

ENNISKILLEN MODEL PRIMARY SCHOOL

October 2024

Dear Parent,

Now that we have settled into a new term you may find the following information of interest. It has been a good start to the year with staff, pupils and parents once again being supportive – thank you. I have an effective team of teaching and non-teaching staff here who always strive to put the needs of pupils first. Parents have shown a good interest in what their children are doing (including homework) – thank you.

I am currently updating aspects of the school's Development Plan. Part of the process entails seeking views from a selection/sample of parents. Should a questionnaire filter your way, thank you for completing it (electronically). The process is not to identify individuals or air specific grievances – rather to help direct us to improve some areas of the service we aim to provide.

An electronic sign in system has just been installed in the foyer. Following a trial period involving staff, we are now hoping that parents and visitors will also use the system. This will include times when adults enter the school, when collecting pupils early/dropping off after an appointment etc. Guidance is to be supplied about how to use the system.

All schools have been engaging with the Education Authority over the last year to begin the process of reconstituting Boards of Governors. This process is lengthy and should happen every four years. The current Board members have served this school very well (for more than four years) and I would like to thank them for their efforts when helping to address many pastoral, curricular, financial and personnel matters behind the scenes. Such attentive and professional service has helped the school to run much more efficiently and often when faced with difficult issues and decisions. As part of the reconstitution process, I now need to start the process to elect two parent representatives to serve on a new Board which will come into effect later this school year. Therefore, in the not-too-distant future, all parents will be sent home some information to help explain the process – involving a ballot, election etc. A **Board of Governors' Annual Report** for the 2023/2024 school year will also filter home in the weeks ahead – this summarises a typical school year and aims to cover many facets of school life.

Details will follow soon about Parent Teacher Association organised events – for example, a **DISCO** is planned for the evening of **Thursday, 24th October** and a **FAMILY CHRISTMAS FAIR** on the afternoon of **Saturday, 30th November**. The support of the P.T.A. is invaluable and despite so many changes/pressures on people in more recent years, a concerted effort has been made to profile the efforts of the P.T.A. on an annual basis. Mrs Clarke and a few other members who are stepping down from the committee deserve special recognition – thank you. New members are very welcome – leave your name at the office if interested.

Please take care when coming to and from school. The traffic lights (green man) should always be used to cross the busy adjacent roads. Parents who authorise older children to come to and from school (without adult supervision) are responsible for their own children by ensuring they follow the road safety guidance. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure safe passage to and from school. As we enter the darker mornings even greater care needs to be taken.

It helps the school financially if more parents claim free school meals. I am aware we have many families who could claim but do not. For full details please check the Education Authority's website: www.eani.org.uk

As relayed before, the financial pressures are huge. In addition to claiming free school meals, supporting P.T.A. ventures etc. it is necessary to plan more specific fund-raising events. This helps

spread the cost and avoids the need to impose even more charges/fees on parents. As often alluded to, as a school we fall short of meeting any Department of Education criteria which attracts extra funding – such is the unfairness of the Budget formula.

****PLEASE ENSURE THAT NUTS/FOODS CONTAINING NUTS ARE NOT BROUGHT TO SCHOOL. CEREAL BARS and BIRTHDAY CAKES NEED CAREFUL MONITORING AS THEY CAN CONTAIN TRACES OF NUT. NUTS OF ANY TYPE MUST BE AVOIDED e.g. Peanut, Walnut, Cashew/Pistachio, Pecan, Almond etc. Sometimes NUTS can be interpreted as peanuts only****

REMINDER: If sending water to school please avoid disposable bottles (we have a recyclable bottle policy in place) – thank you.

