



The Wee Friday Note

Friday 19th May 2023



“Family is not an important thing. It's everything.” – Michael J. Fox

1. “Poppy’s Garden”

Our new school garden, dedicated to Poppy Ogle who we lost last May, will be officially opened by the Ogle family in June. More details shared soon. Thanks to AXA Insurance Community Grants for fully funding this very special project in memory of a very special girl.

2. School Funding & Finances 2023-24

You will no doubt already be aware from the local news, that schools in Northern Ireland are facing drastic cuts to their funding. On top of a 10% cut in our own school’s basic level of funding, we face losing around a further 6% through the loss of other funding streams such as Extended Schools, Engage, Happy Healthy Minds and Shared Education. In real terms, Cregagh Primary School will have around £100,000 less to run on next year than we had available to us for this current school year which is now drawing to a close. This situation is made worse by the fact that only 14 children are enrolled to start our P1 class in September. To be financially ‘comfortable’, our school requires 22 or more P1s to be joining each and every year. Fewer children also means less money and more difficult choices.

Of course, modern families tend to be smaller compared to previous generations but too many local families are choosing to send their children to schools far outside of the Cregagh Estate and our surrounding area. This then, combined with the funding crisis, means we face rising costs and a smaller income. Cregagh Primary School will have to make tough decisions about how and where it spends the limited money it has available to it. Some of the additional services we have grown accustomed to such as Learning Support, counselling, Family Engagement are likely to stop at the end of this June, if not before.

This year, school has subsidised the cost of school trips (often paying for buses), transport to swimming lessons, breakfast club, etc. This will also stop at the end of this school year, with the full cost of these things having to be passed directly onto parents. Cregagh Primary School will continue to try and make things as affordable as possible for parents whenever possible.

The 2023-24 school year is going to be challenging. We are going to have to ‘do without’ some very important things and while this situation is very frustrating for everybody at a school-level, parents especially must remember that schools, just like private family homes, have rising bills to pay and our school budget, just like those of families, doesn’t go as far as it once did!

But it’s still not all doom and gloom! We have much to be thankful for and celebrate. Since 2014, I have managed to bring in over £500,000 of investment into our school through applying for external funding from charities and local businesses. From whole Reading Schemes, iPads and computers to outdoor play equipment, our recently built Family Resource Centre and our beautiful “Poppy’s Garden”, we have continued to develop and improve our school.

Let me end my comments by telling you that I have recently written to over 34 local businesses: reaching out and asking them to consider helping us save our in-school counselling service by partnering with us donating what they can towards meeting the annual cost (£11,000 for 2023-24 academic year) of providing counselling to many of our most vulnerable children. So far, only a few have responded but among those who have, only one or two have been positive. One such positive reply was received from our good friends at Hamilton’s Newsagents and Spar Greenway: thanks to Judy and her team, who have always been great supporters of our school!

3. **School Photographer – Wednesday 24th May**

The school photographer will be visiting school on Wednesday 24th May taking individual, family and whole class photos. Parents are under no obligation to buy.

4. **Sports Day – Friday 26th May at 9:30am**

All pupils should come into school wearing sports clothes! They also need a bottle of water with them! The first race will begin at 9:30am. We are providing all the pupils with a special treat for break!

5. **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 – including right up to the end of term!

It is especially important for our senior pupils to continue wearing the correct uniform and wear it smartly; as doing this is good rehearsal for the wearing of uniform in secondary school.

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, 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 ***

Wednesday 24th May

Photographer in school

Friday 26th May

Sports Day

Monday 29th May

Spring Bank Holiday – school closed

Tuesday 30th May

School Development Day No.5 – school closed to all pupils

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

Wednesday 28th June

P7 Awards Ceremony & Celebration Evening
Mount Merrion Parish Church
(This is for P7 pupils and parents only)

