



# St Mary's Primary School

Grace Park Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath  
Tel: 090 6472321 • Email: stmarysathlone@gmail.com



## April 2023 Newsletter

Just a reminder that there are many ways to contact the school if you need to do so;

By Phone- 09064 72321

By Email- [stmarysathlone@gmail.com](mailto:stmarysathlone@gmail.com)

In Person- At the main office

If you need to contact your child's teacher this can be done via the SeeSaw app. If you have not received a login code for this or you cannot access it please let your child's teacher know.

Our School Website -[www.stmarysprimaryschoolathlone.ie](http://www.stmarysprimaryschoolathlone.ie) has further information and updates.

## 2023/2024 SCHOOL YEAR ADMISSIONS



Our Teddy Bear's Picnic for our new Junior Infants starting in September 2023 will take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> of May @ 9.45am-11.30am.

### Parent Association



Our next Parent Association Meeting takes place on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 at 7pm in the Junior Hall of the school**. Any parent/guardian is welcome to attend PA meetings, whether you are a member of the committee or not.

If you wish to contact the Parent Association please email [stmaryspa2022@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryspa2022@gmail.com)

### Parent Classes



### NEW CLASSES

- 4 sessions of **Storysacks** - 9.30 - 12.30 Thursdays 20/4/23 - 11/5/23.  
*What are Storysacks? Children love fun and interactive activities and the idea of the 'Story Sack' is showing and teaching parents that if you include supporting materials alongside a storybook itself it will allow children to be more 'hands on' during story time, stimulating their minds, language and imagination by bringing stories to life.*
- 4 sessions of **Sewing** - 9.30 - 12.30-Thursdays 18/5/23 - 8/6/23
- **Make Up Artist**- We have one more upcoming 1 -hour workshops with an experienced Make Up Artist on 27<sup>th</sup> of April at 9.30am-11.30am. If you are interested, please let me know!

## ONGOING CLASSES

- A horticulturalist from the LWETB will visit the school fortnightly to work with parents/caregivers/grandparents/guardians etc. We are always looking for more participants so please get in touch if you are interested!

We can accept adults 18+ (parents, grandparents, guardians, caregivers, any interested adult).

- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) is ongoing, taking place in the LWETB on the Clonown Road, Athlone. Assessment required before commencing the programme.
- All courses are free of charge to parents/guardians of pupils in the school. Please ensure the school has an up to date email address for you, as all communication regarding courses will be via email.

Please contact Iseult (Home School Community Liaison) on 086 83545647 or on [iseulthscl@gmail.com](mailto:iseulthscl@gmail.com) to enrol in a class or for further information/advice.

## **Green Schools Initiative**



St Mary's NS is working towards applying for our 8<sup>th</sup> Green Schools Flag- Global Citizenship-Marine Environment.

We have various initiatives taking place across the whole -school which we are hoping will allow us to achieve this goal next year.

The whole school is currently engaging with various aspects of Green Schools Marine Week this week -24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> April.

5<sup>th</sup> Class will attend a Marine Conference in the Radisson Hotel on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April and will display a class project entitled 'Coral Reefs'.

4<sup>th</sup> Class are currently working through six workshops on 'Life Below Water'.

3<sup>rd</sup> Class are currently engaging with the 'Seakeepers' lessons based around educating students about the very specific marine environment.

Our current Green School Committee will be engaging in a 'Marine Clean -Up' on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> of April at the River Shannon in Burgess Park. They will also attend an Athlone Canal Awareness Event on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2023.

2<sup>nd</sup> Class are growing lettuce and strawberries in our Polytunnel!

We will hold new elections for our Green School Committee in Term 1  
2023/2024!

### Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) Service in St Mary's N.S



Our HSCL Coordinator -Iseult Murphy- is a teacher who works in partnership with parents, teachers and local community organisations to support positive educational outcomes for pupils/students.

The HSCL Coordinator also works closely with the other two strands of Tulsa Educational Support Services, Educational Welfare Officers (EWO) and personnel from the School Completion Programme (SCP) to improve educational outcomes for children. As part of her work, the HSCL Coordinator will meet parents during home visits, at courses for parents in the school and at other school and community events. Please feel free to contact Iseult Murphy on 086 8354567 or at [iseulthscl@gmail.com](mailto:iseulthscl@gmail.com) for advice, information or support.

### Attendance



We encourage full attendance at school for all of our pupils each day that they are well. Please see our step by step protocol below for informing parents of your child's absence rates;

#### Step 1 -5 day text

You will receive an automatic text from the school when your child misses 5 days- regardless of the reason why or whether or not you have informed the school of the absences. This text is intended to alert you that your child has reached 5 days absence.

#### Step 2- 15 Day Letter

Your child's teacher will send home/post out a letter to inform you when your child has missed 15 days of school- regardless of the reason why or whether or not you have informed the school of the absences.

### Step 3- 20 Day Letter

This is a formal letter which reminds parents of their legal obligation to ensure their child is attending school under the Educational Welfare Act 2000.

