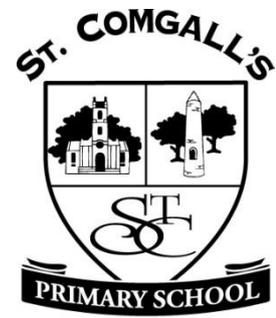


Parent Information Sheet

September 2017



Dear Parents,

Please find below useful information and reminders for the remainder of the month of September 2017.

New School Minibus & Table Quiz

It is just wonderful to start our new school year in possession of our new school bus. It is already in service for our year 6 swimming children, who are being shuttled to the forum in comfort and style! Many thanks to the fundraisers and to our whole school community for the huge effort and generosity that made it possible for all of us.

To get this year off to a great start, the fundraising team invite all of you to a table quiz in Starbucks NEXT TUESDAY 19th September - 6.30 for a 7pm start. It is aimed at families and is set to be a great start to our school year. Try to fix up a team and have a fun evening. Further details from the fundraisers inside this newsheet.

Beginning of New School Year Mass

All parents / family / friends are invited to join our school community for the beginning of the new school year Mass. It will take place in St Comgall's Church at 11am on Wednesday 20th September. Please join us as we pray for a great year ahead.

P.1 Information

Settling Interviews 11th – 22th September

Interviews for parents of our new P.1 children will take place the week beginning 11th September. For these interviews, P.1 parents should enter school via front entrance. Please contact the class teacher if your interview has not been arranged yet.

P1 Dinner Menu Trial

On Wednesday 20th September, the P1 children will have opportunity to try out school dinners and spend some time being introduced to the canteen and staff, before their full day routine begins on Monday 25th. On Wednesday 20th children will be brought to the dinner hall by the P1 staff, prior to the 12pm finish, and can trial dinners during a quiet period. A note will be sent home and if you wish your child to take part, the cost of dinners is £2.60. Alternatively, children can bring a lunch box to eat a small snack during the dinner session time that day.

Reminder: School Closure

Monday 2nd October will be a school closure for the children. Normal school resumes on Tuesday 3rd October.

European Day of Languages

We will celebrate European Day of Languages on Tuesday 26th September. In St Comgall's, we will celebrate diversity and languages in other countries. Each class will be given a country from which to learn a few words of the language. **Children will come to school in their uniform as normal.**

- P1 Lithuania (Lithuanian)
- P2 Slovakia (Slovak)
- P3 Poland (Polish)
- P4 India (Malayalam)
- P5 Philippines (Tagalog/Filipino)
- P6 Romania (Romanian)
- P7 The Czech Republic (Czech)



Perhaps you can help them find out one interesting fact about the country they have been assigned?

Travelling Book Fair

Our book fair will take place from Wednesday 4th October to Wednesday 11th October. It will be a great way to stock up on new reads or even Christmas gifts whilst helping our school get free books. More information closer to the time.

Cool for School Photographer

Our school photographer will be present in school on Tues 3rd and Wed 4th October. They will photograph all children / family groups and you will then have the opportunity to purchase the photos. We would ask that they are prepared for the photo by being dressed in their "winter" (shirt & tie) uniform – as that day begins October.

Reminder: Summer uniforms can be worn in September, May & June only.

Important Information Regarding Allergies

Throughout the school, several children have very serious allergies. It is important that parents refrain from giving their children products containing nuts, lentils, pulses, peas, eggs. Some examples of these foods include, peanut butter, hazelnut or chocolate spread, lentil soup, confectionary containing nuts, (Snickers/Topic), etc. If a child with an allergy comes into contact with these, a life threatening situation could occur. Many thanks for your co-operation.

NB. Whilst some chocolate spreads are nut free, from a school perspective it is difficult to ascertain if the spread is nut-free or not. We would therefore ask if you could try to avoid chocolate spread.

If your child has an allergy, please ensure that all details are given to the school secretary.

If there are any changes to previous conditions, please update the office.

School Uniform

As we begin the new school year it is great to see all the children back to school wearing their full uniform. I would ask you to support us by ensuring that your child/children continue to wear their uniform to school every day throughout the year. Footwear for school uniform must be all black. **Also, please ensure that all items of uniform, coats, footwear and bags are clearly marked with the child's name and class. This helps when items of clothing or bags are lost or found.**

