### "With faith, family and

friends...anything is

### possible!"

Principal: Mr J Matthews, B. Ed (Hons) M.Sc. PQ.H. (NI) I Ballymena Road, Antrim, BT41 4JG t: 02894428837 f: 02894428853 e: info@stcomgallsps.antrim.ni.sch.uk w: stcomgalls.co.uk

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# NEWS @ St.Comgall's ISSUE 1: 2016 - 2017 Outdoor Trim Trail

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Children at St Comgall's Primary School are now able to benefit from a fun and engaging outdoor Trim Trail, which was officially launched on 25<sup>th</sup> October. "We have had ambitious plans for outdoor play facilities for the children for quite some time. Within the school campus, there were previously very few outdoor activity areas for the children to engage with and the equipment that was there was popular and over-subscribed", said Mr Matthews. "We are absolutely delighted that through the grant from the Big Lottery Fund of £10,000 along with school funds and the fundraising carried out by our Fundraising Group, we have been able to develop this incredible resource, to assist our goal of helping to tackle the increasing problem of childhood obesity", he continued.

The Trim Trail is an outdoor play facility, designed to create the opportunity for young children to develop a lifelong passion for outdoor physical activity by creating an exploratory, fun and engaging physical play area within the school grounds. It provides a safe outdoor play area with a wide range of outdoor equipment designed to engage and challenge children physically, to develop children's confidence in movement, to support better peer relationships and turn-taking and to develop a passion for physical activity.

Since its installation the children have been enjoying it thoroughly and it has already become a firm favourite with everyone.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Big Lottery Fund for their grant of £10,000 and to the staff, parents and local community who have supported our fundraising efforts to provide such an incredible resource for current and future generations of children", said Mr Matthews.



### LOTTERY FUNDED



Here are some of our pupils making good use of our new Trim Trail and enjoying the exercise.

# Thank You Tesco!!

St Comgall's wishes to extend our sincere thanks to the staff of TESCO. During the summer, and organised by Mr Stephen Bann, one of our parents, staff from TESCO provided their time to re-paint our entire school hall for free. It has refreshed the space for the children using bright green and blue colours. Their time and effort given by TESCO staff, to our school community is appreciated by all our Board of Governors, Staff and Children.





Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The St Vincent de Paul Society (or as it is often known - the SVP) is an international Christian voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty and disadvantage by providing practical assistance to those in need – irrespective of ideology, faith, ethnicity, age or gender. The Society is a lay organisation initially formed in Paris in 1833 by Blessed Frédéric Ozanam and his companions, and active in England & Wales since 1844. Placed under the Patronage of St Vincent de Paul, it is inspired by his thinking and works. It seeks, in the spirit of justice and charity, to help those who are suffering poverty in whatever form.

Last year thousands of families across communities in Ireland celebrated Christmas because of help from people like you.

Unfortunately, this Christmas even more families will need help to put food on the table.

Here at St. Comgall's we reached out to our parents and children in an effort to help these families in need in our community. As always your generosity knows no bounds, the response was overwhelming. We and St, Vincent de Paul would like to thank you, our P.5, 6 and 7 parents and children, very much for your donations.





Thank you so much for your generosity. It will make such a difference this Christmas.



On 27<sup>th</sup> of September a group called Image Theatre came to our school. The play was called The Jungle Book. All of KS2 got involved in this play. Some lucky people got to act in the play. The play was about the original 'Jungle Book' in 1893. The main characters were Mawgli the man cub, Baloo, Kaa, Bagheera, Akela, King Louie and Shere Khan. The story was about a man cub that got washed away from his village and Akela found him. He welcomed him to the wolf pack. Shere Khan didn't like the man cub and wanted to eat him. Baloo taught him the laws of the jungle. Mawgli got captured by King Louie and Baloo saved him. Akela missed his prey so Shere Khan decided to become the main wolf pack leader but the man cub went to the man village and got fire and KILLED Shere Khan, so the man cub went back to the man village. The people who got picked were either wolves or monkeys. Everyone sang songs. All the costumes were very funny looking. The wolves got to stand on the big rock and the monkeys got to play limbo with a big rope and it was all very exciting. We were very glad that we got picked and it was a very good experience for us, we would like to experience this again because it was very good.



On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September we celebrated Our Day of Languages. The Languages day was a time to celebrate the 6,000+ languages spoken around the world, and we celebrated some of the languages of children in our school – we had some multilingual fun! Each year group learnt facts about their assigned country. They also learnt a few words of the language spoken in that country.

