

Parent Information Sheet

MARCH 2019

Please find below useful information and reminders for the month of
MARCH 2019.

March School Closure

As set out in our annual school holidays, the school will be closed Monday 18th March 2019.

HAPPY ST PATRICKS DAY!!



Ash Wednesday Mass

Ash Wednesday Mass (6th March), due to St. Comgall's Church being closed for renovation, our P.4 – P.7 children will have Mass in our school hall. Fr. Emerson will administer a special blessing to children in P.1 – P.3 on that day.

Year 1 Second Consultation

Week beginning 11th March – P.1A & P.1B

Week beginning 25th March – P.1C

Year 1 parents will be involved in their second consultation with the class teacher. These will take place in your child's classroom. Please use the sign-up sheet outside each classroom to book an appointment time.

Pancake Tuesday

On Pancake Tuesday (5th March) there will be pancakes for tuck instead of bagels. Pancakes are 25p.

Green Day Friday 15th March

To celebrate our Patron Saint, children are invited to come to school on Friday 15th March dressed in Green – or wear a green item. This is just for fun!

St. Patrick's Day Assembly

Year 5 are preparing an assembly in honour of our Patron Saint. They will perform this for parents at 2pm on Friday 15th March. A personal invite to year 5 parents/grandparents will be forwarded by year 5 pupils. Hope you can make it! Additional parking in the playground will be available on this day.



Lost Uniform

As the weather is improving the children will be taking their jumpers off and if they are not labelled then it is extremely hard to find their owner. It then proves expensive to parents who have to buy new jumpers. Please clearly label all items of your child's school uniform, especially jumpers, cardigans and coats.

World Book Day (N.B. This will NOT be a dress up day.)

This year World Book Day will be celebrated in the classrooms. It is Thursday 7th March 2019. On that day the children will be involved in a range of different reading activities across the school. It should be a great day. This year we will have a focus in school on books that promote a wide range of subjects. Each year group will cover a different subject.

P.7 Service of Light

The Service of Light for our P.7 pupils will take place on **Wednesday 20th March** in St. Joseph's Church at 7pm. Sponsors are welcome to attend but this ceremony is for parents passing the light of faith.

P.7 Carlingford Trip

A letter re: Carlingford residential for year 7 will be sent home this week. Deposits of £10 to secure a place will be required by Friday 15th March.

P.7 Retreat

P.7s will attend a retreat on Monday 11th March in St. Joseph's Parish Hall from 10am – 2pm. Children must bring a packed lunch.

Dinner Menu – Ash Wednesday

Please note a change to the dinner menu on Wednesday 6th March – Ash Wednesday.
Fish, Roast & Mash Potatoes & Peas

P.6 Science Workshop

Newcastle University Faculty of Science Agriculture and Engineering are sending a team of STEM experts to Primary 6 on Friday 1st March to encourage children to "Think like a Scientist". The groups will make predictions, look at experiments and observe interactive STEM demonstrations.



EASTER HOLIDAYS

School will close for the Easter Break on Thursday 18th April at 12noon for all pupils. There will be NO breakfast club and NO tuck or lunches on Thursday 18th April. THERE WILL BE NO BUSES in the morning or at 12 O'clock. 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 29th April 2019.

SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

P.7 Service of Light – Wed 20th March – 7pm in St. Joseph’s Church

P.7 SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION - Wed 3rd April - 1pm in St Joseph’s Church
(*Please note this is a 12pm CLOSURE day for the whole school*)

P.3 SACRAMENT OF FIRST PENANCE - Thurs 11th April - 1.30pm in
St. Comgall’s Church

P.7 Pledge Mass – Thurs 16th May – 2pm in St. Joseph’s Church

P.4 SACRAMENT OF FIRST COMMUNION - Sat 11th May – at 11am in
St. Comgall’s Church



NSPCC Assembly & Workshops – 8th March

“Speak and stay safe” KS1/KS2 workshop aim to equip our pupils with the knowledge and understanding they need to stay safe from abuse and neglect. The assembly is delivered in a fun and interesting way with the help of the NSPCC mascots ‘Buddy the Speech Bubble’. The assembly will be followed up by workshops in P.6 & P.7. Please see detailed letter attached to this information sheet giving more details about the workshops.

