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 November 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians

It’s lovely to see all our children and staff back into school after our Halloween break.

**Dinners** - IMPORTANT 

Dinners cost ***£2.60*** per day. In order to assist you and ourselves, we would be grateful if you could, ***at the beginning of each week,*** enclose the relevant dinner money ***(no change given***) in an envelope, write on the envelope your ***child’s name***, the ***days*** your child will be having dinner for that week and enclosing the ***correct*** amount of money.

It would be helpful if you could use a separate envelope for each child. However, if you have two or more children in the same classroom, one envelope will suffice as long as they are clearly marked. ***All money should be handed to the class teacher and not the office***. **If you know your child will be late for school, please telephone the school 028 427 28523 if you wish to order a school dinner. Dinners need to be *ordered by 9.15 am* so if your child is late, we are unable to order after this time.**

Thank you to all the parents who are already doing this.

**Book Fair**

Our annual Book Fair is being held at the school from **Tuesday 14th November—Monday 20th November.** There will be a great selection of fiction, non-fiction, etc., available and as this is a fundraising project for the school please do your best to support it as with any commission earned, we shall be able to purchase more books for the school. This is also an ideal time to stock up on any Christmas presents. The Book Fair will be open for parents and children as follows:



Monday —Thursday 2.00—3.00 pm

Friday 2.00—2.30 pm

**You may send in money with your child to purchase books or if you want to buy them as a surprise, just ring the office and we will put them aside for you. We would direct you to** <https://bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/travelling-books/the-books> **and you will be able to browse the books online.**

**School Closure - Strike Action by Non-Teaching Staff**

Our Board of Governors have agreed that school will be closed on Thursday 16th November due to strike action by all non-teaching staff and this is to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils and teaching staff.

**Christmas Craft Fair** 

Our annual Christmas Craft Fair organised by our Parents Council will take place in the **Portaferry Community Centre** on Thursday 30th November 5 – 8 pm. ***Any items you may have for the usual Tombola and the bottle Tombola*** ***stalls would be much appreciated and we would be grateful if you could please send them into school by******Thursday 23rd November****.* ***Also we are looking for volunteers to help on the night. If you are able to help out in any way, please ring the school.***

**Charity – Leukaemia and Lymphoma NI**

We have raised an amazing £320 from our Halloween Dressing Up day for **Leukaemia and Lymphoma NI.** We shall be having a fundraiser for the above charity on our Christmas Jumper Day Wednesday 20th December. Many thanks for all your support.

**Open Day**

Please note Open Day is on Thursday 7th December from 11.45 am – 12.30 pm. Any parents and children considering enrolment in P1 and any parent of younger children who are planning ahead are most welcome. The best way to find out about our school is to visit us. It will enable the children and parents to get a taste of life in the school, see our facilities, meet staff and current pupils and ask questions. Please spread the word amongst family and friends.

** Christmas Hampers**

We are now collecting items for the Christmas hampers so to give you some help with ideas, we list below some items that would be useful. This is a very important part of our ballot and your generosity is very much appreciated. We would be grateful if you could send in one or more of these items by the end of November: ***If every child only brought in one item, it would go a long way to helping us to make up a few hampers. Please put the items in a bag which will be left aside for the required amount of time.***

Bottles of spirits/wine, mince pies, shortbread, chutneys, mints, biscuits, tea, sugar, coffee, breadsticks, cranberry sauce, tins of fruit, chocolates, packets of soup/sauce, selection boxes, men’s and women’s beauty products and any other items would be greatly appreciated. ***Please make sure that all food items have good dates on them.***

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**Ballot Tickets/100 Square**

Each family will be allocated 2 books of tickets to sell for Christmas but if you require more, please contact the school. All monies and stubs should be returned to school no later than Monday 11th December to allow time for their preparation. Prizes include gift cards, vouchers, bottles of wine and spirits, food hampers and much more. All tickets are numbered and ***all unsold tickets must be returned to the school.***

We shall be running a 100 square for both children and adults at £1 per square with lots of fabulous prizes. Children can purchase these at school.

**Homework**

There will be no formal written homework for children from the week commencing Monday 4th December.

**Pantomime – The Night Before Christmas (P1 —P7)**

The children will be attending the above performance on Thursday 30th November 2023. We will leave school at 9 am sharp so ***children need to be in school for 8.50 am*** as the performance commences at 10.30 am and we will need to be seated at 10.15 am. Children should come to school in full school uniform. ***All*** children should bring in a packed lunch in a plastic bag with your child’s name clearly written on it and children will eat this in The MAC. Please do not bring in any school bags or lunch boxes that day. ***All children will go home after the pantomime at approximately 1.15 pm.***

**Christmas Shows**  

P1 – P3 will have their Nativity Play on Thursday 14th December at 11 am in **Ballyphilip Parish Centre.** Entry will be by ticket only (minimum donation £5) which will be on sale at the school from Monday 13th November. Grannies,grandads, aunties, uncles and friends are also welcome to attend but must have a ticket. ***All children participating in the Nativity Play will go home immediately afterwards.***

We hope to organise a show for our P4 – P7 classes during the summer term.

