



Faith Respect Responsibility Trust Team Work Success



St. Fillan's Primary School Newsletter

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December 2019

Our shared vision - "We are all learning, growing and succeeding together"

Our Shared Values:

R - Respect **R** - Responsibility **T** - Team work **F** - Faith **T** - Trust

S - Success



Head Teacher's December's Message:

Firstly, can I introduce myself as the new Acting Head Teacher at St. Fillan's Primary School. It's a great privilege and honour to be become part of the St. Fillan's family and be able to lead the school while Mrs Mackenzie is on her well-deserved maternity leave. The staff and pupils have made me feel most welcome and it was lovely to meet so many parents at our, 'Sharing the Learning' afternoon.

I hope to meet many more families during December as the school prepares to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas.

November was a busy month for the school as the school prepared for Mrs Mackenzie's leave with All Saints Day Mass, Fire drills and Flu vaccinations.

Since arriving, the children have really exemplified the schools values of 'Faith' and 'Kindness' both in their conduct and in their resilience to change. We had a wonderful, 'Anti Bullying Week' Assembly where the children shared their understanding of what we all can do to ensure St. Fillan's continues to be a fully inclusive school where any forms of 'bullying' are not tolerated.

World Kindness Day offered the pupils the chance to, 'undertake' random acts of kindness. The pupils always try to show 'kindness' to one another, but it was a fun challenge for the pupils and staff to try to work out who had had a random act of kindness bestowed upon them.

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This month's core value is: Trust and we will be working closely as a school to provide the children with even more opportunities to shine as valued member of the St. Fillan's family. Every child is valued and always trusted to be the very best they can be.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our families a wonderful Christmas and look forward to a happy and productive New Year!

Best Wishes,

Stephen Collins

(Acting Head Teacher)

The Religious Life and Ethos of our School:

Bishop's Clergy Changes - update



As you may be aware Monsignor McFadden is currently unwell and unable to take up his role at St. Fillan's Parish Church. Fr. Paul and Sister Frances are ensuring that our pupils' spiritual needs are being met, but at this very busy time in the liturgical calendar some dates have had to be postponed or changed until Mgr. McFadden is well enough to start in the parish.

Please check the school/parish websites and bulletins for updates.

We would hope to formally thank Father Paul with a presentation from the children and Parent Council in due course.

Advent

During the month of December, Sister Mary Frances will be supporting us in words and prayers with the lighting of candles on our school advent wreath at our Monday assemblies.

St Fillan's Jesse Tree As part of the school value of Kindness we will have a Jesse Tree in the central area for pupils to show kindness to those less fortunate, by gifting small items such as non-perishables, in date foods, toiletries etc which can then be donated to the Johnstone Foodbank before Christmas.

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Upcoming Parish Events:

P6 PFFA Mass & P7 Mass of Enrolment for the Sacrament of Confirmations

The Primary 6 Pope Francis Faith Award Mass and P7 Mass of Enrolment will be celebrated on **Sunday 8th December 2019** at 11.00am, in St. Fillan's Parish Church. The P7 pupil's sponsors are also encouraged to attend. During the mass the P7 pupils will offer their formal letters to the Bishop, stating their desire to be confirmed

Everyone is welcome to attend and it would be lovely to see as many of our families as possible in attendance with our P6 and P7 pupils, **'Dressed for Excellence'**.

School Vision, Values and Aims:



Our school vision, values and aims are the beating heart of our school and the core beliefs of what we are aiming to achieve. As a Catholic School, we also follow the 'Charter for Catholic Schools' and our core values echo the values contained in the Gospels.

This month, we will focus on our core value of 'Trust' and the Gospel Value of 'Kindness.' We are looking forward to 'catching' our children going 'Above and Beyond' when displaying these values in their thoughts, actions and words.

The school aim that we will focus on is: 'Demonstrate Excellence' and this will be a focus in learning opportunities that are provided in the classroom. Excellence can be defined as:

To demonstrate Excellence is to demonstrate a quality that people really appreciate, because it's so hard to find. Excellence is the quality of excelling, of being truly the best at something. When you demonstrate excellence, you should appreciate the work that went into it.

Our children have many opportunities to excel both within and out with school. Please encourage your child to share this with their teachers or let us know directly when they have, 'Demonstrated Excellence'.

