



The Wee Friday Note

Friday 24th February 2023



“Fall seven times, stand up eight.” - Japanese Proverb

1. P1 Applications for September 2023 & the importance of supporting local schools

The next academic year, 2023-24, will reflect a low birth year, meaning that there are fewer children of pre-school age needing P1 places. As a small city school, we feel the pinch of this more than most. We currently have only 12 applications for P1 in September, 6 less than the current P1 class. This reduction in numbers will be made worse by the fact that a large class of 26 P7s will be leaving us in June. A smaller number of pupils will mean a smaller school budget. A smaller school budget will mean less money to spend on employing staff, books, after-school activities and developing things, such as outdoor play areas. Most of what parents see in the Key Stage One playground and our new Family Resource Centre for example, was obtained through external funding from charitable organisations.

Our school enrolment is also affected by other factors such as changing demographics in this part of South-East Belfast and more and more parents choosing “integrated” primary schools over Controlled primary schools (such as Cregagh Primary, which has always been organically integrated and welcomes and cherishes children from all backgrounds), as they feel doing so better positions their children to obtain a place in an integrated secondary school. The shortage of housing for young families in our immediate area is yet another factor that is adding pressure to our school enrolment. Average family size has also fallen significantly across the UK in recent decades. Additionally, Cregagh Primary is surrounded by other primary schools (maintained, controlled, and integrated) – all competing for an ever-decreasing number of children.

In short, our school will need to see a significant upturn in P1 enrolment over the next few years if it is to stay in ‘good health’. It is essential therefore, that our local community gets behind our school in every way it can and does whatever it can to encourage future generations of children from the estate and also the wider Cregagh area to attend Cregagh Primary School. As current principal, former Vice-Principal and teacher, and former P1-7 pupil of this school, I am passionate to see it flourish and thrive. All my staff are equally committed to this vision. Ultimately however, the future of our lovely school won’t be decided solely by its staff and governors; the community that our tagline speaks of: “A family of learning at the heart of our community”, has an equally big part to play.

2. World Book Day – Thursday 2nd March

World Book Day is a charity event held annually in the United Kingdom and Ireland on the first Thursday in March. On World Book Day, every child in full-time education in the UK is given a voucher to be spent on books; the event was first celebrated in the United Kingdom in 1998.

As in past years, our pupils are being encouraged to enter into the spirit of WBD by dressing up as their favourite book character. School asks for a voluntary donation of £1 per family (rather than per child ... cost of living etc) which will be used to purchase new library books for the children. Special thanks to Mr Irwin and the PTA for organising the sale of pre-loved children’s costumes on Thursday 23rd February. I hope some of you managed to grab yourselves a £2 bargain!

3. Short Course for Parents starting Wednesday 1st March

Lois Corbett is our school's family support worker. Cregagh Primary School employs Lois one day each week to give parents a helping hand and offer advice and support over a relaxed cup of tea or coffee. If you haven't connected with her yet, you should try to - she's lovely and very helpful.

Parents looking for a little advice or support with a range of issues, can text or phone Lois on 07526915747. Lois is organising different things for parents to enjoy and be part of their child's education. Being a parent is one of the most challenging things anyone can do.

To be clear, Lois is here for **any** parent. The work she does is for **everyone** – families that are finding things tricky, families in which everything is “tickety-boo (right now at least!) and every family in between (which is most families!)

Do please consider trying this useful course 😊

BOOSTING BRAINS in Cregagh Primary School.

Five things you can do to help your child succeed in Primary School.

When a child thrives and are doing well they are able to:

- Be happy in themselves
- Make friends
- Enjoy their family life
- Get the best start for learning

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Registration Morning - Wednesday 22nd Feb - 9AM

Starting Wednesdays
1st March - 5th April
Time: 9.00 - 10:30AM

WE WILL:

- ENJOY A RELAXING CUPPA AND SNACK
- SHARE TIPS AND SUPPORT
- GET PRACTICAL IDEAS OF HOW TO USE THESE 5 THINGS TO BENEFIT OUR CHILDREN.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS COURSE
PLEASE CONTACT LOIS
Email lois.corbett@barnardos.org.uk
text/phone 07526915747

Believe in children
Barnardo's Northern Ireland

4. School Uniform

Our school is a uniform-wearing school; this is our policy and practice*. School uniform helps build a sense of shared-identity and being part of a team and is the most cost-effective way for parents to clothe their children while at primary school.

Lately, we have noticed more children wearing tracksuit bottoms and girls wearing leggings. Neither of these items are proper school uniform and once one or two children start wearing these, lots of others do too. So, please help us by making sure your children wear their proper Cregagh Primary School uniforms with pride! Thank you!

*If a parent is struggling to replace an item of uniform mid-year, speak to Lois Corbett and if CPS can help, we will 😊

Standard Uniform	
GIRLS	BOYS
Navy, red, yellow or green sweatshirt* (with school badge)	
Light blue, red, yellow or green polo shirt* (with or without school badge)	
<i>*Sweater & polo shirt colours can be mixed & matched as desired</i>	
Grey skirt or dark grey trousers	Dark grey trousers
Grey or black tights or grey/white socks	Grey or black socks
Black shoes (flat heels) or black trainers	Black shoes or black trainers

Summer Uniform (optional)	
GIRLS	BOYS
Light blue, red, yellow or green polo shirt (with or without school badge)	
Dark grey school shorts	Dark grey school shorts
Blue checked cotton dress	-
Navy cardigan (with or without school badge)	-

*** IMPORTANT FUTURE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY / CALENDAR ***

Thursday 2nd March	World Book Day. Pupils to come to school dressed as their favourite book character. School asks for a voluntary donation of £1 <u>per family</u> which will be used to purchase new library books for the children.
Friday 17th March	School closed for St. Patrick's Day (EA non-operational day across NI)
Monday 27th to Friday 31st	Parent-Teacher Interview Week. Children will go home at 1pm Monday-Thursday and 12 noon on Friday (last day of a full school term)
Monday 3rd to Friday 14th April	Easter Holidays (10 school days)
Monday 1st May	May Day Holiday – school closed
Monday 8th May	Coronation of King Charles III - school closed
Thursday 18th May 2023	Local Council Elections – school closed
Friday 26th May	Sports Day
Monday 29th May	Spring Bank Holiday – school closed
Thursday 22nd June	Final Assembly for P3-P7 pupils (parents/carers welcome)
Friday 23rd June	P1 & P2 Prize Day (parents/carers welcome) Deaf Units 1 & 2 Coffee Morning
Tuesday 27th June	P7s last day of school P7 Awards Ceremony & Celebration (evening) ***NEW***

