



January 2024



## Happy New Year

Term 2 is upon us and can we first of all wish each and every one of our St Clare's PS community a Happy New Year.

Please read the Newsletter carefully as there are important dates coming up for various events from sacramental occasions to transfer and admissions applications. Please feel free to share our Newsletter with friends and family on social media. Remember, if your child has been successful in any aspect of their after school activities be that sport or arts etc., please let us know and we will be glad to publicise it in our Newsletter.

## Irish Football Association (IFA)

We are delighted that we have just this week begun a sports/literacy programme with the IFA for our P4 pupils. Coaches from the association are working with our P4 children in a balance of sports and reading activities. This will take place each Wednesday afternoon for the next ten weeks. We are delighted that this partnership has been made possible and thanks go to Mrs Brennan for helping to organize this. We hope this will benefit our future teams as well as raising our literacy standards.

## Applying for a Nursery/ Primary Place in St Clare's

Enrolment is now open on the EA website for entrance to the Nursery and Primary School for September 2024. Already the Nursery is almost over capacity for applications and there have been up to day 45 applications for St Clare's PS. We encourage all our prospective parents to complete the application process as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

## Transfer Test News

The last of the Transfer tests has taken place at the end of November and now the wait for results is almost over. Results will be administered to parents on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January. Unlike previous years, Mr O'Doherty will not receive the results himself but he will be available on the Saturday morning in school to answer any queries parents may have.

The marking system is very different this year and will not be reflected as a grade but instead a band number depending on the overall score each child has achieved. The school has sent out a summary of what this means compared to previous years' results. A copy of this is included at the back of this newsletter also. It is very important that you are aware of the requirements for each school which you may want to apply to in terms of the band your child has received. Mr O'Doherty will be available to guide parents through this process as always (see information below).

## Transfer Meetings/ Annual Reviews

Over the coming weeks, Mr O'Doherty will be available for P7 Parents to assist them in registering for a post primary school. He is willing to meet at evening times also to accommodate those parents who are working. Please see the sheet at the back of this newsletter explaining how to register online in order to select your school. If you are in any way unsure of what to do, Mr O'Doherty will make an appointment with you to help you select. It is very important that you read each of the post primary school's selection criteria carefully. Non-Grammar schools can-not accept Transfer Test results as part of the supporting documentation for acceptance. It is also important that any parent who has an appointment with Mrs Welsh for annual review, ensures that they make this meeting.

For your  
Calendar

Confirmation for all P7 pupils will take place in St Paul's Church on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>  
January at 11.00am

Mid Term Break takes place from Mon 12<sup>th</sup> – Fri 16<sup>th</sup> February.

# Important Dates for the Diary

Date	Activity
Thursday 11 January 2024	Admissions criteria for Post Primary Schools published on the EA website.
Tuesday 30 January 2024 - at 12 noon	EA Connect opens for online applications for Post Primary.
Thursday 22 February 2024 - at 12 noon	EA Connect closes for online applications for Post Primary.
Monday 4 March 2024 – by 4pm	Final date for late paper applications.
Saturday 18 May 2024	Parents/carers will receive application outcome via email or by letter.
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> January	Confirmation for P7 Pupils in St Paul's Church at 11.00am

## Applying for a Post Primary Place

Online applications will open at 12 noon on Tuesday 30 January 2024 and will close at 12 noon on Thursday 22nd February 2024.

We will share with you an electronic copy of the key information leaflet 'Applying for a Year 8 Post Primary Place' in the coming weeks. This leaflet and further guidance will be accessible on the EA website in due course to assist you in making an online application.

Before starting your child's application you should:

- All schools will require the birth certificate to verify a child's name and date of birth. Either a full (long) or short birth certificate may be used or an amended birth certificate or an adoption certificate, where appropriate, is acceptable. If you do not have a copy of your child's birth certificate, please contact the schools you wish to nominate to see what other documents they may accept.
- You should refer to the admissions criteria to find out if other supporting documents are required by each of the schools you have chosen e.g. proof of address.
- You can scan or take a photo of the documents you require for each school and save them on the device you will be using to make your Post Primary Application. Make sure the photos or scans are clear and legible.
- For GDPR purposes you may wish to remove personal/sensitive/private information from your documents before uploading e.g. financial details in bank statements.

## Attendance Matters

As explained in the last edition of the Newsletter, there will be a special prize for the class with the best monthly attendance record. We can announce that the winning class for December is Mrs Clarke's P4B class with an impressive monthly total of 95.3% attendance. P4B received the special attendance cup and will hold on to this for the rest of this month. They were also given their special treat for making such a great effort, a trip to Joe's shop for Slush puppies and a classroom party. Don't forget in June the top attenders will receive a special treat by going to the movies, popcorn will also be provided!!! Please make sure that your child attends school every day as everyday matters.

Mr O'Doherty is now in the process of an audit with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) looking at attendance rate and patterns. The parents of those children whose attendance has been below 85% have received letters over the past number of weeks. Those families where the attendance has been significantly low are receiving calls with the Principal for interview regarding the low rates of attendance. For those individuals whose attendance rates are critically low, this information has been passed on to the EWO and house calls will be made. It is our legal responsibility to ensure that every child has access to learning and at St Clare's we will do everything we can to ensure that this is the case for every pupil in our school. We thank you for your support in this matter.



