



**ST. MARK'S JUNIOR SCHOOL.
PARENTS NEWSLETTER
13/04/2015**

DEAR PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

We hope you all enjoyed your Easter Holidays and the spell of lovely sunny weather!

There are a number of issues which we wish to bring to your attention.

RETIREMENT

Margaret Mooney, who has been on our teaching staff since 2000 has today announced her retirement.

Margaret has been teaching as a Resource and Special needs teacher for most of her time with us. She has been our Special Needs Post Holder and Coordinator since 2011.

Those of you who have had reason to know Margaret over the years will, I know, be aware of what a great contribution she has made. Margaret will be finishing with us at the end of June. She will be greatly missed by all of us in St. Mark's JNS.

I know you will join me in wishing her every joy and success as she opens this new and exciting chapter in her life.

INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS & SEACHTAIN NA GAELIGE

This took place during the fortnight running into the Easter holidays.

It was a huge success and really beneficial in terms of educating our children in tolerance and knowledge of 'otherness'.

INTERCULTURAL COFFEE MORNING

This was held on the day of the Bunny Bop and as in previous years was a great success. A sincere thank you to those of you who baked and cooked goodies from your country and culture to share with the rest of us.

Our thanks also to all who attended.

A special thanks must go to the small but wonderful Parents Committee for all their hard work and commitment.

BUNNY BOP

This too was a huge success - thanks in no small part to your wonderful generosity and the efforts to which you went in dressing up the children.

The raffle on the morning together with the Bunny Bop raised approx €6,000

So a huge thank you to you all for your wonderful generosity.

- As a result of your generosity we now have Beautiful new yard markings
- Extended the fencing on our Sensory garden
- New shelves for 2nd hand uniforms
- Drum lessons x 6 for all 1st and 2nd classes

All Sponsorship Cards must, for safety and licensing reasons, be returned. So please ensure you return any outstanding money and your sponsorship cards before Thursday 23rd April.

All cards returned will be entered in the Raffle which will take place on Friday 24th April 2015.

There will be 4 x €50 prizes - one for each class grouping.

MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTION

Thank you to all who send in the monthly €5.

It is greatly appreciated and helps towards meeting the shortfall in government funding of maintenance in our school.

TROCAIRE BOXES

Please send these back if you have not already done so.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION SUNDAYS

This year our First Holy Communion children will make their First Holy Communion as part of the 10 o'clock and 12.30 Sunday Parish masses.

The First Holy Communions this year will be this Sunday 19th April 2015

2ND CLASS PHOTOGRAPH

Dougie - our school Photographer will take all the 2nd class photographs on Wednesday 22nd April 2015.

First Holy Communion Children should wear their Communion clothes and those not making

Communion should wear their best clothes or national costume.

BOOK MONEY, EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT & ACTIVITIES COSTS 2015/16

We are committed to keeping the cost of your child's books and equipment as low as possible. This year we are again including the cost of active Curricular activities such as Swimming (2nds) Basketball, Dance (J.Infs, S. Infs & 1st classes) in the total cost. We have worked out a number of payment plans so that you pick the one that makes it easiest for you to pay.

All those who have paid by June 26th 2015 will have the cost reduced by €10

The Educ Costs to you this year are as follows:

Junior Infants:

Bks & Educ Equip	€90
Basketball & Dance	€40
TOTAL	€130

Senior Infants:

Bks & Educ Equip	€90
Basketball & Dance	€40
TOTAL	€130

1st Class:

Bks & Educ Equip	€90
Basketball & Dance	€40
TOTAL	€130

2nd Class:

Bks & Educ Equip	€90
Swimming x 8- 10 Lessons	€60
TOTAL	€150

(Remember Full Payment before 26th June will reduce each by €10)

If you are experiencing financial hardship - please let us know in confidence and we will do our best to work something out.

We have been taking payment on Tuesday and Wednesday since February.

We will continue to take payment or part payment on books every morning from now on between 8.50 a.m - 9.10 a.m.

To all those parents who have paid for books and for the cost of extra curricular activities we are most grateful. Thank You.

Could we ask that all outstanding money (for the current year 14/15) owed to the school for Books, Educational equipment, Swimming, Basketball and Dance be paid in full immediately.

If you are having a problem doing so please make an appointment to meet me.

Outstanding Money on this years bill if not paid will be added to next year's costs.

SCHOOL TOURS

The School tour season is about to begin. Given these recessionary times we have tried to keep costs as low as possible - but yet again it is the high costs of coach hire which drives up the overall cost.

In order that you can plan for the cost we are trying to give you as much notice as possible.

JUNIOR INFANTS

will not leave the school to go on tour but will enjoy a puppet show - and a Teddy Bear's Picnic in the grounds.

This date has not yet been finalised but the **cost will be about: €5**

SENIOR INFANTS

Will go to Newgrange Farm on Thursday 14th May 2015

Cost €18

This is an hour long bus journey so please ensure that your child has a plastic bag with them if they tend to suffer from travel sickness!

Senior Infants will not return to the school in time for 1.30 pm pick up on the day of their tour. They will instead need to be picked up an hour later than usual.

Home time for Senior infants on day of the tour will be 2.30pm

1st CLASSES

Will visit the Zoo on Wednesday 20th May 2015

Cost €18

1st classes will not return to the school on time for 2.30pm pick up on the day of their tour.

OUTSTANDING BOOK MONEY

They will instead need to be picked up a little later than usual.

Home time for 1st classes on day of the tour will be 3pm

2nd CLASSES

Will go to Lullymore in Co Kildare on Wednesday 13th May 2015

Cost €20

2nd classes will not return to the school on time for 2.30 pm pick up on the day of their tour.