All the children came to school dressed in the colours of their assigned country and some dressed in the national dress of that country.

# Welcome to our new P.1 Pupils





















On Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September, at assembly, two Policemen came to talk about road safety. First they talked about wearing reflective jackets at night in the dark. Then they brought three volunteers up and they wore a reflective jacket. One of them wore a cycle helmet. The police



men said that, "You always have to wear a helmet when you are riding a bike." After the policemen reminded us, "In the dark, you must wear a reflective jacket to be seen". Secondly, Officers Mark and Andrew talked about how to cross the road safely. They needed a volunteer and Laoise from our class was chosen. The policemen and Laoise showed us, how to cross the road safely.

The policemen said, "The first thing you do is stop at the edge of the footpath. Then look left and right and listen while walking across the road."

Last of all the policemen talked about why you should always

wear your seatbelt when in the car. They needed a volunteer and Kevin was chosen. Kevin was sitting on a chair as an example of what could happen if you don't put your seatbelt on. The policemen said, "So this is what happens when the car stops." Once he said that he pulled Kevin's chair pretending the car stopped. "So that's what happens when the cars stops! If you don't have your seatbelt on, you could get a very bad injury!!"

At the end we gave the policemen a round of applause.

It was good to have the policemen visit our school because we now understand how to be safe when walking, cycling and in the car.

By Irene And Christel Primary 6B





# Travelling Book Fair comes to St. Comgall's

The Travelling Book Fair came to St Comgall's on the 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October. The book fair is a fantastic way for parents to supplement their child's home reading material. It also helps raise money for books in our school as we can purchase books to a percentage value of all money spent at the fair by parents. This has been a great way in the past of enhancing our school stock. The children were excited to see the book fair in the school foyer and had fun picking a book to buy and bringing it home to read.



## This year the school raised £952.00 Hope everyone enjoyed reading the books they bought. Thank you very much for all your support.





## INTERNATIONAL KARATE KID

Katelynn McCracken is a pupil in Mr McLaughlin's P.7 class, she appeared in the Antrim Guardian in October after making an impressive win at the Northern Ireland Karate Championships. Katelyn took gold in kata and bronze in kumite U11's. She lost points in kumite due to contact otherwise it looked like she was headed for straight double gold. Read below what Katelynn has to say about Karate.

I'm Katelynn McCracken, I am in P7B I have been doing karate for 5 years. I was 5 years old when I started the NIKW, Antrim. I train at Belfast on Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday. I train at the Antrim Forum on Wednesday. I train with the NIKW Northern Ireland Karate Wado. Wado is the style of our karate.

I have started competing internationally, I nearly got a bronze in a tough fight in England at the British Championships.

At the Northern Ireland championships I got a gold and a bronze medal, very close to getting two gold medals.

Karate is good for you because it keeps you fit and teaches you all about self-defence.

I would recommend karate to anyone at any ages. What encouraged me to do karate was just for fun, but when I became older I became more dedicated. Now on a Tuesday after the class has ended, me, my sensei and 5 other people, Ross, Thomas, Adam, Callum and Jack have another training. Before me and my friends went to any international competitions we went through a minimum of 8 weeks of really hard training. I have done 4 grades which makes me a green belt.

### Well Done Katelynn!!





On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> of October, the ICE (Institute of Civil Engineers) team visited our school. We had been learning about super structures and the engineers who built them such as Gustav Eiffell, Thomas Telford (he was the founder of the Institute of Civil Engineers) and Isambard Kingdom Brunell.

We built a 14 metre long cable stayed suspension bridge. First we got our safety helmets and high visibility jackets because we needed to be safe. We split into groups. Some people connected the cables and others lifted pieces of the deck and connected them together. We learned that in construction safety, planning and teamwork are very important.

To make the bridge stand it was pulled up by wire cables which were connected to the tower that were at each end of the bridge. The deck which we had to walk on had to be strong to hold us up. The foundation was at the bottom of the bridge and held everything up. We put blue pieces of foam under the bridge to hold it up while we built it.

When we had finally finished building the bridge we realised it looked like many world famous bridges such as: The Golden Gate Bridge, Brooklyn Bridge and Clifton Suspension Bridge. We weren't sure if it would hold us up, but it did! We learnt that when we worked as a team we could have great success!

