  

 **education SERVICES**

**Executive Director: Tony McDaid**

**ST VINCENT'S PRIMARY SCHOOL -**

Head teacher Eileen Tompkins

Dear Parent/Carer August 2019



I am delighted to welcome you all to a new school year and it is a pleasure to see how well settled the children are already in spite of this very changeable and unseasonal weather. How very quickly summer holidays become a distant memory! We have a number of new families joining our school and we hope that you will already feel most welcome and very much part of Saint Vincent’s school community. We are delighted to see our school continue to grow and it is a pleasure as always to see the children so beautifully turned out, eager to learn and looking so smart in their school uniforms. I want to extend a special welcome to two members of staff: Mr. Stephen Garvey who is a newly qualified teacher and Mr. Neil McKenna who is now a permanent fulltime member of staff.

**Staying in touch**

Following consultation with our parent council who have financed the school app, we use our school app as our preferred means to stay in touch. We encourage all parent/carers to download this app if possible as this is proving to be the best and most cost effective way of ensuring you receive timely communication from the school. We have over 500 regular downloads from members of our school community. Login details to access the school app are available from the school office.

Our school website has regular updates of all school activities and is also a great means of keeping in touch with what is happening. During the school year all newsletters will be uploaded directly to this website and you will receive a text to advise you when a newsletter is available. If you prefer to have a paper copy of any subsequent newsletters, please contact the school office to request your copy. Your child’s class may also have a Twitter page and your child’s teacher will let you know about this.

**Primary 1 Parents’ Information Evening**

To begin the school year and ensure you have the information you need to support your child’s learning we invite all primary one parents/careers to come and meet your child’s teachers on Thursday August 29th from 6.30 pm.

We hope that as many primary 1 parents/carers as possible can avail of this opportunity, which our teachers provide to keep you informed and involved in your child’s learning.

In all other classes, events will be organised to which you will be invited in due course. You will understand that here will not be enough time during these meetings for individual consultation but if you have an urgent matter which you wish to discuss, an appointment can be arranged if you contact our school office.

All parents will have an opportunity to meet their child’s class teacher for an individual meeting during Parent’s Evening on October 10th You will be invited to select a slot that best suits you nearer the time.

**Advance Notice of forthcoming Masses/School Events**

Holy Mass will be celebrated in Saint Vincent’s Church on Friday September 6th at 9.30. During this Mass we will have a special blessing for our primary 1 child as they begin their years in primary school. The enrolment of our primary 6 children taking part in the Pope Francis award will also take place at this Mass. Everybody is most welcome to join us. You may know that the relics of Saint Therese will be coming to Scotland at the end of August and Sean Fitzpatrick and Mollie Maloney both P7 pupils will represent the school at the Opening Mass in Carfin on Friday August 30th.

We celebrate our school feast of St Vincent de Paul on 26th September with Holy Mass at 9.30. The very popular Dance-a-thon for school funds will take place that day. Sponsorship forms to follow.

**Parental involvement**

As always we invite all our parents/careers to take an active role in the life of the school and to work in partnership with us. To begin we invite all parents and carers to join us at the first meeting of the Parent Council and an opportunity to exchange views and plans for the year ahead as well as meet new friends on Wednesday August 21 at 7pm. The meeting will last only for one hour. Further dates for the chance to be part of a consultative group of parents will be issued after the Parent Council Meeting.

At the start of a new school year, we are most grateful for any support of your child’s learning in school. Your assistance in ensuring children arrive punctually for school, with homework tasks completed is much appreciated and of enormous benefit to helping them achieve their potential. Time spent reading together for pleasure is proven to be of real value and we are very fortunate in our school to have a group of dedicated volunteers who support our Scotland Reads programme to provide this opportunity for some of our children.

Our lost property is often filled to overflowing with so many items of clothing, lunchboxes etc. Please make sure you clearly mark any belongings your child brings to school with their name.

We welcome your involvement in the life of the school and in particular would be grateful for any time you can offer as a volunteer to help out in school. Please contact me if you would like to help. I can assure you we will be delighted to have you and we can arrange for a PVG application to be completed.

