

SEPTEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first school newsletter this year. I hope you will find it informative and interesting! Don't forget to regularly check your child's school bag for letters. As we begin the new academic year I would like to take this opportunity to extend a welcome to all the new families who have joined us this year and warmly welcome back everyone involved in the life of McClintock Primary School.

This new term welcome new staff to McClintock – Miss Rachel Hutchins (Teacher to cover P1 Maternity Post in October) and Mrs Clare Johnston (P1 Classroom Assistant/Lunchtime supervisor). We hope they will enjoy working here. We also welcome back P6/7 Teacher, Mrs Thompson from maternity leave.

We wish to make all parents aware that we have pupils in P1, P3 and P4 with allergies including nuts. A member of staff also has a nut allergy. Anything containing nuts such as Nutella, Peanut Butter, certain Cereal Bars must not be brought into school as some of our pupils will take a severe reaction. When preparing breaks and packed lunches please bear this in mind. This applies to all P1-7 pupils because of movements around the school, are together at lunch, at whole school assemblies etc. A letter highlighting this has been sent out to all parents.

We are a **Healthy Break** school and want our pupils to develop life-long healthy eating habits. Find attached a copy of our guidelines for what is permitted to be brought to school for break.

We are setting up **Google Classroom** for each pupil so we can communicate with parents and vice versa. More information to follow. **To reduce costs and preserve the environment the vast majority of written correspondence will not be printed and issued through Google Classroom.**

With the continuing cuts in education funding an excellent way to raise funds for McClintock P.S. at no cost to you is through using our on-line shopping app. Please type in the link www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/mcclintockps to register and support our school. It is easy to use, with the majority of well known retailers offering donations to the school, at absolutely no cost to you! **We have discovered that there is an Easy Fundraising App available on Android Google Play and Apple App Store that makes it very convenient for you to purchase using mobile devices such as phones and tablets etc.** Retailers such as eBay, Amazon and all the major main street stores, including supermarket chains are in the scheme. **Please tell your family and friends to support us too!**

School priorities in McClintock's **School Development Plan for 2024-2025** include focusing on writing genres in Literacy and mental maths in Numeracy. The Shared Education Project partnership with Roscavey and St.Colmcille's Primary School will have a wider focus this year including pupil participation. Thank you for your continued support.

If you believe you may be entitled to **free school meals** please contact the **Education Authority's Free School Meals Section** on 028 8241 1496. As part of the entitlement a **clothing grant** is also available for each pupil. I have noticed that some parents who would be entitled to receive this assistance haven't yet applied, remember that you must re-apply every year. If you believe you are eligible an early application to the Education Authority is advised, as the waiting list can be quite long at this time of year. If you wish, make me aware that you have submitted an application and I will try to assist the processing of your application by following it up with the Education Authority. For more information on eligibility visit the EA website <https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals> to read all of the latest relevant documentation.

The **Breakfast Club in the Children's Centre** reopens from the first day of the new term, **Friday 30th August**. Pupils can be left in the **Children's Centre** from **8.15-8.50am** where they will be supervised and receive a healthy breakfast consisting of cereal, toast and fruit juice/milk. Children attending after 8.30am will not have time to take a full breakfast so please ensure if you would like your child to avail of the breakfast to arrive before **8.30am**. The cost for each pupil is **£1.00** per day or **£4.50** for the entire week. **Any pupils arriving at school before 8.50am should avail of the Breakfast Club, as supervision in the main school or classrooms is not available.**

After-school provision is available from the Children's Centre: 1.00-2.00pm £1.50, 2.00-3.15pm £3.00 and 3.15-4.00pm £1.50.

The **Annual General Meeting** to elect the committee for the **Parents Support Group** for this academic year will take place in the school later this term. I would urge parents to come along and play an active part in helping the school and perhaps make new friends.

This month **P4-7 pupils** will be participating in the **Accelerated Reading programme** which has a proven track record in greatly improving pupil reading and comprehension. We will be hosting a Parents' Meeting in the school hall to discuss the programme. This will take place on **Tuesday 17th September 3.15-4.15pm** and **all P4-7 parents are invited to attend.**

To maintain and promote the quality of **pupils' homework** parents are requested to check and sign any written homework. Homework diaries will be distributed to the P3-7 classes inviting teachers and parents to write comments. Pupil spelling/table books containing **Weekly Spelling and Number Test** scores will be sent home on Fridays for parents to view and sign. The importance of parents and teachers working in partnership to support their child cannot be over-emphasised.

Again at the end of each term **the Top Speller and Times Table/Number facts pupils** in each of the P3-7 year groups will be publicly recognised and they will receive an attractive trophy or medal at a special assembly. The Friday test scores will be used to assist in selecting the winners. Pupils will be reminded to use the **'look-visualise-say-cover-write-check'** method when learning spellings and regularly rehearse the times tables and number facts. Your child's teacher will be only too delighted to give you guidance, simply arrange a convenient meeting time!

I suggest that P7 parents who are considering a grammar place for their child to look at the official Schools' Entrance Assessment Group (SEAG) website – www.seagni.co.uk. This site provides the most up-to-date information on the process, including registration forms, a guide for parents, past papers and access arrangements etc. If you are unsure about any aspect then please contact Mrs Thompson, Mrs Somerville or myself to discuss any matter further. For your information the two test dates, which SEAG candidates must attend are Saturday 16th and 23rd November at 10am in Omagh Academy. **Please note P7 parents who wish to register their child for the entrance test with SEAG have to do so before Friday 20th September. It is the parent's responsibility to enter their child with all the relevant information completed.**

The Purple **'Cash for Clobber' Clothing Bank**, is located at the front of the school, outside the kitchen to encourage the habit of recycling and helping those who are less fortunate than ourselves. A sincere thank you to parents and the local community who donated items last year. We are kindly asking you to continue donating any unwanted or used clothes, pairs of shoes, handbags and belts to generate much-needed funds for us and also helping parts of Africa, Pakistan and Eastern Europe at the same time. Simply deposit your bin liner into the clothing bank. The commission from your 'clobber' bags will assist us to bridge the financial shortfall in funding for our school.

