



04/02/2021

Dear Parents

Thank you all for your patience, support and cooperation over the past month. I know that remote learning is not easy and many of you are juggling caring responsibilities, work and learning activities at the same time. The staff really appreciate everything you are doing to ensure the children's learning continues during this lockdown. However, please remember that the most important thing at the moment is to keep yourself and your family safe and that your family's well-being is more important than anything else. If you need to take a short break from home learning, please do so and let the teacher know through ClassDojo.

We want to express our thanks too, to all our parents who are key workers. We know that many of you are working under very difficult circumstances and wish you the grace and strength to cope with the challenges you face daily. We also appreciate that you only send your children to school when you have no other options.

The staff have also been working extremely hard, pulling together the resources for the printed learning packs, as well as creating the recordings, videos and tutorials they are sharing with you every day, while juggling their own caring responsibilities. The pack for collection this week is a three-week pack which will take us up to Friday March 5<sup>th</sup> when the current restrictions are due to end. We all hope and pray that the public health situation will have improved by then and all of the children will be back in school the following week. To enable this to happen, I urge you all to redouble your efforts in following PHA advice, and in particular, to minimise your contacts to prevent transmission of the virus.

A huge burden was placed on the shoulders of our P7 pupils and they are to be highly commended on how well they have coped over the past year. They have demonstrated great resilience and maturity. I know that they are now thinking of post primary schools and a further period of uncertainty and anxiety is unavoidable. The children will, however, take their lead from the adults around them. Therefore, as parents and teachers, we need to ensure that the message they hear from us is that we know they can cope, there are lots of great post primary schools to choose from and what matters most for their future is how well they apply themselves and how hard they work when they get to their new school, not the school itself.

The online application process for post primary schools will open through the EA website on March 1<sup>st</sup> at noon and close on March 16<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. Information on the process is available at

<https://www.eani.org.uk/admissions-guides/post-primary-admissions-guide/key-dates>

Please take the time with your child to view the Open Day Presentations from a range of post primary schools so that they understand that all schools teach the same curriculum and there are many, many great schools where they can thrive and flourish.

As you know some post primary schools have amended their entrance criteria this year. They are available on the EA website at <https://www.eani.org.uk/search-schools> as well as the schools' own websites. It is important to read these carefully for each school you are considering. Some schools ask for verifying documents which parents must upload with the application. Requests for such information should be made by emailing [info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stthereseoflisieux.belfast.ni.sch.uk) and stating clearly what information needs to be provided. Please ensure that you consider the information needed by your second and subsequent choice of schools, not just your first choice. The verification letter from St Therese will be sent to you by email as soon as possible.

The application process for P1 places in Sept 2021 is now closed. If you have made an application, please ensure that all documentation is uploaded on the EA portal by Fri Feb 5<sup>th</sup> at noon.

The school will be closed from Mon 15<sup>th</sup>–Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Feb for half term. The staff will be taking a well-deserved break and have been instructed to turn their school ipads and laptops off, so they get a chance to recharge their batteries with their families. I hope that you all get a chance to do the same.

***Provisional*** dates for Confirmation and First Holy Communion have been set as follows but are dependent on the public health situation continuing to improve.

- Confirmation - Monday 26<sup>th</sup> (JMcF) & Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April (NR) at 11am in Holy Family Church
- P4 First Confession - Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> (CMcC) & Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May (SON/PM) at 11am in St Therese Church
- P4 First Holy Communion –Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June 10am (CMcC) & noon (SON/PM) in St Therese Church

We have purchased a one-year online subscription to Collins Big Cat e-Book Library. This offers a wide range of levelled reading books from P1-7 which children will be able to access at home. Teachers are being trained in setting up 'book shelves' for their classes over the next week, so please look out for your child's log in details in their learning pack. Teachers will let you know through ClassDojo when your child can start using this excellent resource.

Thanks to everyone who made a contribution to the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal. Including gift aid, just over £2,000 was donated to this wonderful local charity.

Finally, I would like thank all of our parents and carers once again for your continuing cooperation and support, and our pupils and staff for their positive approach and commitment to learning at this unprecedented time.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S McTaggart  
Principal