



PARENTS' NEWS  
SEPTEMBER 2019



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## WELCOME BACK:

We hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer. Welcome back to all our pupils, staff and parents for what promises to be an exciting new school year. A particular welcome to our Year 1 and Nursery pupils and to our new pupils. We hope you settle into your new class, make lots of friends and enjoy your time at Steelstown. We also welcome Mr Vincent Feeney who will be teaching P5 and Mr Kevin McLaughlin who will teach P4. We also welcome our new LS Assistants – Mrs Michelle Gallagher and Mrs Stephanie McAuliffe.

Miss Jacinta Hegarty was in Steelstown Primary School for 33 years. We wish to thank her for her long and dedicated service to the children and community of Steelstown Primary School and her contribution to the charity and life of the school.

Mrs Anne-Marie O'Kane was in Steelstown Primary School for 29 years. We wish to thank her for all she did for the school and school community also.

We wish them both many years of good health and happiness in the years ahead.

We look forward to building upon existing relationships and developing new home school relationships to provide best experiences and opportunities for our children.

## SCHOOL ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS:

To comply with Child Protection and security considerations, the following access procedures are in place:



### P1

In the morning all P1 pupils are to come into the school via the main school entrance or the entrance at the music room at the side of the building. Supervision is in place in the P1 shared area from 8.45 a.m. and children or parents are asked not to go into either P1 classroom at this time.

At 2.15 p.m P1 & P2, children are to be collected promptly. Children from Mrs Crampsey's class can be collected at the back door beside her classroom. Children in Mrs McColgan's class are collected at the outer door beside her classroom. Children who are waiting to be collected will be taken to the front foyer of the school while they await collection.

### P2

All P2 pupils must come into the school via the main school entrance or the music room entrance. Supervision is in place in the assembly hall from 8.45 a.m. and children should be left at the hall where they will be collected by their teachers at 9.00 a.m. Parents are asked not to go into P2 classrooms.

At 2.15 p.m. children will be accompanied by the teacher and/or classroom assistants to the front and back gates.

All P1 & P2 children must always be collected by an adult and the class teacher should be informed of any change in arrangements for collecting children at the end of the school day. Children who attend the after-school club must be collected by an adult at 3.00 p.m. from the mobile classroom.

### P3-P7

P3-P7 children should enter the school via the main entrance or the back door at the top of the playground. In the interest of Child Protection and Health & Safety, parents are asked to leave children at the foyer. Messages for teachers should be given to staff in the foyer or in the office. Children are supervised in all areas of school – breakfast club, ICT, Accelerated Reading Club and corridor supervision.

At 3.05 p.m. all children will come to either the front or back gates of the school for collection. Parents are asked to wait at the gates to avoid congestion and confusion at the exit doors at dismissal times. This is also in the interest of Child Protection and Health & Safety. We thank you in anticipation for your co-operation.



After 9.10 a.m. access to the school is by the main entrance only. All parents/visitors must report to Reception on arrival. (This is in interest of Child Protection)

**In special circumstances, alternative arrangements can be put in place, but only with the approval of the Principal or Vice Principal. We thank you for your co-operation in these matters.**

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Parents must report to Reception for collection of children during the school day where they should sign the register for withdrawing pupils.
- Parents are not permitted to approach classroom doors at any time during the school day without prior consent at reception. P.E. gear, lunches and general messages should be given to the School Secretary, who will deliver them.
- If you wish to discuss an issue with your child's teacher, an appointment must be made through the office. All appointments with class teachers should be made for after class time. Children in class cannot be left unattended at any time.
- If an urgent matter arises, you may speak to the Principal or Vice Principal by telephone or in person before 9.30 a.m. An appointment can be made during the school day to speak with the Principal or Vice Principal.
- **Children must not wear jewellery to school** (i.e. earrings, necklaces, bracelets etc.), as these can cause injury during playtimes and physical education.
- Children should wear full school uniform and only plain black shoes to school. All coats, P.E gear and items of uniform should be clearly marked with the child's name.



### School Uniform

Our school uniform gives a sense of pride and belonging. All children are encouraged to wear full school uniform each day.

### Free School Meals

To find out if you are eligible please follow the link below. If your child does not avail of free school meals, please still apply as it has a direct effect on our funding.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financialhelp/free-school-meals>

### ROAD SAFETY

- Pupils who come to school by car should be left off and collected at the pedestrian accesses. Additional parking space is available in Our Lady of Lourdes car park, which is within walking distance of the front gate. Parents are asked to be considerate of the residents of the houses near the school gates at Ardnamoyle Park and Steelstown Road, who are often inconvenienced by the volume of traffic around 9.00 a.m., lunch-time and home-time. Parents should not park on footpaths as we have had reports of children not being able to pass and having to walk on the roads which is a considerable safety hazard.
- Parents are asked to remind their children of the importance of taking care crossing the road on the way to or from school.



### Bicycles

We are delighted to see that so many of our children walk or ride to school. This brings rewards and benefits to health and the environment.

Bicycles may be brought to the school site, but they must be walked from the gate to the bicycle rack at the front and back doors. We would kindly ask parents to remind children not to cycle inside school grounds because of safety.

**HEALTHY EATING:** Parents are reminded that Steelstown Primary School is a health promoting school and has a healthy breaks policy.

