



## **Information Booklet for Parents**

### **Your Child in Primary One**

**2020/2021**

You are very welcome to our school. We hope that both you and your child(ren) will enjoy a happy and successful time with us. We also hope that you find the information in this booklet helpful in preparing you and your child for starting school in September.

**Staff 2019/20210**

<b><u>Principal</u></b>	<b>Mrs N Magee</b>	<a href="mailto:nmagee351@c2kni.net">nmagee351@c2kni.net</a>
<b><u>Primary One</u></b>	<b>Mrs Magee</b>  <b>Mrs A Kane (Principal Release- Thursday and Friday)</b>  <b>Ms Mc Alinden</b>	
<b><u>Primary Two/ Three</u></b>	<b>Mrs E. Mc Conville</b> <b>Mrs A Kane (Wednesday)</b>  <b><u>Ms Mc Alinden</u></b>	<b>Designated Child Protection Teacher</b>
<b><u>Primary Four/ Five</u></b>	<b>Mrs Mc Caughey</b>  <b><u>Mrs J O' Hare</u></b>	<b>Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection</b>
<b><u>Primary Six/ Seven</u></b>	<b>Mr P Keenan</b>  <b>Mrs D Sheilds</b>	<b>Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection</b>
<b><u>Clerical Officer</u></b>	<b>Mrs J O' Hare</b>	
<b><u>School Meals Staff</u></b>	<b>Mrs J Mc Givern</b>	<b>Cook</b>
	<b>Ms Mc Alinden</b> <b>Mrs J O Hare</b>	<b>Lunch Supervisor</b>
<b><u>Caretaker</u></b>	<b><u>Mrs D Fitzpatrick</u></b>	

**In the school year 2020/2021 there will be 84 children enrolled in the school**

**School Hours**

Under normal circumstances the school will be open at 8.20am to facilitate early arrivals – Due to Covid-19/ PHA restrictions the early drop off is not currently available. The

school doors will be opened at 8.40 am and the school day will begin promptly at 8-45am.

Break Time: 10-15am - 10-30am

Lunch Time: 12-05pm – 12.55 pm

The Primary One – Three children will finish school at 1.45pm each day. The children will be dismissed into the care of their parent/ childminder by the class teacher via the front door.

To settle the children into school life the Primary One children will be phased into the normal school week. Please note the Primary One finishing times for the month of September.

28th August	Induction day Primary One	9.00 – 11.00 am
31st August– 4th Sept. 7th – 11th September 14th – 18th September	8.45- 12 pm	
21st – 25th September	8.45- 1.00pm (Children remain for lunch)	
28th September →	Normal school hours 8.45- 1.45 pm	

**Punctuality is important.** Children become anxious if they are left waiting in the school. School staff will only release the children into the care of someone the staff know if someone different is collecting your child please let Mrs Magee/ Mrs Kane know in advance if possible.

If your child is to be collected early from school e.g. to attend a medical appointment etc. the child must be signed out from the school office. Children will not be released from school early if this procedure is not followed.

### **Pupil Absence**

If your child is unable to attend school please inform **the school** of the reason for the absence on **the first day of absence**. This can be done by telephone or email and should be confirmed with a written note when your child returns to school. If the absence is likely to be prolonged, the information provided will enable the school to assist with homework or any other necessary arrangements.

### **General Information**

School dinners are available. These are currently priced at **£2.60**. The children are offered a choice of meals each day. The school dinner menu is sent home each month and it is also available to view on the school App - Dinner money should be paid on a **Friday**. Unfortunately, if the school dinner bill is not settled at the end of each month your child will not be able to have any more meals until the outstanding bill has been paid.

If you are eligible for assistance with School Meals please complete the application form and return it to the Education Authority (available early July) before the start of the school term. Please note that school meals taken before the EA has notified the school that a claim for School Meals Assistance has been approved must be paid in full and a delay in applying can incur a high charge.

Lunches are supervised in the classrooms by the teacher. Please try to keep your child's lunch as healthy as possible.

A list of school holidays will be sent out at the beginning of term. Please keep this in a safe place for reference throughout the year.

If you have a concern or query during the school year, please do not hesitate to contact us. Appointments to speak with the principal/class teacher are strictly on a pre-arranged basis. Please telephone the school office to arrange all appointments.

## **How can I help my child in Primary One?**

### **Your Role as a Parent**

Starting school can be a strange and daunting time for young children. They are used to the company of family and friends and suddenly they are put into a class with a new teacher and lots of children. It will take them a while to get used to the rules and routines of school and to the playground - we hope to make this time as pleasurable as possible. We understand that this time can be traumatic for you the parent also, but we would advise that you try to make the break as quickly as possible.

