

ST. JOSEPH'S NEWSLETTER

September/October 2025

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Welcome to our September/October Newsletter 2025

Since the first day back in September, pupils have been diving headfirst into a packed schedule of learning, activities, and events throughout September and October. From classroom learning to extracurricular clubs, the energy and enthusiasm have been admirable.

Pupils settling into routines, and showing impressive dedication. We have hosted welcome assemblies and enrichment activities, giving pupils opportunities to showcase their talents and build St. Joseph's community spirit.

Sports fixtures, music rehearsals, and art workshops have added to the buzz, while preparations for Halloween and religious events have kept everyone on their toes. Despite the busy start to the year, pupils have shown resilience and teamwork, making the most of every opportunity.

With half-term approaching, St. Joseph's is celebrating a successful start to the year.

New Primary 1 Pupils

Our new Primary 1 pupils have taken to school life at St. Joseph's like a duck to water. They are now very well settled and enjoying life in the 'big school'. They are a super group of boys and girls and it is so lovely to see their personal growth and development in such a short space of time. Most of them can now walk around the back in the morning independently which is a big milestone.



(not all shown due to sharing restrictions)

Halloween

On Friday 24th October we shall be holding our Halloween Fancy Dress Parade and Disco. We are very thankful to Mr Duane Keiran who will once again provide his DJ skills. This is always a much anticipated and exciting day for everyone. No



need to buy expensive costumes. Press the google button and you will be surprised to see what can be achieved with 'stuff' you may already have about the house. We don't do prizes for best costumes as we appreciate the effort made by everyone. Children can bring in some party treats for class skelebrations. (No nuts, gum, fizzy drinks, hard sweets eg gobstoppers etc).

If anyone has any Halloween decorations going spare we would gladly accept if in good condition. Many thanks.

How can you tell a vampire has a cold?

He starts coffin. Wha... Ha... Ha... Ha.....

30 Years of outstanding Service



St. Joseph's Primary School, Meigh, is proud to celebrate a remarkable milestone as Mrs Alison Toal marks **30 years of dedicated service** to our school community.

Since the 1st September 1995, Miss Alison, as she is affectionately known, has been a constant source of inspiration, kindness, and commitment. Thanks to her, countless children from the Meigh area and beyond have been given the best possible start to their Primary 1 journey where Miss Alison has welcomed, cared for, educated and left a lasting impact on generations.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations and deepest gratitude to Miss Alison for her outstanding contribution. Here's to a legacy of excellence and many more happy years ahead!

Pictured is Miss Alison receiving gifts of appreciation from our staff and governor body presented by Mrs Brennan & Mrs Russell.

Child Safeguarding Team

Please be familiar with our Child Safeguarding Team.

Mrs Brennan – Designated Teacher for SG

Ms Moley – Deputy Designated Teacher for SG

Mr Trainor – Principal SG

(Full Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy available on school website.)



Wraparound Provision



8 - 9	Breakfast Club	£1.25
2 - 3	1,2,3 Club	£1.25
3 - 4	Homework & Activities	£2.25
4 - 5	Late Class & Activities (with snack)	£3.25

Our Wraparound Club numbers after school have dramatically increased this term, especially from 2pm to 3pm. Please book online well in advance via School Money for all time slots required to avoid disappointment.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If a child is booked in and for whatever reason is not going to attend, we ask you to follow the procedures as outlined below to avoid being charged:

1. Delete your booking on School Money (Must be adapted by midnight the night before);
2. If it is a last minute change (after midnight), contact the school office **before 10am** and school will edit booking on your behalf.

By adhering to the above instructions you will not be charged.

Unfortunately, a refund can no longer be administered in the absence of above points 1 & 2.

We are having to introduce non-refund terms as when sessions are fully booked and children subsequently do not attend without us being informed until very last minute or sometimes not at all, as this prevents others from availing of that service. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Once a Week - Take a Peek

- Reminder to all parents to tie long hair back every day in plaits or ponytails.
- Check once a week or at the weekend for signs of head lice.



Cross Country at Downpatrick

Over 500 children from 37 schools gathered at Downpatrick Leisure

Centre last week for cross country running. St Joseph's had 8 boys and 8 girls

participating in what were very competitive races. Our girls came agonisingly close to a medal

position when their finishing places were all added up but just missed out. A particular mention must go to Ella who came 9th overall, our highest finish ever. Well done to all for completing in such damp conditions. Thank you to Mrs Carville and Mrs O'Hare for helping with the transportation to and from the event.



Food in School



In the interests of Health & Safety we ask our parents/ carers/ pupils not to allow any break/ lunch items that may contain any traces of nuts. Please be very mindful of the labels of food items coming into school

We do have children in the school who have a **severe nut allergy and require epi-pens..** The school reserves the right to withhold any food items from consumption should the need arise. Children should only bring a healthy break snack to school eg. single sandwich, pancake, cheese strings, fruit, yoghurt, plain biscuit etc. No crisps/chocolate bars allowed as we are a healthy living promoting school. Snack should be minimal, simple and quick to eat as we want our pupils to enjoy ample play time.