P1 & 2 children are provided with a healthy break. P3-7 children should bring their own break to school.

Please do not send any biscuits, bars, sweets, crisps or sugary/fizzy drinks for your child's break. Children should eat only fruit, vegetables, yoghurt drinks/yoghurts or a small sandwich at breaktime. We also encourage parents to provide healthy foods in your child's lunchbox. Those children having

school meals will receive a nutritionally balanced meal as outlined in the Government's Nutritional Guidelines for School Meals.

**Nut Aware:** We currently have a pupil with a nut allergy. Please ensure that your child has no nut products in lunch boxes or brought into school for break times. This includes products such as peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate spreads, cereal bars, granola bars, cakes that contain nuts and some biscuits.

This list is not exhaustive, so please check the packaging of all packaging products closely.

### **ASSEMBLIES**

Year Group assemblies will begin on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September. You will be notified in advance of Assembly timetable for your child's class. Pupil of the Week will be presented at School Assembly.

**ATTENDANCE:** Regular attendance at school is essential for your child's progress. There is a direct relationship between regular attendance at school and your child's progress and performance. When a child's attendance drops to 85%, schools have no choice but to report it. 85% attendance means you've missed 46 days. That's 9 weeks – over 2 months of school. One of the factors affecting performance is poor attendance. The Vice Principal and the Education Welfare Officer, Mrs Marcella Doherty, meet on a monthly basis to review the attendance of all pupils. If attendance or late-coming becomes a concern, we will contact parents directly in line with procedures. **Parents should not take children out of school during term time for holidays.**

**E-SAFETY/MOBILE PHONES:** Mobile phones **are not permitted** in school at any time. Mobile phones can be used by some children to tease and bully others via text messages and more seriously inappropriate images. If it is discovered that a child has a phone in their possession in school, they will be asked to leave it in the secretary's office and collect it at home time. Parents will also be informed. In the case of a child having to contact home in an emergency during the school day, this can be facilitated by the school secretary. As you may be aware from recent media coverage, cyber bullying is also an increasing problem for our young people.

**\*It is illegal for any child under 13 to have a Facebook, Instagram or Twitter account. \***

### **Website, Facebook & Twitter**

You can access updates and news via our school website, Facebook and twitter sites. Newsletters will be made available regularly to parents online. If you would prefer a paper copy, please call by school office to receive one. Paper copies will also be made available at various points of the school.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!**

If you or a relative can volunteer to help with gardening, sport or any other school activity, please leave your name and contact details at the school office. Thank you.

### **Friends of Steelstown**

We welcome new parents and present parents to our parent/teacher association. Our PTA is committed towards enriching the school experience by arranging events and raising funds for school resources etc. We even provide tea and biscuits at the meetups ☺ If you are interested, please leave your name at the office.











I look forward to working with each one of you and building on the great community and parish we are part of.

*Mrs Siobhán Gillen*



Steelstown Primary & Nursery Unit  
School Closures 2019 – 2020



| <b>Term 1</b>                   |   | <b>Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December (inclusive)</b>        |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|
| September 2019                  | Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2019  | Staff Training Day  |    |
| October / November 2019         | Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> October -<br>Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> November  | Halloween Holiday (Inclusive)   |    |
|                                 | Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> November   | Staff Training Day  |    |
| December / January 2019<br>2020 | 12:30pm closure on Friday 20 <sup>th</sup><br>December – School will reopen on<br>Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January          | Christmas Holiday   |    |
| <b>Term 2</b>                   |   | <b>Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (inclusive)</b> |   |
| February 2020                   | Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> February<br>Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> February  | Mid Term Break  |  |
| March 2020                      | Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March  | St Patrick's Day Holiday  |  |
|                                 | Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March  | Staff Training Day  |  |
| April 2020                      | 12:30pm Close on Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup><br>April School will reopen on Monday<br>20 <sup>th</sup> April for all pupils | Easter Break  |  |
|                                 | Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> April  | Staff Training Day  |  |
| <b>Term 3</b>                   |   | <b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 (inclusive)</b>    |   |
| May 2020                        | Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> May<br>(changed from Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May)   | May Day Holiday   |  |
|                                 | Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May   | Staff Training Day  |  |
|                                 | Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> May  | Staff Training Days   |  |

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

| Year Group | Date  | Event   |
|------------|---|---|
| P7         | Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept                            | Literacy & Numeracy Club begins P7                        |
| P2         | Mon 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept                            | P2 After-school Club begins                               |
|            | Mon 16 Sept   | After-School Clubs begin (sheet to be sent out this week) |
|            | Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> Sept                           | Staff Training Day  |
|            | Tues 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct                            | Friends of Steelstown Meeting 7pm                         |
|            | Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> Oct                            | School Draw   |
|            | Wed 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct                            | Hallowe'en Disco  |
|            | Thur 31 <sup>st</sup> Oct & Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov | Hallowe'en Holidays                                       |
|            | Tues 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec                            | Open Afternoon 1:30 – 3:30pm                              |
|            | Thurs 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec                           | Christmas Rickety Wheel/Fayre & Santa 5 – 8pm             |

Curriculum Afternoons/Evenings for P3 – P7 parents have been arranged for week beginning Mon 23 September.