By Liam Phinn and Eva Varghese, P7B



The children in primary 2 had lots of fun learning all about fruit, vegetables, the farmer and bread during the theme Yum Yum Yum. At the end of the theme, primary 2 prepared a prayer service to thank God for everything at harvest time. Everyone sang and said prayers and some even dressed up as different vegetables on the day! Thank you to everyone for all the fabulous costumes and props you supplied for the service. Our families really enjoyed it!



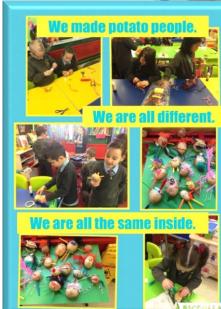
On Monday 21<sup>st</sup> Nov as part of Anti-Bullying week Mrs Christie's class, P.5B had the chance to work with actors – to perform a play themed "Click Safe." The play explored the issue of internet safety and helped children understand the importance of keeping themselves safe online. The project allowed pupils to work together to create a fun, action packed 20 minute performance. Through the play, the children explored issues such as: the value of teamwork, self-expression, public speaking and confidence building. They also reminded us about online safety/Facebook/iPads/phones/bullying and what to do if it happens to you! This was a really enjoyable event.

Mr Christie's class practising their "Click Safe" Play



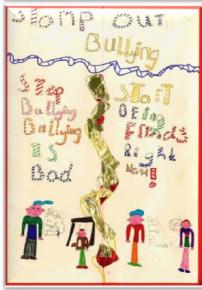
## Potato People

As part of Anti-Bullying Week from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> November our P.3 children made potato people; they cut one of the potatoes open to see the inside, they discussed how they are all the same on the inside.



Some of the children's work about bullying





#### Our Potato people

My name is Fayth and my name is Caitlin and we really enjoyed making our potato people. We stuck the arms and legs in the potato people then we put hair in the potato people. We put mouths on them. Some people put moustaches on theirs, they were all different. Whenever the teacher cut open a potato we talked about how all potatoes look the same in the inside. We might look different on the outside but we are all the same on the inside.



Fayth Sansome and Caitlin Hannah P3C



# Road of Hope Shoebox Appeal





Last year Road of Hope donated 11,000 gift filled shoeboxes to those, young and old, who wouldn't normally receive any gifts. Here at St. Comgall's we have certainly shown that people do indeed have a kind and generous nature, as the response to the Shoe Box Appeal our P.1, P.2, P.3 & P.4 children donated.

### 244 Shoe Boxes

We and the Road of Hope charity would like to thank you all very

#### much for your generosity.

# Halloween Horrors at St. Comgall's



The children had a fun day of dress up for Halloween. They also learnt at assembly about the dangers of fireworks and how to remain safe when they are near fireworks.



As part of Maths Week, we invited the Happy Puzzle Company to our school. We were organised into groups and had to work together to solve problems. One of our favourite puzzles was fitting all of the shapes together to create new shapes. We also loved balancing the penguins on the boat so it didn't tip over! A great day of magical mathematics!



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# **Remembering Lorraine**



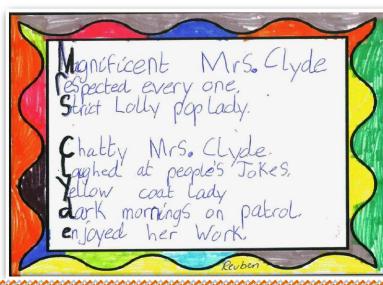
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During the month of November here in \$t. Comgall's we remembered our dear friend and colleague, Lorraine, the children worked on some beautiful artwork and wrote about their memories of Lorraine. Here you can see some of the magnificent work and thoughts about Lorraine. We still miss her and think about her often. We pray for her and her family.