They will instead need to be picked up a little later than usual.

Home time for 2nd classes on day of the tour will be 3pm

In order for your child to go on tour we must have signed consent from the parent/guardian and also the full amount of the School Tour one week before the actual tour date.

ACTIVE WEEK AND SPORTS DAY

Depending on the weather Active week will take place during the following week **June 8th - 12th with Sports day on Wednesday 10th June weather permitting**

We hope that as many of you as possible will join us again this year as the children really love when you are there to cheer them on. More information on this will issue as the date approaches

TEXT-A-PARENT

Just a reminder to ensure that we have an up to date Mobile phone number for you please. If you did not receive or most recent text this week about the school warden service in Aderwood - please check with the office to ensure we have your correct mobile phone number.

JUNIOR INFANTS 2015:

We have offered places to 138 Junior Infants for September 2015. Through the General Meeting and individual appointments I have met the majority of children (and their parents) who are coming to us next year. I still have a small number to meet.

If you have a child or are aware of a child who should have received a place for this coming year please contact the school immediately.

If you have a child of preschool age please ensure that you have put their name down with us for school. Some children have missed a place this year because their names had not been given to us in time. And now all places are allocated and they are now on a waiting list.

MOVING HOUSE/ SCHOOL/AREA?

If you have plans to move house or know that your child will not be returning to us next year - please let us know as soon as possible as we can then allocate a place to a child on our waiting list.

ATTENDANCE & TIME KEEPING

Firstly I wish to acknowledge all those of you who send your child to school every day, on time and are punctual in bringing and in collecting. In order for your child to make real progress in school - this is crucial.

I would ask that those of you who struggle with Attendance and Punctuality make a real effort to improve on this - for your child's sake.

SCHOOL UNIFORM & JACKET

Your child is expected to wear full uniform every day and the school track suit on designated P.E. days and on School Tour Days. All children are required to wear the school jacket - and this is the only acceptable jacket for your child to wear to school.

If Summer does make an appearance and the weather gets warm enough - please remember that children may wear navy shorts with their track suit T-shirt and Track suit sweat shirt top.

PAIRED READING

This is an initiative that we rely on you totally for running. A huge thank you to the small group of parents / grandparents who make themselves available to help with this activity. If you think that next year you could give us a little time daily or even weekly please contact the school. We would love to have your help.

🎱 LOST PROPERTY

Week on week there are a number of items - mostly clothing misplaced by the children. These items end up in our lost property box. You can check in this box any afternoon at home time. Items will be left in the box for a month and after that will go for reuse or recycling.

🎱 2ND HAND UNIFORMS.

We are always grateful for 2nd hand uniforms donated in good condition. We are always short of track suit bottoms.

🎱 JUNIOR INFANT HEARING & VISION TESTING

This will take place during this coming term - and has been scheduled by the HSE for the week beginning 15th June 2015. You will get a consent form to sign in due course.

🎱 2ND CLASSES

We will be saying goodbye to all our 2nd class children at the end of this term. All 2nds will visit the Senior school in June and this takes away most of the anxiety around their transfer.

We will also have a **Graduation Ceremony** which will most likely be on Friday 26th June - but dates and details will be confirmed with 2nd class parents nearer the time.

We will miss all our 2nd class children and wish each one of them every happiness and success on their life's journey.

🎱 SPRING/ SUMMER CLEAN UP

We are hoping to organise a parents spring clean of the grounds in the coming weeks - details will follow soon.

🎱 LIBRARY BOOKS RETURN

We would ask that you make a special effort to return all Library books to us. We will have no option but to implement a **€5 fine for unreturned books**

🎱 LIFT OFF TO LITERACY

We are also missing a small number of Lift Off books in the Senior Infants and 1st classes.

We would ask that you check and see if your child has returned all books borrowed. Replacement of these books is €5.

🎱 PASSPORTS FOR SIGNING

If you require a passport to be signed I am delighted to oblige but please note the following

Making an appointment is the best way to ensure I am available to sign.

If both parents are named on the Birth Certificate then both parents must be present to have the passport signed.

There will be a slot for signing every Friday at 12.45 pm - 1pm - otherwise an appointment is your best option.

🎱 LEAVING CHILDREN TO YARD IN THE MORNING

Please note that for insurance reasons children should not be left unsupervised in yard before 8.50 am.

It is not acceptable practice to leave your child in the care of another parent.

🎱 CHILD PROTECTION

We would ask that parents do not stand at gates, or sit in cars at gates, watching the children while they are playing.

You as parents would not be happy if your child was being watched by a stranger!

It is difficult for teachers on yard to determine who is a stranger and who is a parent.

We do understand that parents who need to come for the 1.30 home time collection start to gather at the gates towards the end of big yard - and this is fine. But it is not acceptable for children to be watched for the duration of their playtime and a number of parents have voiced concerns about the practice of doing so.

🎱 SCHOOL CLOSURES THIS TERM

• Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th May 2015 - Closed

• Friday 22nd May 2015 - School closed for Elections.

•Monday 1st, Tuesday 2nd & Wednesday
3rd June 2015 - Closed


•Tuesday June 30th 2015 school closes for
Summer Holidays at 12 o'clock

School reopens after Summer holidays for
15/16 academic year on Tuesday September
1st 2015

As ever, we thank you for your generosity,
courtesy, co-operation and support.

We look forward to working with you this term
in the interest of your child's happiness,
learning and well being.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann Ryan".

ANN RYAN,
PRINCIPAL.