



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Dipton

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Executive Headteacher: Mrs J Burgess
We follow in Christ's footsteps

Friday 9th September

Dear Parents/Carers and Pupils



It is with great sadness that we hear of the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

We have gathered in school this morning to mark her passing and to begin a period of reflection, and celebration of her life.

We share the words of our new King, Charles III:

"We mourn profoundly the passing of a cherished Sovereign and a much-loved Mother. I know her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country, the Realms and the Commonwealth, and by countless people around the world. During this period of mourning and change, my family and I will be comforted and sustained by our knowledge of the respect and deep affection in which The Queen was so widely held."

We will think about how best to mark our gratitude for her incredible service to our country, in the coming days, and we will follow any guidance issued.

**Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her.
May she rest in peace.
Amen.**

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Now to school news...



I hope you have all had a lovely holiday and that you are all feeling refreshed and ready to go. It is wonderful to see all our pupils and staff back (smiling)!

We are sure the start to the new term has been particularly exciting, or maybe a little nerve-racking, for our newest pupils (and their parents) starting Reception. We have been delighted with the way our youngest pupils have settled so far and we are confident all new children and their families will quickly get to grips with school routines. Thank you, also, for following our school uniform guidelines including school bags. Using school recommended bags makes such a difference to space in our porches. Please remember, if anyone needs help with uniform, contact the school office and staff will do whatever they can to source the items you require (including the green rucksacks as we would like to see all pupils using these). We never want uniform to be a source of worry.

I want to say a huge thank you to Mrs Gardner and all members of staff for ensuring school has started smoothly. We are getting used to a bit of a change this year as I begin working between St Patrick's and St Joseph's. I see it as a huge advantage that St Joseph's and St Patrick's are neighbouring schools. This means I will be in very close proximity to both schools at all times, should any issues arise (although I know, with very experienced staff, both schools will always be in very safe hands. Whilst St Patrick's and St Joseph's have their own identify, I look forward to forging greater links between the two. In fact, we will be looking to develop links more widely with other schools within our Trust. Sharing ideas and good practice can only benefit our school family.

School Improvement Priorities

This year brings us many opportunities for all members of our school to grow and learn together. We are challenged to have the highest expectations in all we do. Every school produces its own version of a school improvement plan which lists priorities for development. We have wasted no time at all and we have already met as a team to agree school improvement priorities – some of these will be explored across both schools.

1. Catholic life and Religious Education



We propose to build links within and beyond our local community to give our pupils a greater understanding of how we can be of service to each other. We would like to reinforce the message that positive behaviour within classrooms and around school is important to all members of our school community as it makes our learning experiences as positive as possible.

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We want our Religious Education lessons and our liturgical prayer opportunities to be engaging and fully involve our pupils.

2. Pupils with additional needs

We want to ensure our pupils with additional needs have the most appropriate provision. In line with Trust advice to schools, we will review our systems and revisit all pupils with additional needs to consider classroom and school adjustments, as well as support needed, in order for pupils to make the greatest progress possible. Our SENDCo will liaise with pupils, staff and parents to ensure an accurate picture is established.

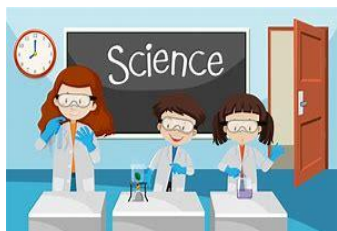


3. Monitor progress and achievement in our Year 3 and Year 4 cohort

We wish to keep an additional focus on these two cohorts as we appreciate a lot of the early building blocks in their learning was affected by Covid disruption. Yes, this is true of every year group and, rest assured, the progress of every child, in every year group, is tracked very closely, but our Y3 and Y4 pupils had their early learning journey significantly interrupted during EYFS and key stage 1.



4. Wider Curriculum



We want our pupils to experience activities across many subjects and we aim to provide opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in a variety of areas. To do this, we will be looking at how we plan across different subjects so that there is consistency.

5. Pupil Voice

We hope to extend opportunities for pupil voice in terms of areas of responsibility and opportunity for real change. We know there are already a range of opportunities for the pupils at St Patrick's to take on leadership roles. We intend to talk to our pupils about these. What do they want to keep? What would they like to change? What other ideas do they have?



6. Attendance and Punctuality



We will continue to demonstrate the highest expectations in terms of attendance and punctuality – working closely with parents, carers and other agencies where attendance is a concern.

We want St Patrick's pupils to benefit from every learning opportunity and, for that, they need to be in school. We fully understand that children can become unwell, and sometimes pupils will be absent from school. That said, good attendance is vital if pupils are to achieve the best possible outcomes.

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Parent/carer questionnaire

As we begin a new academic year, it seems very timely to hear your thoughts on all the positive aspects of St Patrick's as well as possible areas to develop further. Shortly, I will be issuing a brief questionnaire so you can share your views. I know we had a good response to all surveys issued during the last academic year. Hopefully, that will continue.

School diary of events/after school clubs

Currently, we are putting together the school diary of events and after school clubs for the autumn term. We will send these out as soon as they are finalised in the next few weeks.

Earrings

For health and safety reasons, earrings are not permitted in school. I realise some children will have had ears pierced over the summer holiday but it is now 7 weeks since term ended last academic year and that should have provided sufficient time for earrings to now be removed.

Haircuts

We do not wish to continually speak to parents (often the same parents) about inappropriate/excessively short hair so we ask you to follow school policy, which is available to view on our school website.

Safeguarding/Online Safety

We will give regular updates throughout the year regarding the need for vigilance with online safety. Please alert us to any concerns you may have. Whatever anxieties you may have, there will be others who are worrying about the same thing. It is better for us to know about this so we can address issues with pupils in an appropriate manner.

Go Read

Our new reading app, Go Read, is up and running. If you have not done so already, please download the app and log on so you can begin recording your child's reading. We ask that your child reads at least 3 times per week at home. The app allows us to monitor this in school. I think some were keen to get started and initial feedback has been very positive.

Good luck to Year 7

Last, but certainly not least, we wish all the Year 7 pupils well as they embark on their next adventure. We know they will 'do us proud' as they carry on their good work at their new schools.

I know I speak on behalf of all members of staff when I say we are all very excited to get stuck in and help our children learn and progress. If you have any queries/concerns regarding any information in this letter, please phone the school office or email: stpd@stpd.bwcet.com

Please remember, it is always better to deal with us to have queries/concerns answered, rather than rely on information which may filter through WhatsApp groups etc. The school office can always provide the most accurate information. Speaking to a member of the school office team should always be the first point of contact. When home and school work together, pupils will have the best chance of success.

Kind regards
Mrs Burgess
Executive Headteacher

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