

Message from the Principal

With the summer holidays fast approaching it is timely to acknowledge the support and generosity of so many throughout the year.

Sincere thanks are once again extended to Mrs Sweeney for producing our Newslink and keeping us up to date with termly copies.

To you, our parents, and indeed to everyone who has supported our school family, I offer my warmest thanks for your co-operation and kindness.

Our pupils have continued to shine and grow and we are immensely proud of all their achievements. To our P7 pupils, we bid a poignant farewell as they prepare to embark on a new journey. We wish them every success and happiness in their new schools.

Finally, special mention must go to Mr Battersby, our Vice-Principal and close friend, who after thirty-three years of dedicated service to St. John's, is retiring at the end of this academic year. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for his commitment, loyalty, humour and friendship and wish him a long, happy, healthy and fulfilling retirement.



Newslink

St John's P.S.
Gilford

End of Year Mass

We extend a warm welcome to all our families, friends and parishioners to join us on Tuesday 27th June at 10am in St. John's Church for our End of Year Mass. This is an important date on our calendar as we prepare to say farewell and to wish our P7 Leavers every success for their future. This year it will be more poignant as we say farewell to Mr Battersby. We hope to give thanks for the 33 years he has spent in St. John's.

Issue No 84
June 2017

With
Sympathy

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Mrs Campbell, mother of our cook Ms L. Campbell. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam uasal.

Annual Prize Giving

The Annual Prize Giving will take place on Monday 26th June at 10.15 am in the school assembly hall. Everyone welcome.



CLASS OF 2017

Miss McCooe and Mrs Grimley are looking forward to welcoming our new P1 pupils to St. John's on Wednesday 14th June at 2.15pm.

Healthy Break

Remember to provide your child with a healthy snack for the first day back in September.

Provision of fruit will begin on Tuesday 5th September. We are unable to process orders prior to this date.

Contact Details

Have you changed your phone number or moved house recently?

If so, please ensure our contacts are up to date.

Many Thanks.

School Holidays

School will close on Friday 30th June at noon and reopen for pupils on Friday 1st Sept 2017



First Holy Communion

Congratulations to all the P4 pupils who received their First Holy Communion on Saturday 27th May.

Special thanks to Mr King and Canon Powell who prepared the children to receive this sacrament.



Thanks also to Mrs Maria McConville, Mrs Sheila McConville and Mrs Cecilia Gallagher who served refreshments in the school after First Holy Communion. Our thanks also to everyone who contributed musically to the Mass, the school choir and musicians, under the direction of Mrs Power and Ms Pat McAlinden.

Thanks to everyone who helped make Sports' Day 2017 a great success.

Thanks to the ladies who provided refreshments throughout the day. Thanks also to Catherine McEvoy who caught the spirit of the day on camera. Visit the parish website to view Catherine's photos and also our school website to see many more photos of the day.

We would like also to thank everyone who came along to support and cheer on the children as this adds greatly to the atmosphere of the day. Thanks also to everyone who helped tidy up at the end of a very tiring day!

We were delighted to have the company of Mr Battersby's wife Mairead as Mr Battersby blew the whistle for the final time on Sports' Day in St. John's. **A final word of thanks to Mr Battersby for organising another successful and memorable Sports' Day.**



Thanks to the P7 parents who helped organise the Good Luck Banner for Mr Battersby.

Sports' Day 2017

On Friday 2nd June as Sports' Day dawned bright and sunny Mr Battersby arrived to school to prepare for his last Sports' Day in St. John's. By the time other staff arrived he had erected the gazebo and was armed with his megaphone, clipboard and whistle. All he needed now were the children! They began to arrive full of anticipation of the day that lay ahead and they were not disappointed.

The sun shone the whole day and the clouds passed overhead. Everyone participated with great spirit and the final runners were cheered over the finishing line by all the spectators.

P7 pupils along with Mr Battersby enjoyed their final lap of honour around the field to huge applause.

Farewell

We will miss Mr Battersby's expertise on Sports' Day especially for the P1 bean bag race!



P7 Retreat with Sr Mercedes

On Wednesday 31st May P7 pupils had the opportunity to spend a prayerful retreat day with Sr Mercedes Coen to reflect on their faith journey to date.



