**St. Joseph and St. James’s Primary School**

# 34 Chapel Street

**Poyntzpass**

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3rd September 2019

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Welcome back to a new school year. Below I have detailed important information pertaining to the first term of school.

**SEN Provision**

Your child’s teacher will continue to cater for pupils with any special educational needs in class. An IEP will be drawn up, in conjunction with the relevant pupils and parents, and will be reviewed with pupils and parents at the appropriate times. One of our parents, Mrs Helen Hamill, has volunteered to assist in delivering additional help to some of our pupils. Mrs Hamill recently attended training in numeracy intervention strategies and these will be incorporated into her sessions. The sessions will be planned and prepared by the class teachers and delivered in a small group context by Mrs Hamill. We will be in touch with you if your child is going to avail of this assistance during term one.

**Target Setting**

Whole school and class targets have already been set and will be shared with you in due course. Individual targets for each pupil will also be set and sent home for you to add to with your child(ren).

**After School Activities**

* Our own after school service is already up and running. Please remember to send in the booking form.
* Other activities are on offer and information is attached to this letter.
* We are continuing to use the Parentpay system for dinner money and our own afterschool service.

**Healthy School Break**

Please remember that we operate a healthy break initiative. Children are only permitted to drink milk or water and eat only fresh fruit or vegetables. Fruit bars, cereal bars, dilute drinks are not permitted at break-time. **Absolutely no food containing nuts or sesame seed is permitted.**

**Uniform**

Your child is expected to wear full uniform each day they are at school. **This includes black shoes, not trainers**. P.1 – 3 wear their P.E uniform to school on the appropriate day. P.4 – 7 bring their P.E uniform with them (plain white polo shirt and grey sweat bottoms/plain black shorts in third term), including their trainers, to change into before their P.E lesson. **Please ensure all uniforms are labelled. Staff will not spend time looking for a uniform unless it is labelled.**

**P.1 – 7 P.E will be on Wednesdays with Bee Active and P.1 – 7 Gaelic Football/Fundamental Skills will be on Fridays with Healthy Kidz.**

**Attendance**

Your child’s attendance is extremely important. Please endeavour to make medical/dental appointments outside of school hours. If a child is withdrawn for a medical/dental appointment this will be recorded on the attendance register but will count as an absence. Children arriving late to school, after registration is completed at 9.15am, will be recorded on the register as ‘Late’. This, too, will impact on their overall attendance. The school is duty bound to report to the Educational Welfare Officer if any child’s attendance falls below 85%. We will alert you if your child’s attendance is approaching this figure. A letter explaining your child’s absence **must** be sent into your child’s teacher, preferably on the day your child returns to school.

**Walkers**

We must have a record of any child who is to walk home unaccompanied from school. If you are happy to allow your child to walk home unaccompanied please let your child’s teacher know **in writing**.

**Homework**

Our homework policy is on our website. If you need clarification on any point, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

**Opening Mass**

Our opening Mass takes place on Thursday 19th September at 9.30am, everyone is welcome.

**Free School Meals**

If you are entitled to free school meals, please apply for them. For each pupil who has an entitlement to free school meals, the school receives additional funding of almost $700.00 per child.

**Reading Homework**

Your child’s teacher may be carrying out an assessment to ensure your child is reading at the correct level. Given the large numbers in some classes, this may take some time. Please bear with us while we organise reading groups.

**Parent/Teacher Meetings**

Last year we held our P/T meetings in February at the request of the majority of parents. Many parents have told me that on reflection, this date was too late in the year. Teachers also felt that an earlier meeting is more beneficial. This year we will revert to P/T meetings taking place before the Hallowe’en break. If you feel strongly that you would prefer your meeting in February, contact me at the school and we can discuss options.

**Morning Supervision**

Please remember that pupils are supervised in the yard from 8.45am. Any pupil on site before that time should be in the care of their parent/guardian.

**Big Workout Day**

To help cover the cost of our ‘Bee Active’ initiative, we are having a ‘Big Workout Day’. This was due to take place in term three of last year but our calendar was too full. It will take place on Wednesday 25th September and your child will be given a sponsorship form next week.

**Online Calendar**

We endeavour to upload as much information as possible on our website calendar. Please check it regularly to keep yourself informed about all that is happening in school.

**‘Friends Of’**

Our PTA will have its first meeting on Thursday 12th September at 6pm in the school. Everyone is welcome to come along. ‘Friends Of’ are hoping to begin our new school year with a picnic and all assistance is very much appreciated.

Thank you very much for your continued support. Let us look forward to another peaceful and productive school year.

Yours sincerely,

Pauline McEvoy

Principal