Health & Well Being

Daily Mile – St. Comgall’s are currently beginning to participate in the “daily mile” as initiative to improve children’s physical and mental health. It is hoped to have all classes completing a daily mile by the summer term with this being included in our Health and Wellbeing Policy next year.

Science Week

This year Science week’s theme is “Journeys”, encouraging young people to think about the different scientific journeys that happen every day and how they can discover science through their own lives and experiences. Science week takes place from the 11th – 15th March.

SMA Thumbprint

To raise awareness of Climate Justice the Society of African Missions (SMA) will visit P.6 & P.7 on 5th March. The Thumbprint Campaign encourages individuals to promise/pledge to take better care of the environment.

Shared Education Activities

The following classes will be involved in Shared Education Activities with our partner school – Antrim Primary:

P.1s & P.2s take part in the Buddy Up Programme. The children from both schools have reciprocal visits to learn and play together.

P.5s take part in various STEM activities. The children from both schools have reciprocal visits.

P.6s & P.7s will take part in the Northern Ireland Forest Schools Association (NIFSA) Project. Forest Schools is an exciting and inspirational experience for the children. They encourage them to work as a team, build confidence and self-esteem, explore all senses, develop communication skills and much more.

P.7 Tournament in Antrim Forum

Sustrans Big Pedal

See Flyer attached to this newsletter regarding Sustrans Big Pedal. Our school is taking part in the challenge. The challenge runs from 25th March to 5th April. Each day schools compete to see who can record the greatest number of pupils, staff and parents cycling, walking, scooting or using a wheelchair to school. The school will be entered into a daily prize draw for rewards if over 15% of our school cycle, walk or scoot each day of the challenge.

To finish the Big Pedal fortnight, the school will have their 'First Feet Friday' on 5th April (which coincides with Muddy Marathon Day!). More info and reminders of safe routes and parking to follow.



Scholastic Book Fair!

The Scholastic Bookfair will be coming to school on Wed 20th March – Tuesday 26th March. Children will be given viewing & buying time. Any profit, will go into purchasing new books.

Internet Online Safety

Keeping children safe is a top priority in St. Comgall's Primary School, whether on school premises or beyond, and this of course extends to the online world. In all we do, we like to focus on the positives of the online world. Technology is here to stay and pupils at our school live, love and learn through their tech.

What we would like to encourage you to do, though, is to talk to your children about what they get up to online. Please take time to talk to them over the next few weeks about what they do on their devices and with whom, what they love, and what worries them. There are plenty of things to be aware of online, but if you are warning them about risks and dangers, please don't show them scary images or tell them the names of 'bad apps' or challenges/dares to avoid. If you do, that can scare them even more or encourage them to go and google it later! In the past week there have been many press stories about a particular nasty challenge circulating with a scary image on social media. These stories are based on an urban myth / hoax which circulates every few months. Whether that is the case or not, please do not show any scary images from the newspapers to your children in order to talk about it, and do not mention the challenge by name. Instead, as above, talk about what to do if they see something scary or someone dares them to do something stupid or dangerous; ask them if they would tell someone and who; make sure they know never to forward these things to their classmates.

Let's work together to avoid unnecessary sleepless nights.

For further support please note the links below;

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/#>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Continuing our online safety work, parents are invited to an internet safety talk with Detective Sergeant E. McCormill – Esafety lead for the Public Protection Unit and Mario the 02 tech Guru!

Monday 11th March at 6.30pm in School Hall

Muddy Marathon

In March sponsor forms will be sent home for the Annual Muddy Marathon which this year will take place on the 5th April in the Castle Gardens. Sponsorship money will be used this year to purchase laptops for the new ICT suite in the new school building. We really need your help with this. Thanks for your support.

On the day we require parents to help Marshall the route – if you can help, please let us know by completing the reply slip attached to this information sheet.