St. John's Fundraise for NSPCC

Many thanks to everyone who supported our fundraising venture for the NSPCC last term.

On Wednesday 24th May Lisa from NSPCC returned to St. John's to receive a cheque for **£514.50**.

This money will help to fund their **"Speak Out Stay Safe"** Programme.

Lisa was absolutely delighted with this fantastic amount of money and asked the children to convey her thanks on behalf of the NSPCC to everyone who sponsored them.



Transfer

Selecting the school that you trust to educate your child is a big responsibility and one that can weigh heavily on the shoulders of any parent. This year our P7 pupils will transfer to seven post primary schools. We wish them every success and look forward to hearing of great achievements in the future.

Abbey Grammar School Newry 1

Assumption Grammar School Ballynahinch 1

Lismore Comprehensive 1

Newbridge Integrated College 4

Sacred Heart Grammar School Newry 1

St. Patrick's College Banbridge 8

Tandragee JHS 1

Imagine
With all
your mind.
Believe
With all
your heart.
Achieve
With all
your might.

Best wishes to our
P7 pupils as they
prepare to transfer.

Attendance Awards

Congratulations to P7 who had the overall best attendance for the Spring term. Visit our website to see photos of all those pupils who had full attendance. Excellent attendance at school is important to allow children to fulfil their potential. We look forward to finding out which class will achieve best attendance for the Summer term so encourage your child to attend every day.



Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training Scheme 2017

This term saw the culmination of the **Practical Child Pedestrian Safety Training Scheme for 2016/17** with P3 pupils completing their training. P4 and P5 had undergone training in the autumn term. This programme gives our children the opportunity to gain and develop pedestrian skills, observe dangers and practise crossing roads safely by way of supervised training walks in their local area.

The programme is delivered in St. John's by class teachers with co-operation and support from DoE Road Safety Education Officers.

Congratulations to everyone who completed this training successfully. P3 children will be presented with their certificates at a whole school assembly before the end of term.





As another year draws to a close we would like to thank our school council for everything they did this year. They gave freely of their time to meet with Mrs Power to discuss a variety of ideas and views.



As we come to the end of another busy year, we would like to thank the Eco Council for helping us to recycle, reduce waste and save energy throughout the year.

Don't throw away anything that can be recycled!



As a result of all their efforts we are on our way to receiving a Silver Award.

Star of the Month Award

Congratulations to everyone who received this award during 2016/17. We were delighted to see so many worthy recipients in each class.

Visit our website www.stjohnspsgilford.com to view photos of all recipients.

School Uniform



"Uniforms give students a sense of belonging to a particular school and create an identity for the school in the community."

This is certainly the case for the children in St. John's as they wear their uniform with pride and leave a positive impression wherever they go. We take this opportunity to thank all our parents and guardians who ensure children come to school dressed so well daily.

Many parents like to have uniforms sorted before the summer holidays.

School ties and badges can be purchased from the school office. Ties cost £3 and badges cost £1.

Orders are now being taken for the school coat.

Extended Schools' News

Irish Dancing

Our dancers are busy at the moment preparing for the Annual School Dancing Festival which will take place in the school assembly hall on Friday 16th June at 9.30 am. Everyone welcome.

Choir

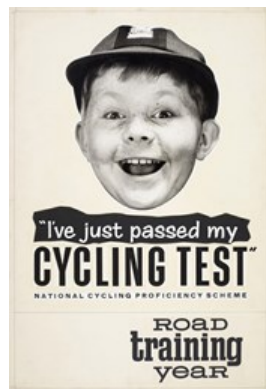
Choir practice takes place every Tuesday with choir mistress Mrs Power. Presently they are very busy practising for the End of Year Mass on 27th June.

Cycling Proficiency Training

For more than 60 years children have wobbled their way to their Cycling Proficiency certificate and now as more people are taking up cycling, there is a greater need than ever to ensure good cycling skills.

As cyclists are among the most vulnerable road users, early road safety education is crucial in keeping children safe on the roads. It helps develop their skills, increase their confidence as cyclists and identify risks they may come across on the roads.