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Staffing:



All checks are now complete and it's great to finally be welcoming to the St. Fillan's family Miss Megan Duffy as Primary 4/3's teacher class. I am sure she will enjoy working with our wonderful boys and girls in the weeks to come.



Safeguarding and Child Protection Update (HIGIOS4 2.1):

Nuts:

You will be aware that we have a number of children in school who suffer from various food allergies and I would ask for your support in reminding your child/children that swapping of snack with another child is discouraged.

We also have children who are severely allergic to nuts. Contact with or ingestion of nuts places their life in grave danger. Please do not send your child to school with a snack or packed lunch which contains nuts. Obvious items would include: Snickers bars, Nutella spread/peanut butter in sandwiches. However, this list is not exhaustive. If your child comes to school with a snack containing nuts, we are happy to provide an alternative and send the unopened snack home.

We appreciate the eradication of traces of nuts is impossible and we thank you for being mindful of this request to ensure the health and wellbeing for every child in our care.

Fun, Safe, Fair!

School Uniform: Dressing for Excellence!



I would like to thank you for your commitment to the request of 'Dressing for Excellence.' Since starting at the school I have noticed just how many children are choosing to wear shirts, ties and school shoes even on non-gym days and they are being commended for their efforts.

St Fillan's has such a unique school uniform which stands the school apart. It's great to see the wearing of our uniform being celebrated.



Playground Matters:

Our children are adequately supervised throughout their playtime and lunch breaks and we are grateful to all of the support staff who know our children very well and who are able to provide the best care possible to each child.

By law, we are required to provide an 'adult presence' in the playground which amounts to at least one adult. However, we benefit from having at least three or four staff members in circulation during breaks.

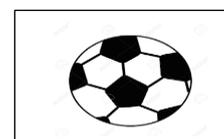
With this in mind, we encourage our children to follow the school values of 'responsibility' and the guiding principle of 'If it doesn't sit well, then you should tell' and we actively encourage our children to immediately share their worries with an adult in the playground. This way, situations can be quickly diffused and solved with minimal fuss or upset.

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Our support staff are trained in the PATHS Programme and are skilled in providing our children with opportunities to 'Problem Solve' and come up with a plan to independently work through social situations on their own. We want our children to be resilient and independent and with guided support, these important life skills can be developed.

We also encourage our children to form relationships and engage in play with children from their own Primary stage or class. It is lovely to see all of our children sharing a playground together, which is a unique situation, but we would like to foster relationships and social development that is age and stage appropriate.

Morning Routines/Readiness to Learn:



Just a gentle reminder that we discourage our children to play football or use the 'Timber Trail' prior to the nine o'clock bell in the morning. The principle reason for this is in the interests of health and safety as the playground is not always supervised with an adult presence and there is limited first aid access for children in the event of an accident. Having tracked our accident logs, children have required first aid and ice packs in the majority of cases due to football related incidents and bumps to the head.

Also, some of our younger children are afraid of the football and as the children all share the playground, it is difficult to reassure the younger ones first thing in the morning when the support staff are not on duty.

We are advocates of promoting a 'readiness to learn' in our school and we encourage our children to come into school settled and calm, ready to begin their learning. It is our experience that unsupervised football games have resulted in children becoming upset and unable to regulate their emotions, leading to unnecessary disputes and anxiety prior to the beginning of the school day. This then takes time to investigate, resolve and ultimately distracts attention away from learning.

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We encourage our children to interact with one another and play games during the short period of time when they arrive to school and when the bell rings.

We would appreciate your continued support with this matter and we encourage our children to demonstrate our core school value of trust.



In January 2020 our Primary 6 children will be voluntarily completing 'PATHS Pals' applications and receive training to develop their leadership skills and empower them to facilitate PATHS strategies in the playground. This is to support younger children who may require assistance with a whole variety of social skills and interactions.



Assemblies:

Assemblies are a great opportunity for us to join together as a whole school community to pray together, share ideas and suggestions, learn from each other and to showcase our learning and achievements.

In December, the following themes will be explored:

Value - Trust and Kindness.
Aim - Demonstrate Excellence!
General Themes: Fairtrade, Christmas Jumper Day, Helping others, Christmas traditions around the World, and the true meaning of Christmas.
Religious Themes: St. Andrew, Advent and the birth of Jesus

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Parent Council /Christmas Fayre

The staff and pupils at St Fillan's Primary would like to thank the wonderful effort of all of parents, staff and pupils who supported in the preparation and organisation of our wonderful Christmas Fayre.