REGISTERING CHILDREN: MANY PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN'S DETAILS ARE CURRENTLY ON COMPUTER RECORD i.e. PRIMARY 1 AGED CHILDREN DUE TO START SCHOOL IN **SEPTEMBER 2025 OR LATER**. ALL CHILDREN WHO ATTEND NURSERY SCHOOLS OR CLASSES MUST ALSO BE REGISTERED WITH A PRIMARY SCHOOL. PARENTS ARE KINDLY ASKED TO INFORM PROSPECTIVE NEW PARENTS TO THE SCHOOL OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS. DETAILS CAN BE RELAYED BY TELEPHONE (66324865) OR BY EMAIL: info@enniskillenmodel.enniskillen.ni.sch.uk

There are several '**VISIT THE SCHOOL/COME AND LEARN THROUGH PLAY AFTERNOONS**' scheduled for three Fridays this term – aimed at pre-school parents and children: Starting at 2.30p.m. on October 18th, November 15th and December 13th. All are very welcome.

The **After School Homework Clubs** for P1 to P7 children are continuing to be extremely popular. The clubs operate until 5.30p.m. every day and parents are invoiced at the end of a month. As previously indicated, prices have not increased this year. Thank you for using – any profit we make goes straight into the school budget for the benefit of the children.

After School Activities are up and running again - attendance is encouraged. Ju-jitsu and multi-Sports operate on booking systems directly with the coaches. Separate guidance has been supplied about the menu between now and Christmas.

As directed by the Department of Education, P.E. must feature much more as part of the school curriculum. Mrs Murray and Mr Robson, P.E. Co-ordinators, have been an immense help in promoting whole school participation; it is important that all children take part regularly. Thank you also when reinforcing uniform standards and by removing earrings on designated P.E. days.

We appreciate it if parents monitor homework tasks very carefully/regularly. We like it if the diary and completed work are signed. Staff have been asked to focus more on presentation given that it is the start of a new school year – ruling, handwriting, setting out work and writing, for example. Children benefit and learn from consistency, structure and routine.

Head Lice: It is common to have a higher incidence of head lice at this time of year. I would encourage parents to check their child's hair regularly and thoroughly. If head lice are detected, please treat and inform the school immediately.

Other events to come:

BREAKFAST MORNINGS: Friday, 27th September Friday, 25th October Friday, 29th November

These mornings are open to all pupils and parents - access to the hall will be available from 8.15a.m.

As the 27th of September is 'Macmillan Cancer Day' we are using the breakfast morning to help raise funds for this charity. Thank you for the support.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER – Thursday, 4th and Friday, 5th October – a letter from Mrs Keys (Vice Principal) is filtering home. Pupils are not to wear P.E. kits on these two days.

Primary 1 Play Mornings – 10th (P1M) and 11th (P1McC) October (separate correspondence is being sent home).

Primary 2 Play Mornings – 17th (P2G) and 18th (P2B) October (separate correspondence is being sent home).

Tuesday, 22nd October at 9.20a.m. – **Harvest Assembly – P5K** (parents of P5K welcome; details to follow) &

Thursday, 24th October at 9.20a.m. – **Harvest Assembly – P3J** (parents of P3J welcome; details to follow)

It is planned that a collection for local Food Banks will complement the assemblies – this collection will be open to all parents in the school to contribute.

Monday, 14th to Friday, 25th October (inclusive) – **Parent Discussions** (as advised by your child's class teacher) – details will be circulated very soon. All are face-to-face meetings. Some meetings may run into early November.

The school will be celebrating '**Maths Week Ireland**' later in October (12th on). Mrs Coulson (Co-ordinator) will be engaging all pupils, staff and parents to focus more on aspects of Mathematics and Numeracy. There are some innovative ideas/tips on the following site if you would like to have more of a mathematical focus at home - <https://www.mathsweek.ie>

HOLIDAY REMINDER: Half Term: Monday, 28th October until Friday, 1st November (inclusive).

Ross (multi-sports coach) is planning to run a club for four of the half-term days – I have given him permission to use the premises. Again, bookings are made directly via him – leaflets to follow soon.

A **Book Bank** has been positioned adjacent to the Clothing bank (just off the Castlecoole Road) – by using these recycling options, money is generated for two charities.

Should you require further clarification about these or other points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

W. Glass