

## St. Gerard's Primary School

### Start 2024/25

The boys and girls have settled into the new year and are working hard. Our new P7 children are excelling in setting a great example for the whole of the school. Their eagerness to help with the younger children characterises this cohort, it is so lovely to see their willingness to be of assistance. This bodes well for the rest of the year as they begin that final step on their educational journey to the secondary school. Our new P1 class has settled into school life. They are a lovely group of children and are finding their feet in the big school. They still need a lot of toilet visits particularly during assembly, but we will get there!

### P1, P2, P2/3 & P3/4 Entrance and Exit at Bell Street

We have 4 classes entering the school at 8.55am and importantly leaving the school at 3pm. This is a logistical issue that we are currently in the process of making as smooth as possible. We will try to ensure the P1 and/or P2 children are first to exit the building with P2/3 and P3/4 following afterwards. To ensure that teachers place children into appropriate adult's hands, your patience and understanding are much appreciated. Please stand well back at the fence next to the path so that staff can have a clear view of the area and can identify the adult, that they will send the child towards. General parking by residents and school parents in Bell Street has always been a concern. If possible, could I ask that you find a more appropriate parking area and walk to the school gate; I appreciate that this can have a knock-on effect to the wider school area regarding parking but only a community approach with everyone following guidance will work in the best interests of safety for all.

### Celebrating the Sacraments

Dates for this academic year for children receiving sacraments are

P7 Confirmation 7<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm at St. Gerard's Church.

P3 First Reconciliation 12<sup>th</sup> February 6.30pm at Church to be confirmed.

P4 First Communion 10<sup>th</sup> May, 11am at Church to be confirmed.

If your child has been baptised a Catholic, they will automatically be part of the preparation for these sacraments. If your child is not baptised and you wish them to be presented for the sacraments, please make an appointment to speak with the parish priest, Fr. S. Parkes.

### Jackets for outdoors

As we head into Autumn and Winter months, please ensure your child has appropriate outdoor jackets. We pride ourselves at St. Gerard's that our children are out in nearly all-weather conditions. There will be a few days, where the rain will force us to have a "wet play" but overwhelmingly we allow children a break in the good Scottish weather. It is our intention to hold a coat drive after the October holiday and we will be in touch in due course.

### House Captains

Our P7 House Captains were appointed after election by the school community. There are two appointed for each House with a vice to support in the event of an absence. We wish them every success in their role to set an example for everyone and uphold the school values.

"Here, The Will of God is Done" St. Gerard Majella



### St. Gerard Majella



Feast Day 16<sup>th</sup> October

### McMillan Coffee Morning

We will be holding a McMillan Coffee Morning on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October after 10am Mass to celebrate the feast of St. Gerard Majella. Please come along and join us for a worthwhile cause.

### Parents'/Carers' Evening

Our first parents'/carers' evening will be on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October. This will be an opportunity to find out how your child is progressing with their learning and a chance for you to meet with their new class teacher/s for this academic year. Further details will come out to you in the coming weeks.

### Holiday Dates

September Weekend 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>

We close on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> at 3pm and reopen on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October at 8.55am.

October Break 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>

We close on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> at 3pm and reopen on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October at 8.55am.

## Attendance at School

You will be aware that since the pandemic attendance at school has been a significant issue across the whole of the UK. North Lanarkshire along with all local authorities are monitoring attendance very closely. For academic year 2023/24 our average attendance was 91% with North Lanarkshire average being 92%. This means that on average our children are missing over 3 weeks of school per year. There is a variety of, sometimes complex, reasons why children miss significant amounts of school. As we go through the year, please be mindful of your child's attendance and support the school as it tries to reach its target of 93% attendance. With this newsletter, is a leaflet from North Lanarkshire Council with information and support to help to push attendance rates in an upward direction.

## Timekeeping

There are a significant number of children who are late for school. This is disruptive for the class teacher beginning the learning day and for the child who is late, as it makes them feel a little uncomfortable and nervous. We always try to mitigate this for the child but your help with being on time would be helpful. If for any reason your child is late, we would ask that they enter in the usual manner through their assigned gate. Only if the gate is locked should they enter through the main entrance of the school. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.

## Parking in the School Car Park

Parking in the school car park to drop off or collect is not permitted. This applies for dropping children off for the 8.15am breakfast club. Parents/Carers should park responsibly in the surrounding area. Again, your cooperation is appreciated.

## Uniform

Sincere thanks to all our families for supporting our school uniform policy; our children look superb and ready for learning. Can I ask that parents who donate preloved uniforms if they could hold on to clothing at the moment as we have no room for what you have already donated. Mrs. McIllooney will get in touch after October break to update on this and the Coat/Jacket drive.

## Physical Education

You and your child will know by now the days they are participating in Physical Education. Can you please ensure they have appropriate PE kit for participation in this important curricular activity. We encourage you to purchase the purple PE kit, if possible.

Day	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Class	P.1 P.4 P.5/6	P.1 P.2 P.2/3 P.4 P.5/6 P.7	P.1 P.2 P.2/3 P.3/4 P.5 P.6/7	P.1 P.2 P.2/3 P.3/4 P.7	P.2 P5 P.6/7 P.7

## Emergency Arrangement Changes

Many parents for well meaning reasons contact the school at 2.30pm or even 2.55pm to pass on changes to adult collection and changes to location the child should go to after school. This can be quite stressful for clerical staff particularly on Monday and Friday when we only have one member of staff. While we appreciate last minute emergency changes are reality, we would be grateful if you could clarify with your child who will be collecting them and from what gate. Please try to organize sleep over and after school activities within your friendship and family groupings, this would help out a busy office at a particularly busy time. Thank you.

## Reading Books

Can you search behind cupboards and down the sides of beds in search of St. Gerard's reading books. If you find, please send in with your child. Can you also ensure that reading books going home are returned daily for use in the classroom with the teacher.