Friday is the **only** day designated for a small treat (crisps, small bar etc) at either breacktime snack or lunch (not both if taking packed lunch). Some children are bringing sharing bags of sweets that would feed an army. We kindly ask that this is not the case for obvious reasons.

Aside from packed lunch, no other food or drink may be brought/sent into school – this includes **birthday cakes, party bags or party food items of any description.**

We really appreciate your cooperation and support in this matter

Peace Proms

We are delighted to announce that our p6/7 choir members will be participating in the Cross Border Orchestra Peace Proms at Belfast SSE Area. Peace Proms promotes 'peace through music' and empowers young minds to make a positive difference. The highlight is a series of spectacular large-scale concerts, featuring up to 3,000 choir members and a full symphony youth orchestra, held in major arena venues across Ireland in January–March 2026. Our pupils have already began rehearsing and cannot wait for the big day.



Class Assemblies & Events

We are very lucky at St. Joseph's to have a bespoke stage area and we place a very high emphasis on all of our pupils having the opportunity to perform for an audience on a number of occasions throughout the year. Please see dates in **green** for class assemblies/productions to which parents and family members are very welcome to attend. Assemblies will begin at 10:55am. P1 Christmas Plays will begin at 10am.

Thur. 23rd Oct

P6 Mr Shields

Fri. 24th Oct

Halloween Disco

Fri. 14th Nov

P4 Ms Maginnis

Fri. 5th Dec

Christmas Dinner
(Early Closure
12.30pm)

Wed. 10th Dec

P1 Chris. Play

Fri 12th Dec

Santa Fun Day

Thur. 18th Dec

Carol Service 1pm

New Outdoor Board Games

Do you remember as a child before technology that all we had was the great outdoors and a few board games to keep us entertained. Well, here are the latest additions to our wonderful outdoor environment to stimulate fun and games



We have also added to our gross motor skills equipment which is going down a treat with lots of use during playtimes and we certainly think the artificial grass complements it greatly.



None of the above comes cheap so we thank you all for contributing at certain times of the year when we ask for donations to school funds etc.

Administration of Medicine

If your child has specific needs e.g., reading glasses, inhalers etc., please inform the class teacher. The school will only hold and administer medication for children with very specific medical needs e.g. Auto-Injector Pens for those at risk from anaphylaxis, inhalers for asthma and hypo kits for diabetes. Over the counter medication/throat lozenges etc. **will not** be administered. Only up to date prescriptions with name and dosage on the label will be accommodated in school following an induction procedure involving written permission. Contact office for details.



Please ensure **asthma inhalers** and **asthma careplans** from asthma nurse/Dr. are sent into school to be kept in child's classroom.

Robin Hood

We brought the theatre to St Joseph's last Friday morning when our whole school gathered in the assembly hall to watch a performance of Robin Hood. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the show. Mrs Garvey & Mr Trainor were called upon for their dancing skills and well lets just say the less said the better.



Health & Hygiene

As we begin a new school year we would like to increase your child's awareness of the importance of good handwashing, because, as you know, children are more prone to sharing bugs. We feel that this will help reduce the likelihood of the spread of any infections both in school and at home. We would be grateful if you would go through the handwashing steps with your child. Little rhymes such as "This is the way we wash our hands" for our younger children can make

handwashing a fun experience. It is important that handwashing is carried out after certain activities, for example, using the toilet, before eating, after touching animals and before bedtime. If a child displays vomiting or diarrhoea we kindly ask they remain at home for 48hrs after the symptoms desist.

Communication

One of our key aims in St. Joseph's is to ensure we have balanced, effective communication channels within our school community. We are only sending out essential paper communications to you that may require your signature; all other communications are being sent in the following key ways;

1. Text messages
2. Text messages with links to letters
3. Emails
4. Class Dojo (*informal class based messaging*)

Occasionally we will reinforce messages via facebook but important messages will be sent in one of the three main ways above. To that end, please ensure that we have your correct mobile number and email address. If you wish to change these please let Miriam in the office know by emailing her at mmagennis042@c2kni.net . If you do not update us, you may not receive VITAL INFORMATION going forward.

We are in the process of developing a new school app which will be the primary source for messaging. More information to follow.

Ronan Baker Memorial Hurling Tournament

We were privileged to participate in the Ronan Baker (RIP) Memorial Hurling Tournament at Memorial Park, Killeavy recently. Two St. Joseph's teams competed against their counterparts from St. Moninna's and St. Michaels. They did their best with a strong set of girls providing the backbone due to their Killeavy camogie club involvement however the other schools just had the edge due to many more pupils who were club members which makes all the difference. Regardless of this our pupils got stuck in and gave a very account of themselves.

Children received a certificate and a goodie bag presented by the Baker family which was very much appreciated.



Maths Week Ireland

Over the course last week our pupils in all classes have been participating in Maths Week Ireland and doing all sorts of puzzles, activities and investigative mathematical problem solving. Our Primary 7 pupils were lucky to win a class prize in the daily St. Paul's Math challenge. Who says maths isn't fun?