Panto Season:



Oh no it's not! I hear you cry!

We are delighted that the whole school will attend the PACE pantomime 'The Snow Queen' on Tuesday 3rd December 2019 at 10.00am

The PACE Panto is always one of the highlights of the year and we are sure that the children and staff will enjoy this whole school excursion.

UKLA:

Mrs McKay (Primary 7 Class Teacher) and I will be continuing to take part in this year's UKLA (United Kingdom Literacy Association) bid to source the UK's best new books.

We have had great fun exploring over eighty titles in the non-fiction category and we look forward to working with the children and schools across the Local Authority to condense our longlist!

December 2019: This month's core value is: Trust and Gospel Value: Kindness.

Please note that any changes/amended information will be highlighted in red font.

Day/Date	Event
Tuesday 3 rd December	Advent week 1 Lunch menu: Week 2 Whole school Panto.
Wednesday 4 th December	Scoobmobile class visits P6 and P7
Friday 6 th December	First Friday mass postponed.
Sunday 8 th December 2019	Primary 6 Pope Francis Faith Award and 7 Mass of Enrolment for the Sacrament of Confirmation at 11.00am. The children's Sponsor's are also invited to attend. Bambinelli Sunday will be celebrated with the P4 children in school.
Monday 9 th December 2019	St Fillan's Choir to Paisley Centre Charity singing 12-1pm. P5 Squash Tournament at Strathgryffe 9.45-11.30am. Advent week 2 Lunch menu: Week 3
Tuesday 10 th December 2019	Christmas lunch. Nativity dress rehearsal. Interim reports issued to parents/carers.
Wednesday 11 th December 2019	Nativity Community performance 10.30am, parents performance 1.15pm.
Thursday 12 th December 2019	School closed for Election.
Friday 13 th December 2019	Nativity performance at 1.00pm. Christmas Jumper Day for St Vincent's Hospice suggested donation of £1.
Monday 16 th December 2019	Advent week 3. Lunch menu: Week 1
Tuesday 17 th December 2019	Christmas class parties P1-P3. Children may wear their party clothes to school should they wish to do so.
Wednesday 18 th December 2019	End of term mass at 9.30am celebrated in St Fillan's church, all are welcome to attend. Christmas class parties P4 and P5. Children may wear their party clothes to school should they wish to do so.
Thursday 19 th December 2019	Christmas class parties P6 and P7. Children may wear their party clothes to school should they wish to do so. Choir to attend 'Carols in the Crescent' at 7-7.45pm in Gryffebank Crescent.

Friday 20th December 2019	Head Teacher 'End of Term' Awards. Golden Ticket Tea Party. School closes early at 2.30pm. Wishing all of our families a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

January 2020: This month's core value is: SUCCESS and Gospel Value: Simplicity.

Additional dates for your diary

Monday 6 th January 2020	Children return to school. Lunch menu: week 1 Menu change today Macaroni cheese & Peas Stewed steak, peas & boiled potatoes Lentil Soup
Thursday 9 th January 2020	NSPCC assembly/classroom talks.
Wednesday 15 th January 2020	P1 Registration for surnames that begin with A-L 1-3pm.
Thursday 16 th January 2020	P1 Registration for surnames that begin with M-Z 1-3pm
Friday 17 th January 2020	St Fillan's Feast day mass 9.30am.

I would like to add a feature to our monthly newsletters for comments/suggested improvements and to celebrate the Demonstration of Excellence and wider achievements of our pupils. Wider achievement can range from, tying your laces for the first time to coming first in the Paisley 3k. If your child has achieved something and you want to celebrate it then

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please let us know and we will publish it in our monthly newsletter for the whole community to enjoy! We will also post the achievements on our social media platforms if you have given consent for that. I am honoured and privileged to be leading St. Fillan's Primary School this session and I look forward to working with you all.

Stephen Collins

Acting Head Teacher

Comment/Suggested Improvement :

Name:..... Class.....

Date:.....

Detail of Achievement:

Name:..... Class.....

Date:.....

Final Thought: Demonstrate Excellence