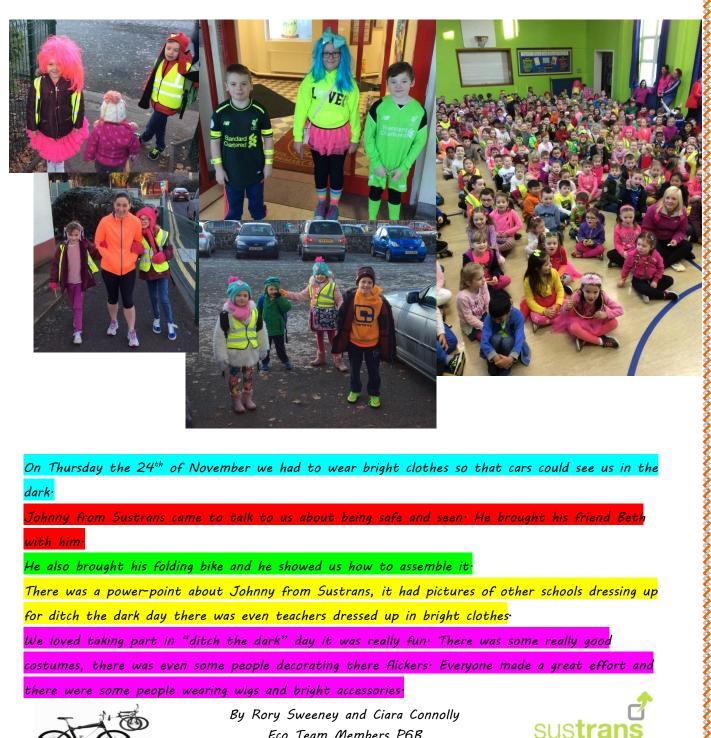
# Ditch the Dark Day

As part of our involvement with Sustrans Active School Travel programme we held a special Active Travel Non Uniform day on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November.

The theme of the day was to 'Ditch the Dark'. To raise awareness of safe travel to school during the darker days, we were encouraging children to actively travel (walk, scoot or cycle) to school wearing the brightest clothing they could! Children were invited to get creative with their outfits to be super bright. The possibilities were endless - bright clothing,

glow sticks, fluorescent orange socks, a pink tutu, a neon green wig – get bright, brighter, brightest!

Parents were invited to join the fun too by dressing to impress in their best neon bright clothing and travel to school actively with your child on that day! It was a fun, active day and the children thoroughly enjoyed it. The school looked extremely bright and colourful that day!



On Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup> of November we had to wear bright clothes so that cars could see us in the dark

Johnny from Sustrans came to talk to us about being safe and seen. He brought his friend Beth with him.

He also brought his folding bike and he showed us how to assemble it.

There was a power-point about Johnny from Sustrans, it had pictures of other schools dressing up for ditch the dark day there was even teachers dressed up in bright clothes

We loved taking part in "ditch the dark" day it was really fun• There was some really good

costumes, there was even some people decorating there flickers<sup>.</sup> Everyone made a great effort and

there were some people wearing wigs and bright accessories.



By Rory Sweeney and Ciara Connolly Eco Team Members P6B

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# **School Council**

### Focus on the crocus.

We were all given an application form to enter this years "School Council" we had to fill in

- Your name
- Your class
- An example of when you worked in a group and what you achieved
- Give three examples of why you would make a good representative for your class and
- What your big idea for improving our school would be

The best applications for each class were chosen to be in the Student Council.

Once the council had been formed we went to visit Antrim Primary School and their school council. When we were there, we planted crocus bulbs in small black pots. Then we put them all in the cleaner's cabinet. Once we had planted all of the bulbs in Antrim Primary we went back to St Comgall's Primary school and were split into three groups to make our own compost. One of the buckets broke so we had to work in two groups to make the compost for our bulbs in two large baskets. Then we planted more crocus bulbs in pots.

The reason why we were planting the crocus bulbs is because it is a purple flower. In poorer countries when children are immunised against Polio they paint their finger nail purple. Polio is a disease which kills and paralyses the young children who catch it. In the worst cases children's legs can shrink. It can spread within a few hours, yet it can be prevented through a simple immunisation. We were planting crocus bulbs to remind us of the dye painted on the fingers of children to show they have been immunised against Polio.

By Alfie Hanna (P6) and Georgia Lavelle (P7)





Antrim Primary School and St Comgall's Primary School's School Council First Meeting;

#### "Focus on the Crocus"

Crocus' are purple and that's the colour charities use to show when people are vaccinated against Polio. When they are vaccinated they paint their finger nail purple! That's what we did on our first meeting with Antrim Primary school between both school councils. As part of our Shared Education Partnership we all met in Antrim Primary School. We all met each other in our school reception and made our way to Antrim Primary. When we got there we met the other school's council and their teacher Miss Pankhurst. We then started to plant our own crocus'. We had to: 

- Get a plant pot,
- Put soil in the plant pot,
- Put a little bit of water in the soil
- Next we put in 9 crocus bulbs and
- Covered them with compost

We began to have conversations with Antrim Primary school children and at first it was a little awkward but we soon began talking. When we finished planting in Antrim Primary School we put our bulbs carefully into a dark store in their school and began to walk back to St Comgalls.