Time to Code

Caitlin Magee back to St. Joseph's through a Business in the Community initiative called Time to Code. Caitlin is an employee of All State and is kindly volunteering to teach coding skills to our Primary 7 pupils.

A heartfelt thank you to past pupil **Caitlin Magee** for generously sharing her time and expertise with our Primary 7 pupils. Her engaging and enthusiastic approach to teaching **coding** has sparked curiosity, built confidence, and inspired a love of digital learning in our classroom.

We are incredibly grateful for her support and the valuable skills she has helped our pupils develop. Thank you, Caitlin!



Hurling/Camogie with Liam Smith

We thank Killeavy coach Liam Smith for giving up his time to coach our P6/7 pupils in the art of hurling and camogie. Liam is passionate about promoting our national sport and is actively keen to develop the next generation of Killeavy hurlers and camogs.



Tin Whistle Ensemble

Schools out on Friday at 2pm for all except our dedicated P6/7 tin whistlers who voluntarily come together every week to practice and fine tune their repertoire. What a talented group of musicians!



Lego Club



Dates for Your Diary

Fri. 24th Oct - Halloween Fancy Dress Disco

Mon. 27th Oct - Friday 31st October - Mid Term Break

Fri. 5th Dec - Christmas Dinner & Jumper Day (Early finish at 12.30 for staff in-house Christmas dinner)

Fri. 12th Dec - Santa Fun Day & Christmas Jumper - (No Afterschool Care)

Thur. 18th Dec - Carol Service & Nativity Tableau St. Joseph's Church (All Welcome)

Fri. 19th Dec - Early Closing @11:00am Christmas Holidays (no dinners or after school wraparound)

Mon 5th Jan - Term 2 begins



Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to invite you to download our new Safer Schools NI App, provided to **St. Joseph's Meigh** by the Department of Education and INTCO Safeguarding Group. (Downloaded Safer Schools last year? This new and updated App replaces it!)

Did you know?
92% of children in Northern Ireland use video sharing platforms, with 53% using social media and 65% accessing messaging apps (Ofcom, 2020). If your child hasn't already been using these platforms, they soon will be! Therefore, it's more important than ever to be aware of how to keep your child safe.

How will the Safer Schools NI App help you?

 Provides you with easy-to-follow steps on how to make your home and devices safer in the 'Need-to-Know' section. It's a great place to start!

 Keeps you up to date with the current online trends, threats, and risks to your child. This information is sent directly to your device!

 Delivers the information you need to know on social media and gaming platforms, helping you understand the latest buzzwords and how to set privacy and parental settings on platforms like Among Us, Minecraft and TikTok.

 Offers expert guidance to help you navigate important issues such as bullying, mental health and healthy relationships. Giving you practical tips on how to approach these conversations with your children.

 Gives you access to your school's latest news, updated policies, and calendar all within your App.

The Online Safety section will support you to help and support where you need it when you need it – it's in your pocket!



To download and login to your Safer Schools NI App, follow the steps below! Make sure to enable your push notifications when prompted to keep up to date with the latest safeguarding alerts and your school news.

NOW



Downloading your App

Step 1
If you are using an iOS device, go to the Apple App Store and search 'Safer Schools NI'. If you are using an Android device, go to the Google Play Store and search 'Safer Schools NI'.

Step 2
Select 'Download'.



Logging In

Please follow the below instructions.

Creating An Account:

Step 1
If you haven't already, please create an account by clicking 'Parent/Carer' on the login screen of your app.

Step 2

To create an account, click 'Register here' and input your full name, email and password you wish to use. You'll also be asked to confirm your password. Once you're ready, click 'Register' and this will create your account.

Step 3

After you register, you will be asked to read and agree to the Terms and Conditions. After reading and scrolling to the bottom, the 'I agree' button will be available to select.

Step 4

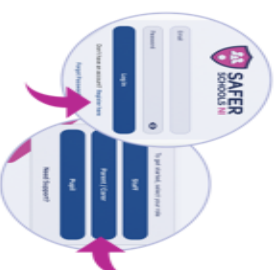
Time to pick your school! To add your school, simply type it in within the search bar and click 'Continue'. Please enter the following exactly:

St. Joseph's Primary School, Meigh

You will then be asked to input the **Entry Code** that you have received from your school that is relevant to your role. Type in your code and click 'Submit'.

Entry Code is 6478

You'll be asked to confirm this by clicking 'Continue'. To scan a QR Code instead of your Entry Code, click 'Scan QR Code'.



Top Tip: Did you know that your App features Multi-School Login? This means that if you are a Staff member in our school with a child in another, or if you are a Parent/Carer of children in different schools, you have access to multiple schools without having to log in and out of the App.

Step 5
To add another School, simply repeat Step 3. You can also view all of your added schools under your name.



Logging into your App:

Step 1
When you have opened the App, you should input your email address and password that you used to create your account. Once you're ready, click 'Log In'.

Step 2

When you log in, you will see your chosen school(s) that you have added to your account. Simply click the school that you would like to view!