In Saint Vincent’s we want where possible for our children to experience learning in real life contexts and throughout the year we have events such as Financial Education week, Enterprise Week, Scottish Week as well as Health, Science and Sports days. Please let us know if you have contacts that could help us in delivering these events and also feel most welcome if you have a skill you would to share at master classes.

**Parent Council**

We have a very committed group of parents/carers who regularly attend meetings of our Parent Council (which also includes our fundraising team) and we would be delighted to see more support for the many activities they offer. We are indebted to the parents who are currently on the Parent Council for the support they have given us in so many ways throughout the year and especially for the financial support which has provided many additional resources, rewards and opportunities for our children.

A date for your diary is the very popular Christmas Fayre, which will take place on Sat December7th.

As mentioned above the first meeting of the Parent Council led by Chairperson Mrs. Olive Thomas takes place here in the school on Wed. August 21st at 7pm to which our local council representatives are invited to attend.

We would be delighted to see a good turnout of parents and to welcome new members.

**Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)**

Last term I consulted you about some of our plans for using the money, which the Scottish government is giving to provide targeted support for particular pupils and raise attainment for all, and we took your views on board. This year funding will again be used to provide learning support. We have employed two additional teachers to allow our principal teachers Mrs. Yvonne Boyle and Mrs. Lorena Ziolo to deliver this extra support for particular pupils. We will also continue to work with Mr. Paul Gorman from Hidden Giants to further develop creative approaches to learning in selected classes. Ms. Deirdre Grogan worked with our Infant staff last session encouraging play based learning in the infant classes. This year Deirdre will work with staff in the upper school to develop enquiry based learning.

 **Free Breakfast Club**

The school breakfast club which is now free to all is up and running and a breakfast which consists of juice, cereal or toast and a piece of fruit is available each morning from 8.15 to 8.45 All are welcome and there is no need to book in advance.

**School Uniforms**

Uniforms are no longer available at school but can be purchased from Academy Uniforms in College Milton (tel 244879). School ties (at a cost of £3.75) are still available from the school office. Please ask if you need further information.

School uniform and other belongings need to be clearly marked to ensure any missing items can be returned.

Children will have received the days and times of their PE lessons so please ensure that your child has their PE kit (shorts and school polo shirt) for PE lessons. For safety reasons, pupils should not wear jewellery during PE lessons and football colours are not allowed.

We encourage the children to play outside and all children get the opportunity to play in the sand area and in the forest area when staffing allows. Please ensure that your child comes to school ready for the Scottish weather. Wellingtons can be worn outside and children must change into their indoor shoes when inside the school.

**Free school meals.**

All children in Primaries 1-3 are entitled to a Free School Meal every day. A meal costs £1.70 for children in Primaries 4-7. The menu is available on the school website if you google St Vincent’s

**This week (w/b 19th August is Week 3)**

If you think you should be receiving grants for Clothing and Free school meals, please make sure you put in an application form online. While all children in primary 1-3 are entitled to a free school meal, all children have to pay 20p for milk. This is a further reason why if you think your child has a free meal entitlement at any stage of the school you should apply online.

**Pupils with allergies and other health issues**.

Some children in the school suffer from a Nut Allergy. We have to be very vigilant for their safety and we need your support to ensure our school is “Nut Free” Please do not use food containing nuts when making up packed lunches and do not give children sweets containing peanuts to bring to school. e.g., Snickers, Fruit & Nut Bar etc. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

We also ask that you inform us if your child has measles, chickenpox or any other contagious illness as we have to be particularly vigilant in this regard given the very sensitive auto immune systems of some of our pupils.

**Absence Procedures**

Please phone the school office before 9.15am to inform us of your child’s absence. If we have not heard from you we will be obliged to call you. We also appreciate being informed of doctor or dental appointments in advance of your child being collected from school.

**Car Parking**

Access to the school car park is **strictly restricted** to staff and holders of blue disability badges **only** between the hours of 8.30- 9.15 and 2.30-3.15. Please do not enter the car park during this time unless you have a disability badge. The car park closes at 8.45 and remains closed until 9.05am. In the afternoon, the car park is closed at 2.45 and reopens about 3.10pm.

**Annual Data Check**

Please ensure that the Office Staff are kept up to date, throughout the year, with changes in Addresses, Telephone Numbers and Emergency Contacts. Annual Data Check Forms have been issued and these should be returned by next Friday August 30th at the very latest. If possible, please include your email address.