Here both school councils began planting again. We all played games while we waited on the compost. Mr Matthews introduced us to two ladies from Antrim Rotary Club. They came to see us planting the bulbs. Finally we all gathered together in Mrs Mullan's room where it was lovely and warm. That was the end of our trip.

By Aoife Stewart (P5) and Ella Dalton (P7)









Congratulations to our students for their fantastic work during the Mangahigh Maths Week Challenge 2016. Five of our students earned more than 150 points and received medal.

The five students were:

Dara Kelly	- P.5A Mrs Jeavons
Josh De La Cruz	- P.6C Mrs Magee
Tania James	- P.7A Mr Jones
Angel Shiji	- P.7B Mr McLaughlin
Eva Varghese	- P.7B Mr McLaughlin



## A Big Congratulations and Well Done!!



# STEM - Scientists Work with P.6

## (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths)

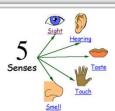
## STEM

Some scientists from Newcastle University came to teach us about science. They taught us about our 5 senses. First we drew scientists. They gave us a sheet of paper and the majority of the class drew mad scientists but scientists aren't mad. They are very smart!

They did experiments to teach us about each of our senses but we will tell you about touch. Everyone gathered in a circle around the class. We all touched fingers and two people in the circle touched fingers with a ball. When they did that the ball flashed . Then we all touched shoulders and the ball didn't flash. That is because when we touched shoulders there was fabric over it. It is because we were not touching skin so the connection would not travel through us like when we touched fingers. The scientists taught us this.

When we grow up it would be great if we could be scientists too!

Eva and Roma P6A





On Tuesday the 29<sup>th</sup> of November, three scientists from Newcastle University visited Primary 6. They were here to teach us about being scientists and how to investigate our senses.

I liked it when we put some strange special paper on our tongue. Most of the people thought it was disgusting and bitter, but they explained that everyone's taste buds are different, so I couldn't taste anything. We also learned the four secret senses (pain, balance, heat, and body awareness) and the normal FIVE senses. They were touch, sight, smell, hearing and taste. We also were allowed to draw a mad scientist.

The science project was very fun, my favourite part was when the man had a tiny music box and he was making it louder by setting it on different surfaces. I also liked when we had to try **STARBURST** and guess what flavour it was. We had to close our eyes, unwrap the sweet below the table and hold our nose when we were eating it. 

#### By Ryan Hood P6B

On Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> of November we had a STEM workshop. We explored the five senses. They are touch, smell, sight, taste and hearing. We did short experiments on our five senses. The first experiment was taste which was when we had a small piece of paper and put it on our tongue and for some it had a bitter taste and others it didn't have much taste because we have different taste buds. The next sense was smell. We got a Starburst and we weren't allowed to look at the wrapper, then we held our noses and put the sweet in our mouths and tried to guess the flavour. Most people got it wrong because it tasted so different. Next was sight. We looked at an optical illusion and it made our teacher's head seem small. The next was hearing. We put a cup against our ears while someone else was playing with a slinky. It made it sound like an earthquake. We then got a tiny music box that was hard to hear at the start. We put it against a table and it was really loud. The final sense was touch. We made a circle touching each other with only one finger. Someone was holding a machine in the middle of the circle but then suddenly the tiny machine bleeped. Then we tried it with our shoulders and it didn't work. That concluded our STEM afternoon. We all had lots of fun!

#### By Luke O'Loan P.6C

# Music Recital

On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December Mr Heron, Music Tutor, along with his students gave a recital to the P.5 – P.7 children. The assembly hall was filled with wonderful music as the children listened to the musician's play some Christmas tunes. Mr Heron is one of the Tutors who come in from the Music Department once a week to teach the children to play their instruments. We would like to thank him for his hard work and dedication to the children in St. Comgall's. The P.5 – P.7 thoroughly enjoyed the recital and were even rocking to the music.



# **Information & Reminders**

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### **Names on Uniforms**

Please remember to clearly label all items of your child's school uniform, especially jumpers, cardigans and coats.



### **Absence Letters**

If your child is absent from school, please inform the teacher in writing of the reason for the absence.

## Children coming to School Early:

Children should not be on the school grounds before 8.45am unless they are attending breakfast club. There is no supervision for children before this time.