Parental Reply – Muddy Marathon

I would be happy to help Marshall the Muddy Marathon on April 5th 2019 from 9.15am – 12.30pm

Name _____

Parent/Guardian of _____

Class _____

P.2 Trip to Carrickfergus Castle

In line with P.2 topic, the P.2 classes will visit Carrickfergus Castle on the following dates:

P.2A Mrs McCaughan– Tuesday 19th March

P.2C Mrs Quinn – Wednesday 20th March

P.2B Mrs Sipa – Friday 22nd March



Children should bring with them, a snack, drink and packed lunch. Children entitled to free school meals will have a lunch supplied. A letter with full details will be sent home later.

Date for your diary.....

“Blingo”

Our fundraisers are organising a great fun night of **Blingo** “bingo with a bit of sparkle!” – For men & women!!

It will take place on Friday 31st May in St. Joseph’s Parish Centre.
SAVE THE DATE! – more info to follow.

Job & Careers Fair

There will be a Job & Careers Fair in the Antrim Forum on Thursday 28th March 2019 – 11am- 2pm & 4pm -7pm. Come along for a chance to meet 60 local employers and support organisations. For more information, visit website below:

www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/jobsfair

WITH FAITH, FAMILY AND FRIENDS
...ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!



Dear Parent/Carer,

The NSPCC's *Speak out. Stay safe.* programme is visiting our school to make sure our pupils have the knowledge and understanding they need to stay safe from abuse.

I'm pleased to tell you that we will be working with the NSPCC, the UK's leading children's charity, who'll be delivering their ***Speak out. Stay safe.*** programme on Fri 8th March. This is a nationwide programme for every primary-school-aged child in the UK and Channel Islands. With the help of their friendly mascot Buddy, they'll be presenting an assembly and workshop to the children in our school.

"NSPCC has helped me to build the confidence to tell people about my worries and problems." Child's feedback

What is the *Speak out. Stay safe.* programme?

Through child-friendly, interactive assemblies (separate assemblies for KS1 & KS2 pupils) and workshops (P6 & P7 only) their specially trained staff and volunteers will give our children information about how to keep themselves safe from harm and how to get help if they have any worries, sensitively discussing issues like bullying and sexual abuse, without using scary words or adult language.

We have studied the content of the materials and heard from other schools who have participated and are extremely confident that they are appropriate for primary-school-aged children. By the end of their visit, we're convinced children will feel empowered – knowing how they can speak out and stay safe.

"This service provides important information in a child-friendly way – it should be made mandatory in all schools. A brilliant service!" *Teacher, Wistaston Primary, Crewe*

"I wanted to thank you for your presentations and workshops in Carrick PS. They were really good and pitched just at the right level for the different age groups of children"- *Principal, Anne Cassidy*

If you would like any more information about the NSPCC ***Speak out. Stay safe.*** programme, including frequently asked questions, you can find it on the NSPCC website nspcc.org.uk/schools or please come into speak to Mrs McIntyre and she can provide more information.

Talking about the Underwear Rule with your children

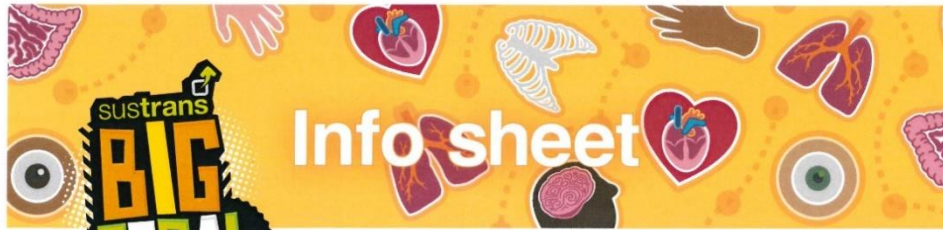
The NSPCC's work in schools will help encourage conversations about staying safe – and they have a number of child-friendly materials to help you carry on the conversation afterwards. That includes 'The Underwear Rule', a simple way for parents to help keep children safe from sexual abuse – without using scary words or even mentioning sex.

