



September 2023



## Message from the Principal

I wish to welcome all the pupils, staff and parents of St Clare's PS back for a new academic year. It doesn't seem that long ago since we were highlighting the success of our outgoing P7 pupils following the wonderful production of 'Joseph' and the leavers mass. However, our summer (what ever that was in July and August) has raced by and once more we find ourselves at the start of a new term.

I have such high expectations for the year ahead and I wish to share some of these with you now. The first significant change to the school is the opening of a specialist class to be headed by Ms Lees. It is important that we are clear, only pupils selected by the Education Authority will be allocated places here, the school itself has no say in admissions. This is a huge undertaking, and I would want to wish Ms Lees and her assistants Ms Wilkinson and Ms Ginley well as they embark on a new pathway for learning in St Clare's.

### Attendance

Our children receive the best possible education in St Clare's. This is reflected in the number of pupils who attend our school and the numbers who choose to transfer to us. We are passionate about our children's learning and the only way we can guarantee that our children meet their potential is if they attend school every day. We work closely with our partners at the Educational Welfare Office and we will always be forward thinking to ensure that all our pupils attend school every day. This will be encouraged this year by a monthly award for the class who displays the best attendance as a group.

### Car Parking Partnership

We are delighted to have a progressive partnership with the Belfast City Council, Sinn Fein representatives and PSNI in relation to securing the one-way system around Cupar street.

You will have seen myself and members of the PSNI distributing leaflets in the past couple of days. We appreciate that in the setting down and picking up times it can be quite stressful. However, we ask that all drivers observe the one-way system around Cupar Street and Kashmir Road to ensure that all school traffic is dispersed as quickly as possible in the mornings and afternoons.

### Staff Contact

We are very eager to maintain good lines of communication with you all. It is vital that we are able to be in contact with you during the school day. There is nothing more important to us than to celebrate the achievements of your child. That is why it is vitally important that you remain in contact with us via seesaw and also to ensure that if you have a change of mobile number or address, that you let the office know immediately. Teachers cannot be contacted after 4.00pm on any day. There are some parents who choose to send messages late at night and I have to insist that this is unreasonable and teachers are instructed not to respond to such messages until normal working hours.

### Upcoming Events

St Clare's PS will be participating in a number of events in the coming weeks. Our school will be taking Part in a special event in Clonard monastery in September celebrating the environment. The pupils will be making a presentation at this event describing the impact of the eco award which we have received. We will be inviting our parents to this event at the mass of creation on the 24<sup>th</sup> September in the monastery.

The school choir will also be involved in a concert at Clonard in November celebrating the seasons. See below for all the important dates of the sacraments for the rest of the year.

Mr O'D.

For your  
Calendar

The school will be closed for all pupils on  
Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October for essential staff training  
(see below for details)

Dates for the Sacraments are now  
published see below.

## Sacraments for 2023-24

We appreciate that parents wish to know as early as possible the dates of the various sacramental ceremonies throughout the year. Yesterday the local Principals met to agree the various sacramental dates for each of the parishes.

The following dates are provisional but the only date which could change is the confirmation date if a new Bishop is appointed and he wishes to be the main concelebrant.

The dates for the sacraments this year are as follows:

**P3 First Confession- Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 11.00am**

**P4 First Communion- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00am**

**P7 Retreat and Service of Light- 5<sup>th</sup> December**

**P7 \*Confirmation- Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January at 11.00am**

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This date for confirmation is provisional. If a new Bishop is installed between now and then, this date may change. However, as it stands, this is the date we are working towards.

## Staff Training 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023

There is one change to the holiday lists published at the beginning of the year. Due to essential training being made available to staff, the school will be closed to all pupils on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October. We realise that this may be inconvenient for some parents and this really is a last resort. However, the training being provided will benefit every pupil in the school. The training is being carried out by an external provider and this was the only date that we could apply for. We appreciate your support and understanding in this.

## Healthy Snacks

Just like the 1<sup>st</sup> January, the 1<sup>st</sup> of September is a time to push the reset button and remind ourselves of school expectations. Unlike a new year's resolution which are sometimes hard to keep, we want to ensure that all our pupils remain healthy and happy. Please ensure that your child has a healthy snack available for them for breaktime. This should be one item of food as the break period is very short and we do-not want food wasted or the pupils spoiling their lunchtime appetite. Alternatively, don't forget children can purchase a tasty bread roll filled with all sorts of goodness each day from the canteen at 10.30am.

## New Look Breakfasts at St Clare's.

We have always believed that we have the best cook in the country and the best kitchen staff of any school near or far. This year the same high-quality breakfasts are being served from 8.10am. However, in addition there will be cooked food available as well from sausages and bacon to eggs and pancakes. All of this for £1.50 is extremely good value. It is also a great way for pupils to start their day. No rushing breakfast into them before school. And they get a chance to sit with their friends and ease their way into the day. We would encourage all our parents to let their children have a go even for one day and see the difference it makes.

## Attendance Matters

Even missing a day from school can have a huge impact on a child's learning. There are times when that vital piece of teaching is missed and it is very hard to get it back. This year at St Clare's, we are putting a real effort into ensuring good attendance and punctuality. Each class will have their attendance tracked and the class with the best average attendance for each month will be given a treat and an additional night off homework!!

