**Spring Newsletter 12/02/2018.**



Dear parents,

Below is some information on recent and upcoming events in our school. It has been a busy term since Christmas and we have lots to do before the Easter Break.

**Grandparents Day and St Brigid’s Day**

For Catholic School Week and to highlight the importance of family we celebrated both Grandparent’s Day and St. Brigid’s Day on Thursday the 1st of February. Fr. Paddy delivered a lovely service to grandparents and pupils in our school hall. A large number of grandparents attended and the children and staff thoroughly enjoyed having them visit the individual classrooms to look at their work and to listen to their songs and poetry. It was a most enjoyable and successful event and we thank the grandparents for their support.

**Friendship Week**

The children have been also celebrating the meaning of friendship in Friendship week and making beautiful friendship trees to remind everyone of the importance of support, inclusion, compassion, empathy and action. In support of Amnesty International the children have been donating €2 for friendship bracelets.

**Fire Drill**

On Tuesday 6th February we had another fire drill. The pupils and staff managed to chop more than one minute off their last fire drill evacuation time. Well done to all!

**Lent & Trócaire**

Ash Wednesday, 14th February, marks the beginning of Lent and will see many children and families begin their journey of promises they will undertake for Lent. This year’s Trócaire Lenten campaign focuses upon the KOROMA FAMILY in Freetown, Sierra Leone who were affected by recent landslides in their area. This tragic event affected the Koroma family in various ways and cost them their home, possessions, work tools and changed the course of this family’s future forever.

Trócaire boxes will be sent home to every family so please show your support, in whatever way you can, to those less fortunate. We will collect the Trócaire boxes after Easter.

**Parent’s Association**

In order to support the Trócaire campaign there will be no ‘Split the Pot’ during Lent. The parents association will be organising an Easter egg hunt for the children in March as well as the annual Easter Raffle. I would like to say a huge thank you to the Parent’s Association for their constant support, fundraising, organising, energy and big hearts. For all that they do for and in our school.

**Maths for Fun**

Maths for Fun sessions will be starting in individual classes after mid-term. The children will develop and strengthen their mathematical skills by counting and working with numbers in lots of fun ways. Each class teacher will be looking for 5-6 parents to volunteer to take part and help out. Our thanks in advance.

**Internet Safety**

To promote internet safety St. Paul’s J.N.S. and S.N.S have invited guest speaker Paula O Connell into the school to deliver training and support workshop on internet safety for parents. This will take place in the school hall on Tuesday 17th April at 7.30pm. A reminder text will be sent out closer to the time.

The website [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) offers information, advice and education on internet safety issues and concerns; social networking, cyber bullying, screen time, web cams, live streaming, dangerous on line games, blackmail etc. Knowledge is power when it comes to protecting your child.

**Child Protection**

All sections of the Children First Act 2015 have now commenced. Therefore St. Paul’s J.N.S. has produced a Child Safeguarding Statement, available on the school website and from the secretary’s office. As part of this procedure the school carried out a child protection risk assessment. After seeking legal advice both Boards of Managements have decided to lock the top gate due child protection concerns, health and safety and insurance issues. This will come into effect on Monday the 19th February 2018.

We understand that in locking this particular gate that some families will have to walk around the perimeter of the school to enter the school premises through one of the other gates. However, we are sure that, like us, your child’s safety is paramount and that you trust us, in our duty of care, to take this necessary action to keep them safe at all times. Thanking you in advance for your support with this matter.

**Dates to remember** 

**Mid Term Break**

Both schools will be closed next Thursday 15th and Friday 16th Feb.

**Spring Walk**

We will have our annual Spring Walk/St. Patrick’s Day fundraiser on Wednesday 14th March at 10am.

**Lá Fhéile Pádraig** 

School will close at noon on the 16th March and open on Tuesday 20th March. **Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig libh go léir!**

**Child Protection Training**

Early closure - St. Paul’s J.N.S. and S.N.S. will close at noon on Friday the 16th of March to facilitate the first of two half day staff Child Protection training seminars.

**Easter Holidays** 

School will be closed for Easter on Friday 23rd March and re-opening on Monday the 9th April.

**World Book Day – 1st March**

World Book Day will be on the 1st March. Look out for the book vouchers worth €1.50 which will be given out towards the end of the month and will enable you to purchase books more cheaply for the month of March.

We will be running a €2 ‘Bring a book, buy a book’ event in the school that week to support St. Michael’s House. All classes will participate in book swops, DEAR time and storytelling.

**Seachtain Na Gaeilge – 12th – 16th March**

During the week of Seachtain Na Gaeilge the children will be encouraged to use Gaeilge as much as possible both in school and at home. There will be lots of fun filled activities around the school - all the classes recited poems and sang songs as Gaeilge in the hall. All pupils and teachers will be dancing *Shoe the Donkey* with great gusto in our school céilí.

**First Confession – 13th March**

First Confession will take place for the second class children on Tuesday, 13th March in St. Paul’s Church, Ayrfield. It will be a special occasion for the children and we wish them every grace and blessing as they continue to prepare for their First Communion.