As you can appreciate, in school all of the children's belongings look the same. It saves time and confusion if children can easily recognize their own belongings. **You could help by putting a symbol or mark that your child can easily recognise on his/her belongings - coat, gloves, schoolbag, sweatshirt, lunch box - please also label these items clearly with your child's name so that others can also easily identify them.**

Our school uniform consists of;

**Boys:** A green jumper, navy trousers, white shirt and a green/grey & navy striped tie.

**Girls:** A navy pinafore/skirt, green cardigan/jumper, white blouse, a green/grey & navy striped tie, navy tights (winter), white socks (summer) and a green and white gingham dress for summer.

A school tracksuit is also available and is required for P.E. **It must only be worn to school on P.E days. Our P.E days in P.1-3 are Monday and Thursday.**

All uniform items are available from Mc Evoy's Drapery, Newry.

It helps if young children have clothes they can easily manage - slip on/velcro shoes, cardigans and coats with zips rather than buttons. Teach your child how to put on and take off his/her own coat, including how to zip and unzip it him/herself.

### **The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

Just as its name would suggest, the Foundation Stage is all about creating a good solid base from which to build upon. Like the foundations of a building – the higher the building, the firmer the foundations have to be – you cannot rush this process!

The Aims for the Foundation Stage are to;

- Support the transition from Pre-school to Primary One, making progression a fun and exciting experience
- Provide a caring environment in which each child may feel safe, happy and secure
- Provide a range of first hand experiences which promote active learning
- Promote a high level of self esteem and confidence in children through the encouragement of independent learning
- Practise and refine social skills including an awareness and understanding of others
- Build on children’s experiences in order to stimulate and challenge their own thinking
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum which enables each child to reach their full potential
- To develop children’s attention and persistence to concentrate on their own play or group tasks
- Encourage children to be responsible for their own learning and become reflective thinkers

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is divided into 7 areas of learning.

- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU)
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The World Around Us
- The Arts
- Physical Development and Movement
- Religious Education

Planning for these areas takes place on a half termly basis. Throughout this half term, activities are planned around a topic. The majority of these activities are of a practical nature, being child centred and often child initiated. Songs, chants and rhymes are often used to support the topics being taught. Parents will be made aware of the topics we will be covering and a suggested list of resources that we will need to enhance our learning experience - all donations will be welcome!

As part of the Foundation Stage there will be a lot of play based learning.

“Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge”

(Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage QCA)

Through the implementation of the Foundation Stage children are being encouraged to take control and be more responsible for their own learning. The teacher is seen as a facilitator in this, rather than the bearer of all knowledge. The children are encouraged that there is no right or wrong way to do something, instead have a go, take on challenges and experiment with ideas. We are making a move towards the children becoming more independent and we would ask for your support with this matter. This could start out by just simply encouraging your child to put his/her uniform/coat on by themselves, rather than you doing it for them!

Some of the ways that we in school promote the children's independence are;

- Self registration
- Visual timetables and notice boards

It is hoped that by working as a team – Home and School – that we can create as rich and valuable an experience as possible in promoting independent thinking and learning in our children.

### **Helping your child with Numeracy**

## **'MATHS IS ALL AROUND US'**

There are 5 main focuses for the programme of Numeracy.

- Number ~ (Understanding number, counting and money)
- Measures ~ (length, weight, capacity)
- Shape and space
- Sorting
- Patterns and relationships

Pre number maths work is based on learning colours, using positional language - next to, up above, down below etc. carrying out sorting and matching exercises and making and continuing patterns.

In order to help with this, in your everyday routine ask your child to help you

- Lay the table - count beakers, match knives with forks etc
- Make the beds
- Sort out the shopping - things that go in the fridge / cupboard
- Tidy the toy box - sort the soft toys into one box and other toys into another box
- Sort out the washing - pair up socks
- Look for same/different shapes inside/outside house

- Count out money when shopping, use mathematical language costs too much, cheap etc
- Compare height/weight/length of trees, flowers etc
- Notice numbers on gates/houses/roads/cars
- Know their personal details - name, age, address, phone number
- Notice the difference between day time and night time
- Sort items in to those of the same colour/size/shape etc.....

These are only a few of the examples of ways that you can make your child more aware of what is around them and how to use their mathematical knowledge and thinking - I'm sure you'll be able to think of others!

### **Helping your child with Reading**

Reading is a journey. It is a developing skill that does not just happen overnight. The journey of reading starts from when your child is a baby and continues throughout their life – it is never ending!

Reciting nursery rhymes with your child is a good way to begin to boost the language development and imagination, and to help with an early understanding of sequence and story. Rhymes encourage movement and rhythm.