**Parental Consent Forms**

To take part in extracurricular activities and educational outings this session it is essential that you complete the Parental Consent Forms (EV5) and return it to the school. This form covers your child for the whole school year although permission slips for individual outings and activities will be issued as and when required.

**Photography / Video Recording**

In compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, I would like to advise that throughout the course of the School Year there are a number of occasions when the children are photographed/filmed taking part in a number of school activities such as the School Show or Sports Events. Sometimes the photographs are for display within the school and sometimes they are for publication on our school website or in a local or national newspaper. Parents who wish to withdraw their child from photography and video recordings should advise me in writing by Monday 2nd September.

Individual and family photographs and P7 class photographs only will be taken by a professional photographer from John Wilson Photography on 4th September. Class photographs for all other classes will be taken on 30th October. (Primary 7 will be on their residential experience in Ardentinny at this time) All photographs will then be available for purchase.

**Routine Medical/Dental Inspections and Treatment**

During the course of the school session, it may be that your child will undergo routine medical inspections, hearing and eye tests, and/or dental screening. This may be followed by additional treatment but you would be contacted if further action is considered necessary.

**Wider Achievement**

We know that many of our pupils attend after school clubs and are involved in many activities outside of school. Please do let us know about your child’s achievements outside of school so we can celebrate their success.

School lunchtime and after school clubs will begin during the first week of September. We are indebted to the teachers and volunteers from the wider community who provide these opportunities for our children.

Our weekly assembly will take place on Thursday afternoons. Following on from last year’s practice, one pupil from each class will receive a certificate based on our school values which are: Respect, Resilience, Fairness, Kindness and Friendship. We will concentrate on one value each week and reward a child in each class who puts the value of the week into practice.

During the month of September the value we focus on is **Friendship.** Our Health and Wellbeing whole school focus is on **Safe.**

Master classes in which all children are involved take place each Friday afternoon and are hugely popular. You will have received a parent information booklet on Lunchtime reflections.

**Credit Union**

On Thursday mornings throughout the year we are fortunate to have a school branch of the Credit union which is part of the Lanarkshire Credit union run by one of our parents Ms Bonnie Salinas ably assisted by some of our children who are trained tellers. We encourage our children to have an account and develop the habit of saving money as a skill for life. The Credit union will re-commence week beginning 16th September and your child can save any sum of money they wish. Please encourage your child to become a member of the Credit Union. Application forms are available from the school office.

**Dates for your diary –**

**Term 1**

September Weekend: School closed on Friday 27thand Monday 30th September

October Week: School closed Monday 14th - Friday 18th October

Primary 7 Residential Monday 28th Oct to Thursday 31st October

November 18th and 19th are both in-service days and school is open for staff only on these days.

The school will close for the Christmas Holiday on Friday 20th December at 2.30 pm. Holy Mass to prepare for Christmas will be celebrated at 9.30 am on the day followed by Carol concert.

Primary1-3 Nativity will be on Tuesday 10th Dec (2pm) and Wednesday 11th December (2pm and 6.30pm)

Primary 1-3 will visit the Village Theatre on Tuesday 17th December (more details to follow)

Class parties will take place week beginning December 16th.

Choir Carol concert December 19th at 6.30pm

School re-opens at 9am on Monday January 6th

**Feedback**

I welcome your feedback and suggestions on any aspect of school life. If you have any question, comment or suggestion please feel welcome get in touch or fill in the box below and return to school. Also if you would like to help in any way as parent volunteer or by running a master class we would be delighted to hear from you.

I wish you and your families a very happy and enjoyable year ahead.

Kind Regards

Eileen Tompkins

Headteacher

Our school vision is to promote quality learning in a nurturing and creative environment where the achievement of excellence and the development of all are at the heart of our Catholic faith community.

 Please let us know if you use the school app or would like a paper copy of Newsletters etc by

 deleting as appropriate: -

 I use the school App………….. **YES/NO**

 or

 I would like a paper copy of Newletters etc……….. **YES/NO**

 Signed ………………………………………………………………..

 Parent/Carer of ………………………………. Room …………….

 Feedback