The principal may also contact parents whose children have missed 10 consecutive unexplained days of school.

Our Attendance Drive is up and running in our school which commenced on Monday 7th November 2022. Please see below for more information.

### Attendance Drive 2022/23 Information



#### Junior Infants-2nd Class

\*Class rewards for good attendance

\*Class rewards for class with most improved attendance

\*Individual certificates for excellent attendance at the end of each term.

#### 3rd-6th Class

\*Reward for the class with the best % attendance at the end of each month.

\*Class rewards for class with most improved attendance

\*Individual certificates for excellent attendance at the end of each term.

### Parking



Parents/Guardians are reminded of the importance of responsible parking when dropping/collecting children at the school. The set-down area is for quick drop-offs and pick-ups; please do not congest this area. There is a 10 minute grace period for parents to park in the Fair Green Car Park at drop-off and pick-up times; we encourage parents to avail of this. For health and safety reasons, cars should not be blocking bus spaces, double-yellow lines, be parked blocking footpaths or at school entrances. Please carefully obey the pedestrian crossing between the two school buildings as this is very busy in the mornings and afternoons. At 2pm and 3pm collection times, please only cross the road with your children at the designated pedestrian crossing.

**\*\*Update**-we have seen an increase in parents walking their children into the school via the main car park gate on the Junior side of the road. This is **not** an entrance way, as it's a busy road with staff parking at that time and as such is a dangerous place for pedestrians to be. Please use the designated entry point for your child's class\*\*

### Sports & Music



- Swimming continues for 3<sup>rd</sup> Class every Wednesday.
- All 6th Classes continue their Tennis Sessions on the school yard (run by Athlone Tennis Club).
- WOW Days (Walk On Wednesday) days are where everyone tries to walk or Park and Stride to school if they can. Park and Stride is where you drive some of the way and walk the remainder.
- 3rd class attended a Rugby Blitz on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April in Buccaneers Rugby Club.
- A coach from Cricket Leinster came to the school on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> of April to teach 4th and 5th class from 11am until 3 o'clock.

### Dog's Trust Visits



Paul Cleary from Dog's Trust has been visiting our school from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> of April until Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> of April to teach all classes about the importance of caring correctly for dogs. He is also teaching pupils about dog safety and wellbeing and how to keep ourselves safe around dogs at home and in the community.

## BLAST Project for Art



Mr Lowry's 4<sup>th</sup> Class created a wonderful project entitled 'Kindness and Friendship' for Art BLAST with local artist Rosemarie Langtry! They worked on the project for over 8 weeks! The class made a fantastic collag  which is now displayed outside of the hall on the senior side of the school. It looks fabulous! Well done to all involved.

## Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in St, Mary's NS



The Amber Flag Initiative- St. Mary's N.S is committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and so we are engaging with the Amber Flag Initiative. As part of this work we are delighted to share that on Friday April 28th, we will be running a fundraising event for Pieta House. We are calling this day Fantastic Friday! On Fantastic Friday, we are encouraging all children to leave their bags at home, come into school in their comfiest clothes, and have loads of fun! Children will participate in dancing, meditation and mindfulness activities. We will be having a drawing/colouring competition for JI-1st and 2nd-6th class, more details to follow with that. The winning class will get an ice-cream party on Friday 5th May! Classes will also get the opportunity to take park in an activities to include Zumba/Dance, Yoga, Art and PE/Games. We hope the children have a really fantastic Friday!

## Junior Entrepreneur Programme



St. Mary's N.S has been engaging with the JEP programme for several years now. The programme ultimately allows pupils to create a business within their

own classroom. Through the JEP curriculum, games and learning aids, pupils get a clear picture of what creating a business is all about. The programme is designed to integrate into the primary school curriculum, with each step providing opportunities for pupils to learn new life skills in addition to comprehensively covering their core subjects. Mr Falvey's 5th Class are busy creating their 'Positivity Bracelets' and are working through huge orders! We wish them the best of luck!

### **Junior Infant PEEP**



(Parents Enhancing Education through Play) Programme

Karen Kinneavy (School Completion Programme) and Iseult Murphy (HSCL) will be running the PEEP programme with all Senior Infant Classes.

The PEEP programme involves one parent/grandparent accompanying their child to each session.

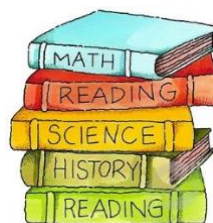
Each junior infant class gets access to 2 sessions. Ms Glynn and Ms O Reilly's classes are now completed.

**\*\*Change to previous timetable\*\***

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 @ 9.30am until 11am.-Ms Phillips

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 @ 9.30am until 11am.-Ms Martin

### **Homework Clubs**



Homework Clubs will continue until the end of the term. Homework Clubs will not run on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> of June due to school closure.



## Sacraments



First Holy Communion- Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> of May @ 11am

Confirmation- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of May @ 5pm

## Upcoming School Closures



Monday 1<sup>st</sup> of May -School Closed - Bank Holiday

Kind regards,

*Ailish McManus*

Ailish Mc Manus

Principal