Brass tuition for P5-7 pupils is scheduled to resume on **Tuesday 3rd September**. Please ensure that instruments are brought in every week. New P5 starts who have submitted paperwork to EA will receive their cornets at the first session.

Mrs Thompson will be shortly taking an after-school **SEAG Homework Club** for P7 pupils. Details to follow.

The school will be offering **After-school P4-7 Guitar** lessons next month. Watch out shortly for a letter sent home with the pupils.

P1-2 pupils should bring in labelled wellies with their name on which can be kept in school for outdoor activities. **Until after the Mid Term break (Friday 25th October) P1 parents should collect their children from the school gate at 12.20pm, unless pupils are staying for lunch.**

We would be grateful if parents could ensure that pupils coats and school sweaters etc. are clearly labelled as every year a number of good quality uniform items are left unclaimed. Also during the better weather pupils readily discard their sweaters during playtime, sometimes leaving ownership a problem! I believe that local stores such as Watterson's and Marks & Spencers in Omagh can provide labels and I have order forms that can be posted off, if required. It would be helpful if pupils could bring in coats with hoods to keep heads dry and warm when outside. **We also suggest that P1-2 pupils have spare underwear in their school bags.**

On PE days pupils should wear their kits into school. PE kits include red t-shirt, navy socks and shorts. In colder weather plain navy leggings/bottoms can be worn. Multi-coloured leggings/bottoms are not permissible. Could all pupils have a coat with them that they can wear outside when the colder weather returns.

McClintock Ulster-Scots Highland Dancing Group resumes again, after the summer break, on **Friday 6th September** in the school hall. The cost will be £3 per week. Everyone, particularly newcomers will be made very welcome. **Newcomers to attend the 5.30-6.15pm session.**

Sessions are as follows; 4.30-5.30pm Seniors, 5.30-6.15pm First Class, 6.15-7.00pm Swords, 7.00-7.45pm Seann Truibhas. For anymore information, please contact the school on 028 8284 1613.

Milk money for the autumn term is **£14.80** (74 days @ 20p per day).

Dinner money is payable on Monday mornings and the cost is **£2.60 per day - £13.00 per week.** **It would be very helpful if correct cash amounts could be given to limit change needed.**

Milk and Dinner money, clearly marked in separate envelopes with name and amount should be forwarded to the secretary, Ms Devlin. For your convenience Ms Devlin has **pouch envelope booklets** in the office for purchase at only **£2.60**. Cheques should be made payable to EA Western Region. **Please pay weekly, preferably on a Monday with the correct amount.**

Getting children to manage their finances at an early stage is important. We operate a **Credit Union savings scheme** to encourage pupils to save on a regular basis. If you would like your child to start saving, from as little as £1 per week then please contact the school's secretary, Ms Devlin who will only be happy to help.

It is recommended that pupils in P1-7 should bring a pencil case with the appropriate items, for example glue stick, pencils (P1-2 Chubby Pencils), pens (P6-7 Blue/Black Writing Pen), sharpener, ruler (P5-7 30cm), eraser etc. This will assist your child to start the day properly prepared for learning.

We kindly request that each family donate an inexpensive box of tissues per child to the school for the use by pupils. We would be grateful if these can be given to your child's class teacher during the first week back.

Please visit our **Facebook Page 'Friends of McClintock Primary School'** and **website www.mcclintockps.co.uk** which I encourage you to look at for important school information.

If you have a concern about your child's progress, about the curriculum or any aspect of your child's experience at McClintock then please seek support at an early stage from the relevant member of staff. The principal is also available for discussion, after contact has been made with the appropriate individual.. We also have a Concerns/Complaints policy which is available to parents on request.

May I take this opportunity in reminding parents to park safely in the village, especially at busy drop-off and collection times. Previously the PSNI monitored this situation during the year and talked to vehicle users. Please do not park on the yellow zig-zag lines or where other users/pupils are put into danger.

If your child has asthma, they may leave a spare inhaler in school with their teacher who will store it safely. If you wish to do this then please request from the Secretary, Ms Devlin the appropriate forms that need filled in.

With Covid and many other viruses still prevalent and to protect all our pupils and staff we are asking that if your child is clearly unwell it would be advisable to keep them at home until they are fully recovered. In the case of diarrhoea/vomiting it is recommended that pupils should not be in school until 48 hours has passed since the last episode. Pupils who are sick are not in any condition to learn and their presence could spread infection to others.

A copy of the school's Child Protection leaflet – 'Protecting our Children' and School Holiday List are attached to this newsletter for your information. A copy of the School Dinner Menu has also been attached for your information.

Dates for your diary:

Friday 30th August Autumn term commences

Friday 6th September Ulster-Scots Highland Dancing class resumes (see above for details)

Wednesday 11th Sept Rev. Colin Mercer Whole School Assembly 11.15am

Tues 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th Sept P5 Brass tuition resumes 9.30-10.50am

(Please ensure instruments are brought in every Tuesday)

Tuesday 17th September P4-7 Accelerated Reading Parents Information session 3.15-4.15pm in the P5 classroom.

Friday 20th September P7 SEAG entrance test application closing date