If a child has an attendance of 90%, that 10% absence is 18.5 days across a year. That's 18.5 school days which is almost a month of schooling. We recognize that any child can be sick and that is fine. However, we will be tracking carefully casual absenteeism this academic year. Again, as in everything we do, thank you for your support in this regard.

## Opening Mass

The opening mass for the new school year will be taking place next Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September at 9.15am in the hall. This will be celebrated of course by Fr Devlin. We would like to acknowledge how happy we are to see Fr Devlin back on his feet and we hope he continues to improve in the coming months.

## MUMO/Springers

Our P7 pupils will be beginning their environmental work with a special gardening project up in Forthspring commencing on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September. We would also like to draw attention to the wonderful opportunities for after school supervision in Forthspring at Springers. This would be very useful for many of our working parents. Why not call in and find out more about the Springers organization and the pricing policy per child.

## BREAKFAST CLUB

- St. Clare's Breakfast Club commences from 8.00-8.45 a.m. every morning at a cost of £1.50 per day. Cereal, toast and fruit juice is available every day as well as hot items. Menu will be available in September 2023.

## BREAK

- As part of our Health Education Programme we encourage each child to bring one piece of fruit or a small sandwich daily.
- Break can be purchased at the Breakfast Club every day.

*Crisps and glass bottles  
are not allowed.*

## DINNER



### FREE SCHOOL MEALS

For anyone entitled to free school meals forms **MUST** be completed online. Failure to complete will result in a charge of £2.60 per day. This charge will be implemented from first day if no entitlement is found to exist. Paid dinners are also available at £2.60 per day. Price is subject to change and will be confirmed September 2023.

## LUNCH

Please protect school books by putting lunches in a separate lunch box. Lunches are supervised. Children are allowed crisps at lunchtime only.

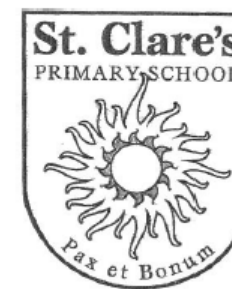
## HOLIDAYS



August 23 – July 24

August	31 <sup>st</sup>	School Re-opens
October	4 <sup>th</sup> 30 -31 <sup>st</sup>	Staff Training Halloween Break
November	1 <sup>st</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup>	Halloween Break
December	25 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Break
January	1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Christmas Break
February	12 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup>	Mid-Term Break
March	18 <sup>th</sup> 29 <sup>th</sup>	St Patricks's Day Easter Holidays
April	1 <sup>st</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Holidays
May	6 <sup>th</sup> 27 <sup>th</sup> 28 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup>	Bank Holiday Bank Holiday Half Term Break
July	1 <sup>st</sup> - 31 <sup>st</sup>	Summer Holidays

*If there are any changes to these arrangements,  
you will be notified.*



**ST. CLARE'S P.S.**

**2023-2024**

Principal: Mr O'Doherty  
323 Cupar Street,  
Belfast, BT13 2SE  
Telephone: 028 90330852

## SCHOOL HOURS

Assembly	8.55 a.m.
P.1 - 3	9.00 - 12.00 12.40 - 2.00
P.4 - 7	9.00 - 12.20 1.00 - 3.00

**Every Monday the whole school will finish at 2.00 p.m.**

As a Catholic School we come together each day to pray. It is important that your child is in time for assembly at **8.55.a.m.**

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### PUNCTUALITY

Children should never be picked up before the end of the school day unless previously agreed with the teacher.

All late arrivals and early pick-ups will be recorded in the school office.

## HOMEWORK



Please help your child by ensuring that homework is completed every night and by showing an interest in what he/she is doing. Homework can be oral or written.

## SCHOOL RULES

All our school rules are based on your child's right to learn in a safe environment and on the teacher's freedom to teach.

*As always we will work in close partnership with you the parents to ensure a high standard of discipline is maintained in the school at all times.*

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### St. Clare's Code of Conduct



### MOVING THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL

- We always keep to the left.
- We walk with our hands by our sides.
- We walk in single file.
- We remain quiet at all times.

## IN THE PLAYGROUND



- We will touch another person with only one finger or hand.
- We will not fight with or hurt anyone.
- When the bell rings we will stand still and remain quiet.
- We will get into line class by class.
- We will greet the teachers on duty.

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### IN THE DINING HALL



- We will be quiet in the line until we collect our dinner and sit down.
- We will not put our arms or hands on the serving hatch.
- When the bell rings we will sit still and remain quiet.
- We will be mannerly to all the adults who work in the dining hall.



**MONDAY - FRIDAY**  
**8.30 - 9.15AM**  
**1.15 - 3.15PM**


**HELP US KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE!**



 Department of  
**Justice**  
An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt  
Máinnstríe O tha Laa  
[www.justice-ni.gov.uk](http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk)

 Comhairle  
Phobail na bhFál  
FALLEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

 **USDT**  
upper  
**springfield**  
development trust

**St. Clare's**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
  
Fax et Bonum

**clonardresidents**  
ASSOCIATION

 we care  
we listen  
we act  
Police Service  
of Northern Ireland

# P1 Children Have Begun Their Education Journey.