Fourteen P6 and P7 pupils availed of the opportunity this year to receive training by participating in the **Cycling Proficiency Scheme** facilitated by Mr King and Mrs McConville. We wish the cyclists good luck as they prepare to take their test.



SHARED EDUCATION SIGNATURE PROJECT

Mrs Power has had another busy term coordinating the Shared Education Signature Project with Seagoe Primary School.



It was the turn of P3 and P4 to invite their peers to St. John's. Both classes enjoyed maths activities with pupils from Seagoe.

P1 and P2 travelled to Seagoe to participate in PD&MU lessons on friendship and feelings.



Then it was the turn of P1 and P2 from Seagoe to visit St. John's to enjoy playing in the Foundation outdoor play area. P1 were fortunate and enjoyed learning outdoors in the sunshine. Due to unfavourable weather conditions P2 had to remain indoors but enjoyed the experience of playing together. Visit our website stjohnspsgilford.com for more information and photographs.

EXTENDED SCHOOLS' CLUSTER

St. John's Celebrate Reading

On Friday 12th May a 'Celebration Day' was held to acknowledge everyone who took part in the **Grandparents' Reading Partnership Project** involving pupils in P1 - P3.

As children start to learn to read at school, parents and grandparents can play an important role in helping to keep them interested in books. This programme offers families the opportunity to do this. Grandparents can find out what interests their grandchildren, help them to find books that will be engaging and fun, and spend time reading the books they bring home from school together. **Visit our website to see photos www.stjohnspsgilford.com**

"Reading for pleasure is the single biggest factor in success later in life, outside of an education. Study after study has shown that those children who read for pleasure are the ones who are most likely to fulfil their ambitions. If your child reads, they will succeed - it's that simple."

Bali Rai

Healthy Break

Research shows that a healthy, balanced diet is linked with academic achievement. In fact, the absence of certain food groups or nutrients in a child's diet can negatively impact grades and attendance.



In St. John's we continue to provide fruit three days a week to help our pupils to establish the habit of making a healthy choice for break time.

Many thanks to our parents and guardians who reinforce this message by providing fruit in lieu of sugary snacks on Monday and Friday of each week.

Maths Club

Mrs Power was delighted with the attendance at the Maths Club this term. The children thoroughly enjoyed the activities.



Eco Club

The Eco Club members have been really busy weeding and planting. We are looking forward to enjoying vegetables and herbs before the end of term. They have also enhanced our outdoor area with the creation of a "fairy garden".



Their fundraising venture of selling sunflower seedlings proved very popular. The pots disappeared like hot cakes when they went on sale. The proceeds will help to fund future Eco Club projects. Many thanks to the Eco Council who supported the Eco Club in this venture.



Visit our website www.stjohnspsgilford.com for further details and photographs.

The Eco Club meets weekly and is facilitated by Mrs Grimley.

MUSIC TUITION IN ST. JOHN'S

We would like to thank Mrs McConville and Mrs Shanks, the EA Southern Region music tutors who provided weekly tuition to many of our pupils. Thanks also to Pat McAlinden who provided singing lessons.

Portadown Music Festival

Congratulations to everyone who participated in Portadown Music Festival.

Special congratulations to everyone who won certificates and medals.



P.E. COACHING IN ST. JOHN'S

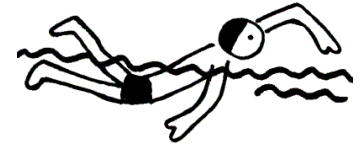
We take this opportunity to thank Mr Liam Hardy and Mr Ryan McShane for their continued commitment, encouragement and support to the children and staff of St. John's.

Congratulations to Ryan on his recent engagement to Jolene. We wish them many happy years together.



Small Schools' Swimming Gala 2016

Our swimming team entered the Gala with great anticipation of winning the trophy for the eleventh consecutive year.



However even though there were some very impressive individual performances they were unable to retain the trophy. The overall score of 172 put them in 3rd place.

Congratulations to everyone who took part and won medals.

For individual and team results visit our website www.stjohnspsgilford.com where you can also view more photographs.