Christmas Pantomime Information

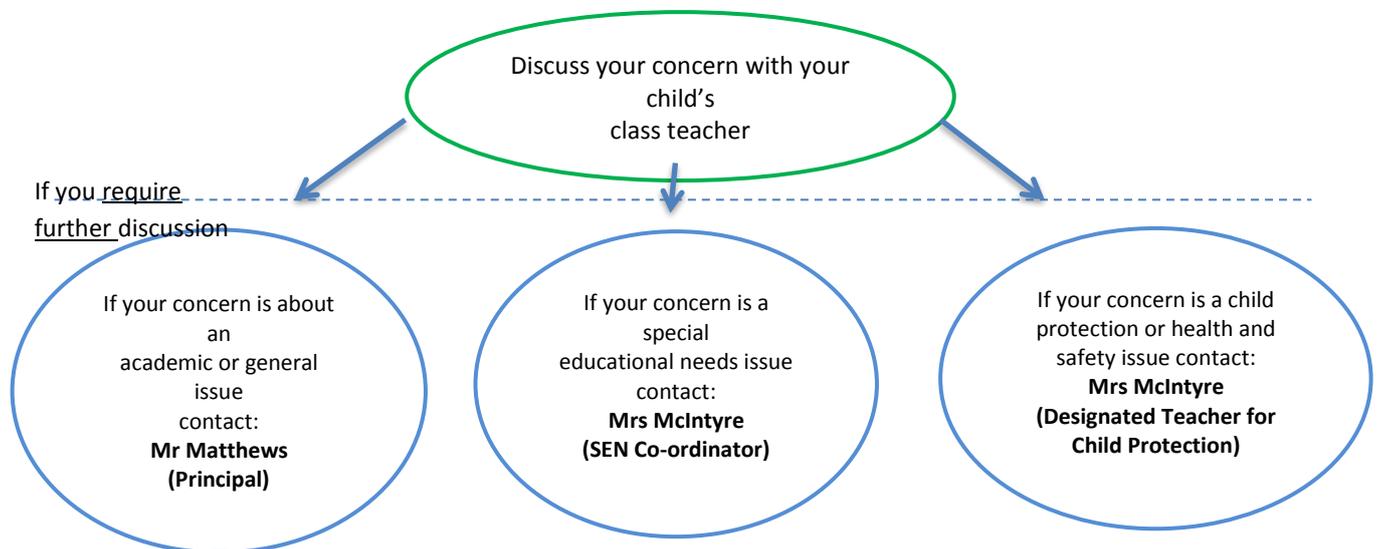
Last academic year, we undertook a review of pantomime attendance, which historically was - every child in the school, every year. The review outlined the pressure on parents to fund this increasingly expensive activity and pressure on the school to safely staff the outings. As a result, a decision was made that instead of cancelling pantomime trips completely, we would give opportunity for children to attend the pantomime twice in the duration of primary life. Therefore, from this year on, for the Juniors in the school - only children in year 3 will attend the local pantomime in Antrim (as this is age appropriate) and for the seniors - only children in year 7 will attend the Belfast Pantomime in the Grand Opera House.

PARENTAL CONCERNS

If you have concern about your child in school, please follow the diagram below.

Most issues/concerns can be sorted out quickly by the class teacher.

If you have a concern about your child:



OPEN DOOR POLICY: If you have a worry or concern, don't keep it to yourself, the Principal and Staff are always happy to listen. It may be possible to have a quick word between 8.45 am and 9.00 am but for anything more in-depth you can ring the office and leave a message or telephone number and the teacher will get back to you as soon as possible.

Teachers start their teaching day at 9.00am and after that it is vital that they are not disturbed.

Healthy Snack / Lunch box – birthday treats & medication needs.

The school has a healthy eating policy, which involves children bringing a healthy break to school every day. Therefore, we will be actively encouraging the children to consume the following foods and drinks at break time:

* milk and water / any fruit or vegetable / any bread product, for example, scone, sandwich, wheaten, soda, pancake, potato bread, tortilla wrap, pitta bread, bread muffin and crumpets. We would ask you to avoid sugary spreads.

We would also encourage children to bring water - in a reusable bottle - to school every day, as hydration is very important to the learning process.

It is also our intention to hold at least one event per term in school to promote healthy eating and highlight the importance of a healthy break.

To extend this further and support our **children who have allergies** (some severe and life threatening) **parents are reminded not to supply birthday cake / muffins / party bags for children's birthdays to the class.** School cannot account for the ingredients in these products re: our children who have allergies and it also goes against the positive and healthy eating promotion in school.

After Schools Clubs

After school clubs are due to start and the end of September.
More details will follow.

Passports

There will be a charge of £5.00 to complete a passport application.
All money will go towards pupil resources.

VERY IMPORTANT MEDICATION NEEDS

If your child needs any medicine administered while in school, for example, Inhalers, written consent is needed.

These forms are available from the office.

P1 Finishing Times

From Monday 25th September Primary 1 children will finish school each day at 1.45pm.