Young children develop their use of language through talking and listening to others talk.

Show children that reading is fun. Visit the library and let your child choose some books to bring home. Sharing books with your children can help them to read. Sharing books does not just mean reading together - it also means;

- a cosy cuddle
- lots of talking
- learning to choose
- laughing together and learning to read.

Sharing books should be something to look forward to - it should not be a task. Choose a time when you are both relaxed and in the mood to share a book. Sitting quietly with a book is a marvellous opportunity to talk together. Guessing what will happen next helps to develop reading skills, and talking about the story and pictures helps to introduce vocabulary and develop language. Being able to talk properly will help your child with his/her reading. Talking gives a child confidence. Your child will model his speech on what he hears around him - mainly from his family. Ask yourself these questions:

- Are you careful about your speech?
- Do you pronounce your words properly?
- Do you explain meanings?

Correct your child when they use baby talk and they will be able to read better.

Teach your child how to read and recognise their name, go over the letter names and their sounds with them - only use capital letters at the beginning of names at this stage.

Each day your child will be encouraged to take a library book home from school. Get in to the habit of reading to your child each night. Maybe an older brother or sister could have a turn too. Look at the pictures together. Point out some things that interest your child, name them. Talk about some of the people in the book. Relate pictures to things your child has at home e.g. a ball, train, lorry etc. As his/her concentration improves, and attention span gets longer, spend more time on books. Listen to what your child has to say about books - you will soon discover what he/she likes in a book.

Children love repetition - if they want to hear or read the same old story or rhyme again - let them. Repetition increases their security and confidence, they join in and eventually remember the words.

### **Pre-reading experience skills necessary for beginning readers**

**Your child should be able to;**

- Talk about their own paintings/drawings
- Understand spoken instructions and carry them out
- Listen attentively to a story, retell a story in a fairly logical sequence
- Tell a story from a picture story book
- Recite nursery rhymes
- Join in repetitive lines in a rhyme or story
- Recognise colours
- Be able to handle a book properly - Select a book and sit down to read it. Open the book at the front and turn the pages over correctly. Return the book neatly.
- Place a sequence of objects or drawings in appropriate order
- Guess what an object is from an oral description e.g. It has 4 legs, 2 arms, is soft, has cushions, we sit on it. What is it?
- Understand words like tall, hard, light etc
- Find pictures in books, magazines etc which relate to the above words
- Sort shapes into size, shape or colour
- Be aware of himself and be able to draw a human figure with a head, body, arms, legs etc in proper positions
- Solve a simple jigsaw
- Recognise own name
- Know difference between letters and words
- Match letter with letter, or word with word
- Complete a repetitive pattern.

## **Helping your child with Writing**

**Allow your child opportunities to;**

- Draw
- Paint
- Crayon
- Cut and stick
- Model with play dough
- Make 3D models with boxes
- Trace outline drawings
- Join dots to form pictures
- Follow mazes
- Draw around templates
- Colour in pictures keeping within the lines
- Complete an unfinished drawing of a common object

**In order to develop the fine motor skills needed in writing.**

From the start it is important that your child adopts the correct way to hold a pencil and form letters. Please keep a close eye on this as bad habits are hard to break and they can lead to untidy work later on. Control of the pencil is very important and will come with practice. Outline letters, pictures etc using dots and let your child trace over them. Provide your child with a wide variety of writing materials to choose from- paints, chalk, crayons, coloured pencils, felt tipped pens. Act as a scribe - write any words your child requests on their pictures (but only use small letters). Let your child practice writing over your letters and then copying them underneath. Please use only the script that is taught in school.

### **What will my child be doing throughout their Primary One year at school?**

Throughout the whole of the Foundation Stage (P1 & P2) the teaching & learning of the 7 areas of the curriculum are planned through topics. Each day there will be a Literacy, Numeracy and Religious Education (through the Alive –O scheme) focus to the children's work as well as a different area focussed on each afternoon. Phonics (through the Linguistic Phonics Programme) is also taught daily.

We use a story or information book as a stimulus for the week's activities. Reading occurs daily as a whole class.

Throughout the Foundation Stage the majority of the activities that the children will take part in are of a practical nature. These activities are child centred and often child initiated. The children are encouraged to use objects and speak about what they are

doing. They do this to develop their oral communication skills as this is fundamental, especially at this stage as the children are learning a lot of new vocabulary and using it in context for the first time.

Songs, chants and rhymes are an integral part of the Primary One curriculum and are used daily to support the topics being taught.

When children are not working directly with an adult, either individually or in a group, they are involved in structured play. The play opportunities support the skills that are being developed. This may be using construction materials, sorting objects, using the shop, engaging in role play, imaginary play with animals etc. Your child will also be developing vital social and interaction skills at this time, important skills they need through out their school years.

