  

 **education SERVICES**

**Executive Director: Tony McDaid**

**ST VINCENT'S PRIMARY SCHOOL -**

Head teacher Eileen Tompkins

Dear Parent/Carer August 2018

A warm welcome to all as we begin a new school year. I hope you and your families enjoyed the benefits of the summer sunshine. 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 three new members of staff: Mrs. Joanne Logan (newly qualified teacher), Mr. Neil McKenna who will teach here on Thursdays and Fridays and Mrs. Karen Brolly appointed to our school as support assistant for the foreseeable future.

During the summer, in addition to some painting work carried out around the school, the ICT suite was converted into a new classroom to accommodate our 13th class. Computers, ipads etc. have been distributed between classes to ensure that all our children benefit from these resources. We have also used funding received from Scottish government to acquire many new resources especially for our infant classes which will be of considerable benefit to enhancing learning.

**Staying in touch**

Following consultation with our parent council, a new school app was launched during last session. 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 regular communication from the school. 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 1 parents/carers to come and meet your child’s teachers on Wednesday August 29th from 6 pm until 7 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 3rd. You will be invited to select a slot that best suits you nearer the time.

**Opening Mass of the school year.**

Holy Mass to mark the opening of the school year will be celebrated in Saint Vincent’s Church on Friday August 31st 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. This year is the 100th anniversary of Catholic Education in Scotland and also a significant year for our parish On 28th September feast of Saint Vincent de Paul we mark the 40th anniversary of Saint Vincent’s Church.

**Parental involvement**

As always we invite all our parents/carers 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 for Coffee and an opportunity to exchange views and plans for the year ahead as well as meet new friends on Tuesday August 28th at 2.15. 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.

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 December 1st.

The first meeting of the Parent Council led by chairperson Mrs. Olive Thomas takes place here in the school on Wed. August 29th 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 have taken your views on board. This year funding has been used to employ an additional teacher for three days per week to provide learning support in the Infant classes. Mrs. Yvonne Boyle is taking on this role on Monday to Wednesday each week. We will also continue to work with Mr. Paul Gorman from Hidden Giants to further develop creative approaches to learning with an emphasis on encouraging play based learning in the infant classes. In the upper school we are working to develop our children as leaders in their own learning.

Last year we put an ambitious programme together which involved working in partnership with Professor Sue Ellis and Mr. Paul Chambers from Strathclyde University to take forward very exciting learning opportunities in literacy and science for all classes. We plan to build on this work during the year ahead by providing exciting opportunities for learning and encouraging children to read widely and write often.

 **Breakfast Club**

 The school breakfast club 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 at a cost of 60p. Children who have a free meal entitlement will receive a free breakfast. 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 £3.50) 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 change into their shoes when indoors.

**Free school meals.**

All children in Primaries 1-3 are entitled to a Free School Meal every day. A meal costs £1-60 for children in Primaries 4-7. The menu is available on the school website if you google St Vincent’s

**This week (w/b 20th 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. Please avoid the use of food containing nuts when making up packed lunches and do not give children sweets containing peanuts to bring to school. eg, 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 require calling 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.

**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 will be issued this week and these should be returned by next Friday August 24th 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 will be taken by a professional photographer from John Wilson Photography on 28th August. (next Tuesday). Class photographs will be taken on September 4th 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 Wednesday 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 **Included.**

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 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 this Thursday August 23th and your child can save any sum of money they wish.

**Holiday Dates –**

**Term 1**

September Weekend: School Closed on Friday 21st and Monday 24th September

October Week: School Closed Monday 15th - Friday 19th October

November 19th is an in-service day and school is open for staff only on this day.

The school will close for the Christmas Holiday on Friday 21st December at 2.30 pm. Holy Mass to prepare for Christmas will be celebrated at 9.30 am followed by Carol concert.

Primary1-3 Nativity will be on Tuesday 11th Dec (2pm) and Wednesday 12th December 6.30pm

Choir Carol concert December 19th at 6.30pm

School re-opens at 9am on Monday January 7th

**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. 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 you families a very happy and enjoyable year ahead.

Kind Regards

Eileen Tompkins

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.