



The Wee Friday Note

Friday 30th September 2022



"Happiness is like jam.

You can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself!" ~ Anon

1. **School closed on Monday 3rd October** - school will be closed on Monday for all pupils. This is as per the school holiday calendar shared in June, again in August and can be found on the school's website. Holidays are also listed on the inside cover of children's *Cregagh Champions* reward booklets as a handy reference.
2. **Special birthday for a special boy** – on Tuesday afternoon, 4th October, a birthday party has been organised for one of our P6 pupils who hasn't been very well and has spent several weeks in hospital. Tuesday's party is for the P6 class only (plus anyone the family invite along directly of course!). This will mean P6 pupils who are going will go straight from school to the party (Community Sports Hall) and remain there until 5pm. School is helping by arranging use of the hall but it is the family who are organising the fine details! But if your child is in Mr Irwin's class, please make a mental note that your P6 child is invited and will hopefully attend. We hope the party proves to be a great success with lots of fun, some staff plan to pop in to say 'hello!', and we wish our very special P6 celebrity a very Happy Birthday !
3. **Two-to-Three Club users** – parents who use our Two-to-Three Club should now collect their children from the Clocktower area at the front of school at 3pm. We made this change last week and it seemed to work better. Thanks.
4. **Is your child entitled to Free School Meals?** For every eligible child registered for Free School Meals (regardless of whether they ever take them or not), schools in N.I. receive additional funding. If you think your children are eligible, please register – it is a big help to the school's creaking finances! If you need help, Lois (our Family Engagement Worker ☎ 07526915747) is happy to help.
5. **Attendance target for all pupils 2022-23** – as of this week, our school's overall attendance is 93%. The Department of Education (NI) states that a child with an attendance record of less than 95% is only just "satisfactory", as 95% means that 9 days of learning have still been lost in one school year.
 - 🌐 We want to see all children in school every day and on time. Missing days of school or being late for reasons that could easily be avoided sends a message to children that school and education "doesn't really matter". Children only get one shot at school, help them make the most of their opportunity.
 - 🌐 "But what if they're sick, Mr Heggarty?" – genuinely sick children should never be sent to school; that's not the problem we want your help with. Holidays during school term, casual off-days, etc. are really the things that are hurting our overall school attendance most.
 - 🌐 "How sick is too sick?" – last week teachers shared on SeeSaw a list of common children illnesses and the actions parents need to take. This information was produced by the PHA and is used by the NHS, the Department of Education and the Education Authority. One of the most important facts in this information is that if a child has experienced vomiting or diarrhoea, they should not return to school until two full days has passed; this is to stop illness spreading to others. If a child has a raised temperature they should not be in school either.
 - 🌐 "What about Covid?" – Covid is still around and will be for the foreseeable future. If your child has Covid-like symptoms, parents should seriously consider using a test to help them rule out Covid. The government no longer provides tests free of charge. Boxes of tests (usually containing between 5-10 separate tests) can be bought from chemists and even from Amazon. Covid is not the same as the flu but it may be helpful for parents to think about it as being very similar. If you thought your child had the flu, would you send them into school?
 - 🌐 So, in summary, children should only really every be off school if they are sick. A tiny cold or snuffle is quite normal. Streaming eyes, noses and sore heads are not. If in doubt, ask either the school office or Lois (Family Worker) for advice: 07526915747

6. **Healthy breaks, no nuts and water only**

- our school has a Healthy Break Policy: only healthy break foods can be eaten Monday-Thursday.
- On Fridays, children can bring a 'sweet treat' to school if they so choose. Children may only bring water to school to drink for break and lunch (not diluted juice).
- Visit our school website for some healthy break ideas.
- Remember we are a 'nut free' school due to some children and staff having some allergies.

7. **Opportunities for parents to get involved** – Lois Corbett, our lovely Family Engagement Worker, has put together a great programme of activities for parents to engage with.

Cregagh First Term Plan

Parent and child engagement – Wednesday 1-2pm

- 5th October – Baking
- 12th October - Bear Hunt
- 19th October Making Playdough
- 26th October Halloween Party

Drop-in / Family Support - Wednesday Am 9 – 11

Coffee and opportunity for individual family support
Short info chats

- 5th October – Making a family Budget
- 12th October – Curry in a hurry
- 19th October – Frugal Christmas Ideas
- 26th October - Halloween Party

*** IMPORTANT FUTURE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY ***

Monday 3 rd October	School closed to pupils (School Development Day No.1)
Monday 31 st October to Friday 4 th November	Half-term (Halloween) holidays – 5 days
Wednesday 16 th November	School Open Night
Wednesday 14 th December	P4-P7 Carol Service at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (p.m.)
Friday 16 th December	P1-P3 Nativity Play at Mount Merrion Parish Church (a.m.)
Tuesday 20 th December	"Carols Around the Christmas Tree" (p.m.)

