



# ST. MARY'S P.S. STEWARTSTOWN



## PRIMARY 1 WELCOME BOOKLET

BELIEVING, ACHIEVING, SUCCEEDING

## WELCOME

Welcome Parents to St. Mary's P.S. and we hope that your son or daughter is looking forward to their first step into primary school.

The purpose of this booklet and key information on the Parents section of the school website [www.stmarysstewartstown.com](http://www.stmarysstewartstown.com) is to provide you with information about your child's introduction to St. Mary's Primary School. Our aim is to make your child's transition to Primary One a happy and enjoyable experience. In order to achieve this, we will meet your child during the two induction days in August and help you to prepare your child for school through sharing key information about the school. If your child has attended the local nursery or playgroup, a member of our staff will have visited them and spoken to the staff.

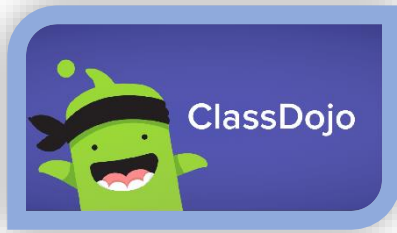
## MORNING ROUTINE

The transition from the home environment to school may represent a very big change for your child. The staff understands this, and they will try to make the transition as easy as possible. There are some things which you can do to help ease the "ordeal" for the apprehensive child.

- Try to ensure that your child is unhurried each morning as they prepare for school.
- Make all preparations for school the night before if possible and avoid last minute rushes to gather up items.
- Make sure that they have a breakfast which will sustain them throughout the morning.

Most children make the transition in the first few weeks quite easily. Don't be too worried if your child cries or doesn't want to go to school after a few days. This happens from time to time, but be reassured their upset wears off very quickly when they see the morning classroom routine unfold.

Each morning P.I children access school via their own entrance at the left side of the school. The side gate will open at 8:50am. We ask that children are accompanied to the school gate at the left hand side of the school and then handed safely over to school staff.



Any small queries/concerns can be shared in the morning or with a short message to school staff using our Communication App: Class Dojo.

Children when they enter school, start their busy day by commencing their morning routine with coat, snack, dinner time choice and then morning Literacy, all before the morning class meeting! We encourage children to complete their daily morning routine independently. You can really help them by making sure your child can, put on and take off their own coat.

## WHAT DO THEY DO ALL DAY?

The Primary 1 classroom is a very busy place, with lots going on but most importantly each day brings a regular schedule and routine, which is extremely supportive, rewarding and comforting to the 4 and 5-year-old child. Your child will soon get to experience and know the daily class routine, from the morning welcome, the class meeting, prayers, calendar, weather, phonics, active learning, healthy snack and tidy up (and that's just to llam). Each day will have a regular pattern that the children will recognise and respond to, building their confidence and their love of learning.



Talking and listening, reading and writing, skills are key to learning in P.I. They are also the gateway to developing a love of learning, enjoyment and personal growth. These all important life skills are developed in class through a variety of fun and interactive



teaching methods, including songs, rhymes, stories and of course active learning.

Children will engage in different kinds of mathematical learning, including, exploring and investigating number and pattern. They will also talk about what they have learned and ask questions about what they see. All of this active learning



builds confidence in numeracy — again an important life skill.

So please don't be worried or disappointed if you get the traditional answer to the question,

*'What did you do in school today'? ..... "Nothing!"*

Primary 1 is the building block to successful learning. We spend significant time ensuring that this early learning and reinforcement of sounds/letters/rhyme/letter & number formation/high frequency words/counting/is

done to support the young learner, to develop their confidence, their independence and their 'can do' attitude so that there is a built in readiness and eagerness to learning. We want them to be ready for reading/writing/counting/adding etc. rather than being discouraged and put off by starting too soon.

## OUTDOOR LEARNING

At St. Mary's we have developed outdoor facilities. Your child will engage in planned and purposeful outdoor learning twice weekly, Thursday and Friday. We aim to go outdoors in all weathers and so ask that particularly on a Thursday and Friday children are sent to school with a warm coat in Winter and a waterproof coat with a hood in the Spring. Please send in a pair of wellingtons (clearly labelled with their name).



## UNIFORM

The school uniform (detailed below) should be worn daily, except on a Wednesday when your child has PE. We ask that children come dressed in their PE uniform each Wednesday. We would ask you as parents to support the school in relation to the above as we regard school uniform as being a very important aspect of our school. School crest sweatshirt can be purchased from local stores in Coalisland. PE O'Neills' jersey is available to order from school. All other items are available in stores widely.

Girls	Boys	PE Uniform: Wednesday
Navy v neck sweatshirt with school crest	Navy v neck sweatshirt with school crest	Navy v neck sweatshirt with school crest
Light blue polo shirt with school crest	Light blue polo shirt with school crest	School blue 'O'Neills' jersey (available to order from school, or white polo shirt)
Navy skirt Navy knee high socks, or navy tights (Blue Gingham dress & white ankle socks in warmer weather)	Elasticated navy trousers  (Navy shorts in warmer weather)	Navy shorts/ navy jogging bottoms
Black shoes with Velcro fastening	Black shoes with Velcro fastening	Velcro trainers (any colour permitted)

All articles, especially clothing **MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME**. It is easy to return articles which have been found if they have a name on them. As sweatshirts are the same for all children it is essential that they are named and checked regularly in case labels have washed off as the children will be removing these for PE and can easily get them mixed up. Whilst every care is taken of pupils' property, no responsibility can be accepted for loss or damage. **Children will also need a small school bag and snack bag that they can easily open and close.**



## HEALTHY BREAKS

It is school policy to encourage healthy eating and to promote a healthy lifestyle for our pupils. In Primary 1 the children will have a snack during the morning session. We ask you to provide a small healthy snack for your child and send it in a lunch box/bag each morning marked clearly with their name and class. Our pupils are encouraged to bring a piece of fruit, vegetable or sandwich to school for their break. They are also encouraged to drink water, please send a filled water bottle to school each day. Fizzy drinks, chocolate and sugar laden snacks and crisps must not be sent to school.

Only fruit, vegetables or bread based products and  
milk or water are permitted as part of our Healthy Break Policy

**Healthy Eating messages will be reinforced throughout your child's time at school .**

## SCHOOL MEALS

Children can either bring a packed lunch to school or buy a school meal, (some pupils may also be entitled to a Free School Meal. Please make your application for Free School Meals well in advance of starting in September.

Copies of the School Meals Menu will be available on the website and are also shared with parents via the Class Dojo App. The price of a School Meal is set by the Education Authority and may vary from year to year, currently school meals are £2:60 per day.



Please pay monies for School Meals using the school's online payment system: bank transfer or PayPal.

Should your child be absent for any reason, the School Meals credit will be carried forward to the next week.

## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER.

- Make sure your child attends every day.
- Ensure your child arrives to school on time - anytime between 8:50am – 9:10am.
- Always be on time to collect your child.
- Take an interest in what your child brings home – it may look like a blue blob to you, but to them it is a work of art!
- Read the messages sent on Dojo, check in regularly to the school website, where you will find details of school holidays and school calendar.
- Check and empty book bags regularly.
- Please send school monies via bank transfer or PayPal.
- Please look after all school resources sent home and return Homework packs each Thursday.

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