATION FOR LENT

Many classes enjoyed making and eating pancakes on Pancake Tuesday in school. The children are learning social skills and independence, buttering their own pancakes, choosing toppings and eating socially with their friends.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our parents in advance for the very generous support throughout Lent for the many fundraising activities that will be happening in all of our classes. We have raised fantastic amounts in previous years in support of Trocaire and hope to be just as successful again this year.

BUG CLUB

Bug Club is an online reading programme which has been used by teachers and pupils for several years. It is a brilliant resource which the whole school is now making great use of. Here is a reminder of how to access it:

Type www.activelearnprimary.co.uk into your search engine. Each child has been given the relevant username and password. You will then be prompted to enter the school code which is tgpr.

P1 FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

Our Primary 1 pupils are currently enjoying a six-week Fundamental Skills programme taken by coaches from Belfast Community Development Sports Network. The purpose

of the programme is to help pupils develop skills and athleticism in a variety of games and activities. The pupils are thoroughly enjoying developing their talents and these skills are designed to be used in any athletic activity.

SALTO

Our Primary One children are extending their gymnastics programme taking turns to visit the world famous SALTO Gym in Lisburn where they receive expert tuition in using a variety of apparatus like the rings, ropes, beams and climbing frames. These visits to SALTO which commence in February, help our children develop their gross motor skills, their fundamental movement skills and their general co-ordination.

RIGHT OF THE MONTH

We have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. (Article 40)

RIGHTS RESPECTING BEHAVIOUR

We can respect each other's rights by treating others the way we would like to be treated and learning from our mistakes.

PARENTS' COURSES

Mr White is meeting with a representative from UNITE in the next week to organise the training that parents have requested.

Positive Parenting Course

A six week course on dealing with challenging behaviours is beginning in March. If you would like to take part please contact Mr White at the school as soon as possible.

Amazing Brains Parent Power Course

We recently had a parent course entitled 'Amazing Brains'. This course is designed to help parents to help their children realise their full potential in education. Here we share a few of the main themes from the course:

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- **Growth Mindset:**
Intelligence is not fixed at birth. With the right attitude, perseverance, encouragement, motivation, parental engagement etc all children can make fantastic progress. We don't say, '*I can't do it*'. We say, '*I can't do it yet*'. Our brains all have the capacity for growth.
- **Reward Effort:**
It is often the case that we praise a child for getting the answer correct or how smart they are but in order to keep a child motivated we need to reward or praise the effort they have put into a task.
- **Diet:**
Our brains need to be hydrated appropriately to be able to focus and learn. Energy drinks and sports drinks are high in sugar and caffeine. A can of an energy drink can contain double the caffeine of a cup of coffee. This leads to hyperactivity and sleep disturbance which has a detrimental effect on the ability to learn. Our brains need water.
- **Exercise:**
Recreational times are very important. In modern times with the increase in technology like smart phones and computer games children can spend many hours playing on computer screens. It is very important that children get enough exercise through sports and activities clubs, playing outside with friends and relatives etc. Such activities help children to build up peer friendships and promotes mental and physical wellbeing. It also helps to promote good sleep patterns.
- **Sleep/Rest:**
Sleep is vital for children to be able to concentrate and learn. The playing of computer games near to bedtime can

result in poor quality sleep and children being tired in the morning. It is important to have a good bedtime routine and that electronic devices are switched off.

ADVERSE WEATHER

Our aim is at all times to keep the school open. However, there are certain times which make this impossible. In the event of severe weather like a very heavy fall of snow it may not be possible to ensure the safety of our parents, staff and pupils. Should the school be unable to open we will follow these procedures:

- A decision will be made by 8:30am
- Text message to parents
- Posted on our school website and Twitter account

If the school should have to close due to unforeseen worsening conditions during the day parents will receive a text message and information will be sent to broadcast on local media for parents to collect children.

Review of Behaviour Policy

We are in the process of revising our Behaviour Policy and School Rules. In order to ensure all children understand the rules, I have met with all children to revise our rules. This uniform approach followed by all staff will lead to a more consistent approach to discipline throughout the school.

We would like to keep parents informed of our revised policy and would ask for their support to help their child follow the rules which are listed below. We ask for your assistance in ensuring all children come to school prepared for the school day- wearing full school uniform, arriving to class on time and with all homework completed and signed.

1. Children should not wear jewellery to school.

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2. Under health and safety, hooped earrings are not permitted.
3. PE uniform may only be worn on the day the children are having PE.
4. The correct PE uniform must be worn. The PE uniform consists of black tracksuit bottoms and grey polo shirt both of which bear the school logo. If parents are unable to obtain a PE uniform, children may wear **plain black tracksuit bottoms and plain grey polo shirt**. Children **are not** permitted to wear tracksuit bottoms or a polo shirt with stripes or labels e.g Nike or Adidas.
5. We would ask boys not to come to school with stripes or zigzags cut into their hair.
6. Mobile phones- under Department of Education Guidelines and school rules mobile phones are NOT permitted in school. On the rare occasion that a child needs a phone in school, then the child must bring a note from the parent and the phone will be left with Mrs Boyd and collected at the end of the day.
7. Mobile phones- any child who brings a phone to school and uses it in school to take photos or post on social media, their parent will be contacted.
8. Children must be respectful to staff, others and school property.
9. Children should not have a social media, Instagram or Snapchat accounts but we are aware that the majority of children in KS2 do have these. We would ask parents to monitor their accounts to ensure their child does not make inappropriate comments online. We would urge parents to closely monitor all on line activity and also reduce the amount of time children spend on gaming

sites such as Fortnite as research has shown that mood changes, increase in aggressiveness, reduction in concentration and attention, changes in personality etc coincide with time spent playing violent and fast action games.

Some of the consequences for not following the rules may include lunchtime detention and for more serious offences we will contact parents and ask them to take their child home.

There will also be incentives and rewards

1. Weekly lining up prizes for the class who lines up best at lunchtime.
2. A movie afternoon for the class who has the most lining up points each half term.
3. One child from each class will be selected to have hot chocolate with the Principal each week.
4. Introduction of a Prefect system.

The children in Holy Trinity are a credit to the staff and parents and I am always very proud of them but the revision of the Positive Behaviour Policy and the clear guidelines with regard to rules and consequences will help children take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour and will lead to improved behaviour, increased teaching time and a happier school community.