



## St. Gerard's Primary School

### Christmas Fayre

Planning and arrangements for the Christmas period are now well and truly underway. Please see the 'Dates for Your Diary' for all upcoming events. As always, we will be kicking off our festive celebrations in style at our annual Christmas Fayre. The fayre will take place on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November from 3-5pm**. Entry will cost £1 – this includes a bounce on the bouncy castle for every child. Please ensure that all children attending the fayre are accompanied by an adult. All pupils will be dismissed as normal at 3pm and those attending should make their way to the school main entrance to enter the fayre. Children can wear casual clothes to school on the day, so they are comfortable for the fayre (no football strips).

We are still accepting donations of prizes for our raffle and cakes/biscuits/home baking for our tearoom. All donations should be handed in to the school in the morning and will be very gratefully received. A huge thanks goes to Mrs. McIloney for coordinating the event. We can't wait to see you all there!

### Christmas Champion

Hopefully, your child may have shared with you our new initiative of 'Christmas Champion'. We will be celebrating all our children's efforts to maintain high standards and make good choices over the weeks to come. As an incentive, all children will be given the chance to have their name added to a class raffle. Five lucky winners will be drawn from each raffle, and will get to enjoy a special Christmas surprise! For those not lucky enough to be drawn – don't worry! We will be celebrating all our children's efforts with a fun afternoon at the end of term.

### Confirmation

We could not be more proud of our Primary 7 Confirmandi. The Confirmation Mass was celebrated in Sacred Heart Church by Bishop Toal on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November and was an evening filled with prayer, song and beautiful memories. Thank you to all the support given to our children during this special time.

### Temporary Staffing Changes

You may be aware that Mr. Conaghan is currently absent. The remainder of the Senior Management Team will continue to cover this absence according to the following arrangements:

Mrs. Reilly is fulfilling the Acting Head Teacher role on Mondays.

Mrs. McMahon is fulfilling the Acting Head Teacher role on Tuesday-Fridays.

Mrs. McIloney is fulfilling the role of Acting Principal Teacher.

We are also delighted to welcome Miss Lafferty to our teaching staff. She will cover the main class teacher in Primary 7, and will cover the Primary 5 class on Tuesdays. All other school and staffing arrangements remain unchanged. We anticipate that these



### Dates For Your Diary

Christmas Fayre (Dress Down)  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November

Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

Primary 6 and 7 Christmas Party  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December

Dress Rehearsal Nativity Performance  
Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 11am  
(1 free ticket to pensioner family member)

Nativity Performances  
Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2pm  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 6:30pm

Primary 2 and 3 Christmas Party  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December

Primary 1 Christmas Party  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December

Primary 4 and 5 Christmas Party  
Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June, 11am

End of term  
School closes at 2:30pm on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>  
December

School Reopens  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January, 8:55am

arrangements will be in place for the remainder of the term, and will inform parents/carers of any further changes.

### Attendance Update

We are currently reviewing our practice around attendance. We would like to gently remind parents that, unless there is a valid reason for being absent, it is vital that all children attend school every day. If your child is absent for any reason, including sickness or an appointment, please contact the school to ensure the absence is authorised.

Due to the high volume of phone calls to our office and the demands on our clerical staff, we ask that you email details of your child's absence to [enquiries-at-st-gerards.northlan.org.uk](mailto:enquiries-at-st-gerards.northlan.org.uk) rather than phone. This should be done before **9:20am** on the first morning of the absence. Emails will be checked daily, and in the event of an unexplained absence, you will receive an email asking you to contact us.

### Nativity Show

Our Primary 1 to 3 children and teachers are currently working very hard to rehearse for our annual Nativity Show, taking place on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> (dress rehearsal – one free ticket given to each family for this performance), Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December and Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December. Tickets can be purchased every morning at Breakfast Club.

### Christmas Lunch – change of date

Please note the change of date for our school's Christmas Lunch. This will now take place on **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**. You can still order your lunch using the tear off slip on the original letter. On this day, we encourage all children to come to school wearing a Christmas jumper or casual, comfortable clothes (please avoid football strips).

### Parent/Carer Concerns

We have recently noticed a significant increase in the number of parents contacting the school in distress after being confronted at the school gates by another parent. The school gates are very busy at the start/end of the day and it is every parent's priority to drop off and collect their child(ren) safely. It can be very stressful if a parent is confronted when they are not expecting it, especially if this takes place in front of others. While we cannot stop this happening, we would strongly urge any parent/carers with a concern regarding another child to contact the school to discuss this in the first instance.

### Uniform Drive

A little reminder that our uniform drive is always available. This can be accessed at the school office whenever needed. Our incredible Primary 7 pupils have been taking charge of this, organising donations of pre-loved uniforms and celebrating re-cycling. Your use of the drive is appreciated.

### School Fundraising

We wish to thank Mrs. Barr and Mrs. Hunter for organising our sponsored danceathon. This took place before the October week as part of our St. Gerard's Feast Day celebrations. It was a day filled with great fun and a LOT of dancing! Sponsor money raised amounted to £1947. A huge thanks also goes to our fantastic Parent Council for organising and hosting our annual Halloween Family Night. This was once again a great event, attended and enjoyed by many of our families. The event raised £434. Christmas calendars will now be on sale in the school for £1. Order forms for these have been sent home. If you wish to purchase a calendar, please return your order form along with the money.

We wish to thank all of our families who attend and contribute to our fundraising efforts. Money raised goes into our school fund, which is used throughout the year to purchase additional resources and pay for visits/events/opportunities that enhance learning experiences for all our children.

### Minnie Vinnie's Reverse Calendar

Our fantastic Minnie Vinnie's will be collecting donations for one of the local Food Banks throughout the month of December. On Monday you will receive a special reverse calendar giving details of the donations they will be accepting. There is no pressure to contribute to this, but if you are able to contribute all donations will be gratefully received.

### Christmas Holiday

The school will close for the Christmas Holidays on **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 2:30pm**. Please ensure you make arrangements for your child to be collected at this earlier time. Schools will re-open for the new term on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January at 8:55am.