 **Christmas Dinner**

We have arranged with St Columba’s Kitchen to have our Christmas dinner this year in their canteen on Friday 15th December. The cost is £2.60. If your child would like to have dinner, please sign and return the attached reply slip, together with £2.60 on or before Friday 24th November. ***Children on the school’s free dinners list will receive dinners as normal and do not need to reply.***

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**Christmas Jumper Day – Non Uniform Day**

Wednesday 20th December is Christmas Jumper Day! All we ask is that everyone wear a festive jumper and donate a minimum of £1 which will be for the **Leukaemia and Lymphoma NI**  charity. We don’t want anyone to go out and buy a jumper – all you have to do is dress up an old jumper by decorating with tinsel, paper snowflake patterns, sparkle with glitter or any other way you can think of to make it look Christmassy!

**School Counsellor**

If anyone wishes their child to avail of the school counselling service, please contact

Mrs Allen for referral.

**Handle with Care**

If your family is experiencing difficulties at home. I would like to provide additional

support at school. I understand that you are not always able to share details and

that’s okay. If your child is coming to school after a difficult night, morning or weekend, please email me “Handle with Care”. Nothing else will be said or asked. This will let me know that your child may need extra time, patience, or help during the day. Also in these bleak economic times, we know how difficult it is to be able to put food on the table, pay bills etc., so if you feel your child needs any extra food for breakfast and/or break or avail of the community foodbank, we will be able to provide some food if needed. Just let Mrs Allen know by email or telephone the school and ask for her specifically.

***Important -* Absence from School**

If a child is absent from school due to illness or for some other reason, we would ask you to please ring the school or email (econlan823@c2kni.net) to let us know the situation ***It is a requirement for us to inform the Education Welfare Officer of any child’s bsence for which we have no explanation.*** ***If there is no explanation of a child’s absence from school, the unauthorised absence code will be used.***

***Absence will be monitored monthly and if your child’s absence is under 85%, you will be contacted by telephone initially. If there is no improvement, the Education Welfare Officer will be contacted to advise them of this.***

***If your child has an appointment during the day, please email*** ***econlan823@c2kni.net*** ***or telephone 028 427 28523 first thing at 9 am.***

 **Breakfast Club**

Breakfast Club is still continuing at Cuan Kids Community Pre-School from 8 am – 9 am.

Cost is £2. Please ring Cuan Kids on 028 427 29933 for more information.

**Early Closures** 

On Thursday 14th December, school will close for P4-P7 at 2 pm. On Monday 18th , Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th December, school will close for P1-P7 children at 2 pm. School closes at **12 pm** on Thursday 21st December for the Christmas Holidays.

Christmas Party day is Wednesday 20th December. This is also our Christmas Jumper Day and we will have a special visitor arriving. We would be grateful if everybody could bring in their favourite goodies to share.

Best Wishes

Nicola Allen

**NICOLA ALLEN**

**PRINCIPAL**

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Tuesday 14th November – Monday 20th November – Book Fair

Thursday 16th November – School Closed – Strike action by non-teaching staff

Wednesday 29th November – Last After Schools for this school term

Thursday 30th November – Panto – The Night Before Christmas – The MAC Theatre

 Craft Fair 5 – 8 pm – St Patrick’s Community Centre, Portaferry

Friday 1st December – Last swimming day for P4/5

Thursday 7th December – P1 Open Day 11.45 – 12.30pm

Thursday 14th December – Nativity Play – 11 am - Ballyphilip Church Hall

 P4 – P7 School closes at 2 pm

Friday 15th December – Christmas Dinner in St Columba’s canteen for whole school

Monday 18th December – Wednesday 20th December - School closes for P1 – P7 at 2 pm

Tuesday 19th December – Christmas Ballot

Wednesday 20th December – Christmas Jumper/Party Day and Special Visitor – donations to Leukaemia and Lymphoma NI

Thursday 21st December – School closes at 12 noon for Christmas Holidays

Friday 22nd December – Friday 5th January – Christmas Holidays

Friday 12th January – Swimming commences for P6/P7

Monday 29th January 2024 – School Closed – Staff Training Day

Monday 12th February – Friday 16th February – Half Term Holidays

Tuesday 20th February – Bee Safe P6/P7

Sunday 25th February – Peace Proms SEE Arena 7 pm performance

Monday 18th March – School Closed – St Patrick’s Day

Friday 22nd March – Last swimming day for P6/P7

Monday 25th March – Friday 5th April – Easter Holidays

Wednesday 10th April – What’s Inside P6/P7

Thursday 11th April – Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am P1/P2

Monday 15th April – Edenmore Photography

Thursday 18th April – Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am P1 – P2

Thursday 25th April – Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am P1 – P2

Saturday 27th April – Tractor Rally

Thursday 2nd May – Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 P1 – P2

Monday 6th May – Bank Holiday – School Closed

Thursday 9th May – Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am – P1 - P2

Thursday 16th May - Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am – P1 - P2

Thursday 23rd May - Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am – P1 - P2

Monday 27th May – Bank Holiday – School Closed

Tuesday 28th May – **Fundraiser - Pub Quiz in Portaferry Hotel**

Thursday 30th May - Debutots 9.30 – 10.30 am – P1 - P2

Saturday 1st June – **Fundraiser - Coffee Morning at Portaferry Market in the Square**

Thursday 6th June – Sports Day

Friday 28th June – School closes for summer holidays

***Christmas Dinner – Friday 15th December 2023***

I would like my child/children \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to receive a Christmas Dinner and I enclose £2.60. ***(Children on the Free Schools Meals Register will receive theirs as normal so do not need to reply)***

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Permission Slip – Face painting and assistance (P1 – P3)***

I allow/do not allow my child/children \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to have their face painted and I give permission for helpers to dress and undress my child/children on Thursday 14th December for the Nativity Play.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