P3 Finishing Times

From Monday 2nd October, Primary 3 children will finish school at 3pm on a Monday and Tuesday each week.

Breakfast Club

Pupils are welcome to come to the School Breakfast Club which opens at 8.10 am at a cost of £1.50 daily. For this, breakfast (cereal, toast, fruit juice) and supervision are provided.

School starts at 9.00 am. Unless prior arrangements have been made, no child should be in school before 8.45 a.m. as no supervision can be guaranteed before this time. I would ask that all children are in school by 9.00 a.m. so that classes can begin promptly.

Waiting Room Information

From Monday 25th September the waiting room will be available to our P1 children as well as P2 and P3. Waiting room is a facility for children in P1 / 2 / 3 who wish to remain behind in school until 3pm. This service has been put in place to support parents who have in the past had to make 2 trips to school for collection or to allow a child to go home with an older sibling. Registration fee for the year is £20.00. It then costs £1 per day to use. **Please ensure payment is made promptly on the day.** You can contact the class teacher or get a registration form from the office.

Updating School Records

It is vitally important that we have your correct home address, home and mobile telephone numbers, email address plus details of your chosen contact person(s) for our records. If any of your details have changed from last year, please contact the school office. If your details change during the course of this year, please let us know.

School Policies

Complete copies of all our school policies can be obtained by contacting the school office. This includes arrangements for Child Protection, Internet Safety, Pastoral Care and Discipline.

Attention All Parents – Correct Money

Could we please ask all parents to establish a routine with their child/children, either the night before or in the morning before they set off for school, to check if they have tuck or tuck money, packed lunch or dinner money, bus money or collection arrangements at home time, so we can ensure your child's day runs smoothly, and minimise unnecessary calls home and eliminate the need to chase up unpaid monies. Thank you for your assistance.

Attendance Matters

All school attendance records are computerised and we would appreciate it when your child is absent from school that a dated letter/note of explanation is sent into the class teacher, explaining all absenteeism. If your child is going to be late for class any morning or needs to leave school for an appointment, a note of explanation is required.

Please note, the teacher cannot mark children present until they arrive in class. Following procedures stipulated by the Education Welfare Office, all unexplained absences from school will be recorded on our computer system as 'N' (no reason provided).

Also please note that in order to receive **100% attendance** for the school year pupils must be present for both the morning and afternoon sessions during the school day. Your co-operation in this matter would be appreciated.

Last year our average school attendance rate was 95.5%. We were happy with this but would like to improve on it even further this year. **Parents can help in the following ways:**

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Make sure your child goes to school regularly and follows the school rules.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time – not late.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours where possible.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness – this should be followed up with a written note when your child returns to school.
- What are they doing? – Who are they with?
- Take family holidays outside term time.
- Attend parent evenings and school events.
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school.
- Always support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour.
- Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school as you expect, they may be putting themselves at risk
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homeworks).
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive.



For more information, please reference the Department of Education information leaflet '**School Attendance Matters: A Parent's Guide**'.

Traffic Reminders:

Dear Parents – for child safety and traffic management, please remember that our school carparks are **LEFT TURN ONLY** on exit during school hours. Please select the most appropriate car park to assist with your onward journey, whilst following school traffic management. Alternatively, park away from the school, walk / cycle /scoot for collection which could help ease congestion around our busy site.

Disruption to Town Parks Residents:

It has been brought to the attention of the school that at drop off and pick-up times, parents from our school are parking their cars in Town Parks, in particular in the Cavalier Court area, then walking their child or collecting to/from school. Parents are asked to desist from this practice as it has inconvenienced our school neighbours and prevented one or two on occasion leaving their house to attend a necessary medical appointment. Please be considerate and find an alternative parking space or route to school. Many thanks.

Sacramental Information

Dates for sacraments are decided at Parish level, in conjunction with all parish schools and the parish diary. Sacramental dates have not yet been agreed, however, it is hoped that they will be agreed and communicated within the OCTOBER Parent Information Sheet.

“With faith, family and friends...anything is possible!”

Principal: Mr J Matthews B. Ed (Hons)
M.Sc. P.Q.H. (NI)



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www.stcomgalls.co.uk

Dear Parent/Guardian

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

The purpose of this letter is to remind schools of the importance of continuing to relay messages about the dangers of concussion to pupils, parents/guardians and school staff and also to remind you about the interactive, multi-media concussion lesson plans to support teaching.