BREAKFAST CLUB: from 8.10am - 8.45am Cost £1.50 Main School Hall.



### Tuck and dinner money

Please ensure your child has the money to pay for tuck and dinners if they use it. It becomes very difficult to manage for our teaching and canteen staff if money becomes "owed." Again, thank you in anticipation for your help with this.



## **Passports**

Any Passport Forms requiring signature from a member of staff will now cost a nominal fee of £5.00, which will go towards school funds.

## **Emaíls:**

Would all parents who completed a form requesting letters and information to be sent to them by email, please remember to check your emails regularly so you will not miss any important news, letters, dates and general information.



## Parents are reminded:

Pick up collection point of your child at home time:

Parents collecting P1 + P2 please collect your child from the teacher in the classroom – access through back gate or pedestrian gate at top of playground.

P3 + P4 children will meet their parents in the junior playground.

Senior children P5 – P7 will meet parents in senior playground.

This is to cut down on traffic through the main school building and promote safety within the school.

## Our School uniform suppliers are

Select Kidz Schoolwear Specialist In Ballymena 47 - 49 Springwell Street Ballymena T: 02825652128 M: 07516115865

Select Kidz are the School uniform supplier for crested uniform.

## New Year's Resolution

You are all aware, we are a hardworking and busy school. As a result we are asking all pupils and parents to make a New Year resolution of "Being prepared for school". It is very time consuming for staff and disruptive for pupils when children and parents do things like; forget dinner money, school bags, PE gear, reply slips, change home arrangements or collections arrangements etc. We also find that despite trying to ensure we give all parents important information by various forms of correspondence e.g. Parent Information Sheet, School Website, texts, emails and letters, many parents are calling school to ask for details already given. To assist our smooth running, and to assist your child(ren), we would ask you to consider making the resolution above. Thank you!

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

- Parents are <u>required to inform school</u>

   before 9.30 if their child will not attend due to sickness/unforeseen circumstances.
- Should a parent not inform school <u>and</u> a pupil does not present in school, we will text the parent requesting them to contact the school immediately.
- It is imperative that parents contact school to explain a sickness or unforeseen absence, they should then follow up with a written note to the teacher with the explanation.
- PLEASE RING IF YOU RECEIVE A TEXT.

## PUNCTUALITY

Parents are reminded that all pupils should be in class to begin learning at 9am. Parents are asked to have children in school on time to help with their learning.

ahahahahahahaha

The access gates into the playground will be closed at 9.10am. From that point on the only access to the classrooms will be by the front door of the school. From here, lateness will be monitored.

These objectives are to improve the learning environment for all children.



# **ATTENTION CHILDREN**, PLEASE REMEMBER WHEN CROSSING THE ROAD ON FOOT, ON A BICYCLE OR A SCOOTER......



Find the safest place to cross then stop. Stand on the pavement near the kerb or the edge if there is no kerb.



Give yourself lots of time to have a good look all around. Make sure you can see if anything is coming and drivers can see you.



Listen carefully because you can sometimes hear traffic before you can see it. Never cross the road whilst chatting to people, listening to your iPod or talking on your mobile phone.

### BE AWARE EVEN WHEN YOU ARE IN \$CHOOL GROUND\$ OR CAR PARK\$

# **SCHOOL WEBSITE!**

Please take some time to visit our school website! There you will find all the information you need about school. You can meet the classes and learn about the interesting events happening in school. We now has a translate engine, so the website can be viewed in other languages. Please select a language of your choice from the drop down list on our homepage. In addition we have added a 'scrolling announcements sections' on the top of the homepage – this will draw your attention to any current activity in the school.



## Reminder P.1 Applications

Please remember that the closing date for P.1 Applications is Wednesday 11 January 2017 at 12 noon. Please don't apply late!



The school will close for the Christmas Holidays on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 12noon for all pupils. This is a NON uniform day. <u>There will be NO breakfast club and NO tuck or</u> <u>lunches on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup></u>. <u>THERE WILL BE NO SCHOOL BUS SERVICE AT ALL ON</u> <u>WEDNESDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> OR THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER!</u> As normal, additional parking for collection on this day will be provided in the front playground of the school. \*Please follow the direction of the staff. School will re-open on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 (This will be a full day as normal).

The Board of Governors, Principal & Staff Wish you all a Happy & Peaceful Christmas, see you in 2017