## Pupil of the Month and Rights Respecting Pupil of the Month Award Winners December

Congratulations to our December winners. Each of them has been presented with a certificate outlining their achievements at a special assembly. We are very proud of our ambassadors within our school.

### Rights Respecting Winners

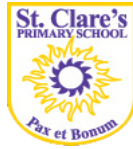


### Star Pupils of the Month



### More From Around the School





Dear Parent / Carer,

### **Full Day Strike 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

I am writing to you today to explain why all school staff have taken the last resort decision to carry out industrial action beginning today with a full day strike. It is important that everyone realizes this is not what we want and goes against our vocation as educationalists. However, we have been left with no choice.

#### **Why?**

- Education in Northern Ireland has been systematically defunded in recent years, resulting in decimating reductions in support, resource and capacity.
- Schools have filled in the growing gaps, holding the fragmenting system together and protecting children from the impact of the cuts.
- Pay paralysis, when set alongside the working conditions of the teaching profession in Northern Ireland, is having a devastating impact on the profession, with clear evidence that we will not be able to recruit or retain teachers and school leaders in the future if these issues are not resolved. Education is in crisis.
- Other public sector workers in Northern Ireland have also received pay increases during this time.
- Teachers across the UK and Ireland have received their normal pay increases over the last three years. Teachers in Northern Ireland have received nothing.
- All five teaching unions have been in dispute for over a year, during which time no offer has been made.
- During this year of dispute, action has been gradually escalated, in the hope that an offer of resolution would be forthcoming.
- Taking strike action is the last resort. This could have been avoided and, indeed, can still be avoided.
- The responsibility to resolve this dispute lies squarely with the employing authorities and the Department of Education.

#### **Who will this strike involve?**

This involves the following staff within our school:

Principal	Teachers	Classroom assistants	Administration /
office staff	Kitchen staff	Cleaning staff	Caretakers
Lunchtime supervisors			

Clearly this is a difficult situation, which will cause some disruption. I would ask you, however, to be understanding. This is a *very* unusual circumstance and is the direct result of the failure to take into account the very real concerns expressed by teachers and school leaders. Taking strike action is not something that anyone would undertake lightly. Those on strike will have thought long and hard about their decision and will also lose pay for the period that they are on strike.

The responsibility to resolve this dispute lies squarely with the Department of Education and our local government. To make your feelings known about that damage that is being done to the our schools, the teaching profession and, of course, our children, you can write directly the following people, in addition to your own local political representatives:

**Sara Long, CEO:** Education Authority, 40 Academy Street, Belfast, BT1  
sara.long@eani.org.uk

**Eve Bremner, CEO:** CCMS, Linen Hill House, 23 Linenhall Street, Lisburn, BT28 1FJ  
eve.bremner@ccmsschools.com

**Maria Thomasson, Acting CEO,** CnaG, Áras na bhFál, 200-202 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6AH  
mariathomasson@comhairle.org

**Roisin Marshall, CEO:** NICIE, 25 College Gardens, Belfast, BT9 6BS  
rmarshall@nicie.org.uk

**Nuala O'Neill, Director:** Governing Bodies Association, Fountain Centre, Belfast, BT1 6ET  
nuala@gbani.org

**Mark Bailie, Director of Workforce:** DENI, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT19  
mark.bailey@education-ni.gov.uk

**Mark Browne, Permanent Secretary:** DENI,

Yours sincerely,

Mr C.O'Doherty  
Principal

The graphic features a teal background with white and yellow text. At the top left, a white rounded rectangle contains the URL [www.eani.org.uk/admissions](http://www.eani.org.uk/admissions) with a magnifying glass icon. At the top right, a light blue circle contains the text "CLOSES AT 12 NOON 26 JAN 2024". The main text, enclosed in a white speech bubble, reads "Pre-School & Primary 1 Online Applications for September 2024 are now open via eacconnect". A white megaphone icon is on the left, and a hand cursor icon points to the URL <https://connect.eani.org.uk/parent/> at the bottom of the speech bubble. The EA logo and "Education Authority" text are at the bottom left.

[www.eani.org.uk/admissions](http://www.eani.org.uk/admissions)

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 **ea** Education Authority



**Dear P7 Parents, please see the grading and a comparison to the equivalent grades from last year.**

**For SEAG 2023 i.e. current P7 Parents**

- It is planned that SEAG Outcomes will be available online from 8am on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January.
- Parents will log on to the portal. A click will take them to the Statement Of Outcomes which can be downloaded.
- The main outcomes are the Total Standardised Age Score (TSAS) and the Band.

Minimum PPTC /GL SAS needed for Grade (Previous year)	PPTC/ GL Grade	Approx Equivalent SEAG TSAS	SEAG Band 2023-24
234	A	206	Band 1
229	B1	197	Band 2
224	B2	190	Band 3
219	C1	183	Band 4
213	C2	174	Band 5
<213	D	<174	Band 6