The Department of Education (DE) and the former Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) launched the 'Recognise and Remove: Concussion Awareness Campaign' on 30 April 2014. As part of the campaign, 'Recognise and Remove' leaflets were issued to schools for distribution to pupils from Year 6 onwards, teachers, coaches and parents. Schools were also provided with copies of the 'Recognise and Remove' poster for display purposes and laminated copies of the 'Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool™'.

It is important that pupils, teachers, coaches and parents are aware of the dangers of concussion; know the signs to look out for; and the action that needs to be taken in the case of a suspected concussion. Any young person suspected of having concussion should **immediately cease** their activity and should not return until they have been medically assessed. If someone has been knocked out or their condition is worsening, urgent medical attention must be sought.

It is also vital that schools and other organisations with responsibility for children are made aware of any injuries involving concussion that a child may have sustained outside school. DE Circular 2015/07 provided schools with a letter to issue to parents/guardians reminding them to inform schools/other organisations about any injury involving concussion affecting their child and any restrictions that may apply to a child's activities. You may wish to consider issuing such a letter again to the parents of new pupils in 2017/18.

'Recognise and Remove': Concussion Lesson Plans

Since September 2015 Concussion Lesson Plans, created by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), have been available for use by all schools. These web-based lesson plans and multi-media resources provide information for teachers and pupils from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4 and are available at <http://www.ccea.org.uk/concussion>. A link to this resource is also available on the DE website and is included in the C2k EQUILLA digital library as well as a video on concussion management and the 'Recognise and Remove' leaflet. The lesson plans reinforce key concepts and messages about concussion through interactive, multi-media pupil activities. The Concussion Lesson Plan website includes links to advice on all aspects of identifying and managing concussion, including suggestions on when a child may be able to return to school as well as their normal activities. Schools have a vital role in disseminating this important message and your assistance is much appreciated. It is also important that new staff are made aware of the guidance and resources that are available. While the 'Recognise and Remove' leaflet is not available in hard copy, in addition to the letter to parents, teachers can refer pupils, staff and parents to the guidance and leaflet on the Department's website at <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/concussion-guidance>.

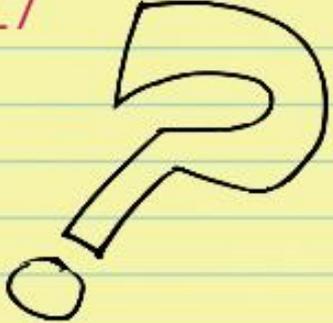
Yours sincerely,

Principal



TUES 19TH SEPTEMBER 2017
6.30PM FOR 7PM START

ST COMGALL'S PRIMARY
SCHOOL PRESENTS



QUIZ NIGHT

AT STARBUCKS JUNCTION 1

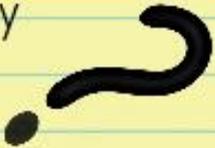
*Come along and test your
knowledge (or lack of it!!!)*

KIDS £1 | ADULTS £3 | MAX 8 PER TEAM



Prizes for the winning team, spot prizes and
raffle on the evening.

Can the adults beat the kids at the Disney
round????



All proceeds go the St Comgall's Fundraising Committee to
help raise funds for our school:)

PROPOSED HOLIDAYS 2017-18

Start back on: Thursday 31st August 2017

AUTUMN BREAK Monday 2 nd October	1 day
HALLOWE'EN – MID TERM Monday 30 th October - Friday 3 rd November	5 days
STAFF TRAINING DAY Monday 4 th December	1 day
CHRISTMAS – close half day on 22nd Dec Monday 25 th December – Friday 5 th January	10 days
SPRING MID TERM BREAK Thursday 15 th – Monday 19 th February	3 days
EASTER – close half day on 29th March Friday 30 th March – Friday 6 th April	6 days
MAY DAY Monday 7 th + Tuesday 8 th – Friday 11 th May	5 days
MAY BANK HOLIDAY Monday 28 th	1 day

Close on: Friday 29th June 2018 – Half Day

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N.B. The above numbered days are school days off and the dates are inclusive. The Department of Education has strict guidelines concerning parents removing children from school during term time for holidays which should be taken during school holidays.

MUMS AND TODDLERS -

NEW Mum's & Tot's group is opening Friday 15th September 2017, 9.30am @ Antrim Parish Centre, behind St. Comgall's Church.

The group will be gathering resources initially, but they have great plans.

Why don't you go along if you have a little one or have a little 2 or 3..... children, if you look after children or look after your grandchildren.

Do you know anyone who is a first-time mummy? Let them know the time and day and maybe they can get chatting with the rest and make new friends.

The group wish to ensure you to feel comfortable with us and safe!!

- All volunteers have ACCESS NI checks specific to the mums and tots group.
- All volunteers so far have completed Child Protection Courses and basic Food Hygiene.