### **When will my child start to read?**

By the end of their Primary One year on average a child should be able to read simple sentences independently. This usually starts to happen during term 2, however for some children this might begin earlier and for some they may not develop this independence until Term 3. The rate of reading can often depend upon how much support is given at home. It is important that you share a book at home with your child each night.

There are lots of skills that a child needs to have before they are ready to read for themselves.

They need to be able to;

- Handle books correctly – turning pages independently etc
- Sequence stories – what happened at the beginning, middle and end?
- Predicting what will happen next
- Discuss endings
- Respond to ideas
- Understand rhyming words
- Listen to letter sounds
- Ask and answer questions based on a read book
- Tell the story from the picture cues
- Use word attack skills e.g. use their knowledge of the first letter sound to guess what the word might be

### **A rough guide to each term**

#### **Term 1**

After a settling in period during the month of September, your child will receive a picture book to take home each night. Encourage your child to tell you the story in their own words using the characters' names.

Throughout the first term much work on developing phonological awareness will be done. This is to fine tune the children's listening and observation skills before the alphabet sounds are taught.

Your child will also have key words to learn called High Frequency Words. There are 45 high frequency words to be learned in Primary 1 and again the rate at which these will be learned will vary from child to child. These will be sent home as focus words in their word book. You should go over these words each day to build up your child's sight vocabulary. When the teacher knows that your child can recognise these words independently in a book or from a flash card, they are ticked off.

When your child is ready he/she will start to bring home a reading book with a few words in it. These will be the high frequency words that they will have learned. There will also be some words that they will not know; they should try to use the picture clues to 'read' what they are.

#### **4 ways to read successfully**

- Use picture clues
- Sound out words
- Memory recall of words- sight vocabulary
- Sensible guesses- Does it make sense in the sentence?

#### **Handwriting:**

We begin with pattern work that promotes the correct formation of letters. Each week different letters of the alphabet will be taught, making sure the children form these correctly and develop a comfortable pencil grip. These are all in lower case. Please do not encourage your child to write in capitals, as this is a hard habit to get them to stop.

#### **Numeracy:**

Much of the Numeracy in the first term is covered through singing number rhymes and practical activities. It is important to provide opportunities to use the correct mathematical vocabulary and practise this.

#### **Term Two**

During the second term your child should start to make more meaningful marks in an attempt to write independently. We encourage emergent writing - which is the attempt

to sound out words and record them, by writing the main sounds that they can hear. The teacher will then scribe the correct word. We also write for the children to copy.

Beginning to write develops confidence and while most children have sufficiently developed motor skills some children are not ready to write and will need more developmental work.

Towards the end of the second term most children will display greater reading skills, they will remember the high frequency words and read them in context. There will still be high frequency words, topic words and tricky words to learn at home.

### **Term Three**

By this point your child should be displaying greater independence when working. They should be attempting to write for a purpose, remembering some of the words learned during the year.

In numeracy we start to engage in addition activities that require a recall of number bonds in preparation for Primary Two.

As well as taught areas of the curriculum a lot of other events take place within school e.g. school trips, Christmas play, sponsored walk, visits to class etc.

I hope that this booklet has given you a greater insight as to what your child's first year at school entails. Throughout the year if you have any concerns or queries about your child's progress, please do not hesitate to contact the school to make an appointment and we will try as best as we can to sort out your query or concern.

## **Prayers to be learned throughout the year**

### **The sign of the cross**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
And of the Holy Spirit. Amen

### **Glory be to the Father**

Glory be to the Father, and to the son,  
And to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the  
Beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen.

### **Morning Prayer**

Father in heaven, you love me,  
You're with me night and day.  
I want to love you always In all I do and say.  
I'll try to please you, Father.  
Bless me through the day. Amen

### **Night Prayer**

God our Father, I come to say  
Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family, and all  
The friends you give to me.  
Guard me in the dark of night,  
And in the morning send your light.  
Amen.

### **Grace before meals**

Bless us, O God, as we sit together.  
Bless the food we eat today.  
Bless the hands that made the food.  
Bless us, O God. Amen

### **Grace after Meals**

Thank you, God for the food we have eaten. Thank you, God, for all our friends. Thank  
you, God, for everything. Thank you, God. Amen.

### **Our Father**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in  
Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread; And  
forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass  
Against us;  
And lead us not into temptation, but  
deliver us from evil. Amen.

### **Hail Mary**

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is  
With thee; blessed art thou amongst  
Women, and blessed is the fruit of thy  
Womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of  
God, pray for us, sinners, now and at  
The hour of our death. Amen.