The guide uses the rules of PANTS to teach children that their body belongs to them and them alone. You can find out more and download the free resources at nspcc.org.uk/pants

If you'd like to know more about the NSPCC's work, or take a look at the wide range of information and advice which is available for parents and carers, please visit their website nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/

Yours sincerely,

Principal



Info sheet



Sustrans Big Pedal is the UK's largest inter-school cycling, walking and scooting challenge that inspires pupils, staff and parents to choose 'human power' for their journey to school.

The 2019 challenge

Travel around the body, learning, exploring and getting active for Sustrans Big Pedal. For the first time, **walking will be counted** alongside cycling and scooting.

This year the challenge will run from **25 March - 5 April**. Register for the challenge from January 2019 at www.bigpedal.org.uk.



How it works

On each day of the challenge schools compete to see who can record the greatest number of pupils, staff and parents cycling, walking, scooting or using a wheelchair to school.

A school's best five days will determine their final position and schools at the top of their leaderboards will receive an exclusive Sustrans Big Pedal Trophy.

2018 was an amazing year

A staggering **1,179 kg of nitrogen oxide** was avoided as a result of the 10-day challenge. Almost **46 million calories** were burned from participants cycling and scooting to school.

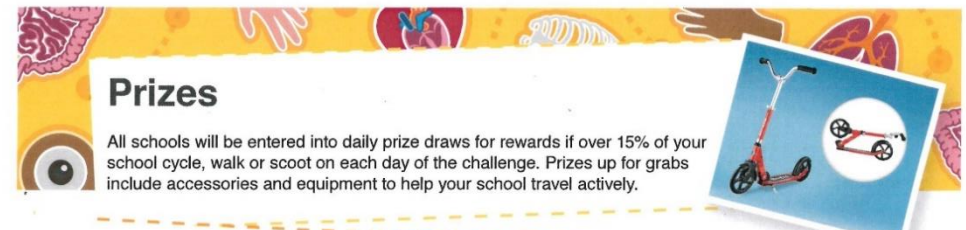
If the journeys logged had been made by car, we saved over 576 tonnes of CO2 and over 60,000 gallons of fuel, costing over £330,000.



Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

Sustrans is a registered charity no. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland). © Sustrans January 2019



Prizes

All schools will be entered into daily prize draws for rewards if over 15% of your school cycle, walk or scoot on each day of the challenge. Prizes up for grabs include accessories and equipment to help your school travel actively.



School Resources

We provide a suite of fun and interactive resources to help make your challenge a success. These free resources include:

- A school account on the Big Pedal website
- A human body wallchart with curriculum-based fact cards
- Daily classroom activities
- Posters
- Top Tips
- Leaderboards



FAQs

Who can take part in the Big Pedal 2019? All schools and classes in the UK can take part in the Big Pedal.

How do I register? A school must register online on the Big Pedal website. You will need your school identification number (DfE/SEED/Inst Ref Number) and the details of a staff representative who will be responsible for entering journeys throughout the challenge. Schools can register any time ahead of the challenge.

Can I see which schools in my area are taking part? Yes. There is a list of schools that have registered on the website which you can search for alphabetically, by school name or Local Authority. You can also view a map of schools taking part.

We can't commit to the full challenge, can we still take part? For schools unable to record five days worth of journeys over the challenge weeks, we also have a one-day version, which can include cycling, walking and scooting activities in the school day as well as on the journey to school.

We are a Special Educational Needs school (SEN), can we compete? Yes, SEN schools can compete too. If your pupils are able to cycle, walk, scoot or use a wheelchair to school then you may enter the Sustrans Big Pedal just like any other school and count your journeys.

There is no separate category for SEN schools. However, SEN schools with pupils who are unable to scoot/cycle to school may use school/static/adapted bikes and count journeys made at school, e.g. during school break times, in the playground.

Be part of something BIG

- 1) Keep up to date, check out the Sustrans Big Pedal website and register for the newsletter at www.sustrans.org.uk/bigpedal
- 2) Put the date in your diaries
- 3) Register for the challenge in January 2019 at www.bigpedal.org.uk
- 4) Email the Big Pedal team if you have any questions at bigpedal@sustrans.org.uk