**A Note from Mrs. Taggart**

As we approach the Easter period school has been very busy. We look forward to the ‘better weather,’ and longer days.

In the interests of pupil safety the main playground/school gates will remain closed until 8.30am. Buses and taxis will stay outside the gate until this time. Those attending Breakfast Club are asked to use the small side gate. There is no pupil supervision until 8.30am.

On Wet/Icy Play Days we will continue to supervise pupils in the hall until all teachers have arrived and bring children to their classrooms.

The back gate will close at 9.30am daily. It will reopen for pick up times.

You will notice that door bells have been placed outside classroom doors. This is to ensure that no one can enter classrooms without authorisation and to keep all children safe. This is a short term solution before we move to the new building where there will be a secure entry system.

If you need to collect you child from class please continue to call to the office and Mrs. Mc Elduff can make arrangements. We appreciate your understanding and patience in this matter.

School Development Plan

With this newsletter you will be issued a copy of the School Development Plan Priorities for this academic year. A lot of these targets have been completed. We continually self-evaluate and work on school improvement to the benefit of all within the community.

**Severe Weather Closures**

Thank-you for your patience during the recent closures. Due to severe weather conditions which caused frozen and burst pipes.

 It is always our intention to open school and we carry out Health and Safety checks daily. However, on some occasions, where circumstances are out of our control, we may need to close the school.

**In cases of severe winter weather when the school may have to be closed, we will be using the school website, the ‘Text to Parents’ service, Facebook and announcements on BBC Radio Ulster to inform parents. Please remember to check the website for the latest information particularly during periods of heavy frost or snow.**

**Please make sure that we have your latest mobile number so that you can be contacted and phone Mrs McElduff in the office if you need to update your information.**

Attendance & Punctuality

Lateness has a disruptive effect, not only to individual learning, but on the whole class. The first half hour in most classes is when homework is explained and discussed.

If you plan to have your child in late for medical or other reason, please let the class teacher know. If your child is absent from school, please contact the school office on day one of the absence. Please send in a note explaining the reason for the absence with your child on return to school.

PLEASE REMEMBER ALL ABSENCES ARE RECORDED AND SCHOOL MUST BE NOTIFIED. Monthly computerised checks are carried out by the Principal and any

‘unauthorised’ absences or regular absence patterns showing will be brought to the attention of the parents and any other relevant agencies**. If your child’s attendance falls below 85% in any given month a letter will be sent home with your child identifying this.**

Absence arising from illness is unavoidable, however, in the interests of continuity and progression of learning, we request that you do not arrange holidays during term time.

Sacraments

Congratulations to all our children who received the sacraments of First Penance and Confirmation. Thanks to parents, clergy and teaching staff for their support in preparing the children. They did their parents and the school proud.

**Transfer Preparation**

As a school we pride ourselves on offering a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the requirements outlined by the Department of Education, whilst promoting and celebrating the Integrated Ethos.

As children progress from Nursery to Year 7 they develop and cultivate core skills in order to prepare them for Post Primary and life in general. We have been informed by all the Post Primary Schools that those children who transfer from OIPS are particularly well prepared and have developed independence, enhanced their thinking skills and are very well equipped to meet the challenges that they may face in their next stage of their education.

In OIPS we promote choice and support pupils and parents in their decision making in relation to Post Primary Schools. Many families decide not to participate in transfer tests but those who have done have achieved success.

In preparation for transfer tests, Year 6 have been given the opportunity to attend “Booster Sessions” for Literacy and Numeracy between 3pm and 4pm each Wednesday after school. **This has been open to all Year 6 pupils and a large group have availed of this opportunity.** Our thanks is extended to Mrs. Waring and Miss Finlay for giving of their time.

After Easter these sessions will continue each week and they will focus on GL and AQE Practice Tests. **Pupils do not need to be entered for Transfer Tests before attending these sessions.**

**‘Sporting’ AFTER –SCHOOL CLUBS COMMENCE SHORTLY**

*Our ever popular sporting after school clubs for this term will commence shortly with further details to follow.*

***Child Protection***

Staff at OIPS are always ready to listen to any problems or queries you may have. Sometimes you may have other concerns where you or your children may want to talk in confidence to an appropriate adult.

Our Designated Child Protection Teacher is Mrs. McKernan, Year 3 and Deputy Child Protection Teacher is Mrs. Taggart, Year 7.

New Build



The build completion date is unchanged and we still hope to be given the keys on the 15th May 2018. The windows are in, walls are being plastered, the second fitting of the electrics has been completed and under floor heating is being installed. It is all very exciting!

The move is planned for late May or early June so please remember the changes to the holidays.

Pupils will return to school on Tuesday 8th May and school will be closed for a week in late May/early June for the move. Remember to make provisional childcare arrangements for this time.

During the move week pupils and parents will be given the opportunity to see around and become familiar with their new surroundings. We will send out a timetable of these plans as soon as we have final confirmation of the completion date.

**Young Enterprise**

Year 7 have being working extremely hard on setting up their own business as part of the Young Enterprise Programme, ‘Business Beginnings.’ They have developed and produced various products over the past numbers of weeks. They had a great day selling in Main Street on Wednesday 7th March. Their products will be going on sale in school in the upcoming weeks. We will keep you posted of times and dates of when this is to occur.

Staff Updates

Mr. Bradley remains off ill but hopes to return soon. If you have any concerns, please speak to your child’s class teacher or Mrs. Taggart.

Mr. Sweeney will continue to teacher Y7ST until Mr. Bradley returns.

Mrs. Clements will return on the 26th March 2018. Mrs. Clements will be reducing to a three-day week (Mon-Wed), until June 2018. Miss. Fannin will teach this Year 4 class on Thursday and Friday, until June 2018.

Mrs. McGarvey returns to work on Monday 12th March. We wish her father well on his road to recovery.

Mrs. Ritchie (Y2 Teacher) will be commencing Maternity leave on 30th April 2018. We wish her and family best wishes for the future. Miss Mullin will teach Y2LR until the end of the academic year.

**Mobile Phones**

* Omagh Integrated Primary and Nursery School strongly discourage pupils from bringing mobile phones to school.
* Mobile phones are brought to the school entirely at the owner’s risk and the school takes no responsibility for mobile phones taken into school. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
* If pupils bring mobile phones to school, the phones must remain switched off and left in the school office for safekeeping.
* Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures, i.e.

via the school office.

**School Logo & Uniform**



* A local design company is currently working on creating a high resolution copy of our school logo. We will let you know when this has been finalised The logo is to comply with digital signage specifications.
* Thank-you for returning the uniform reply slips on what provider you would be prefer for our school uniform. Following this consultation, the majority of parents have chosen ‘Select Kidz,’ as the provider for uniforms.
* O’Neills will remain the provider for the school P.E. Kit and Hoodies. As the updated school logo is to be finalised before Easter, we advise parents not to purchase uniforms until further notice.

Social Media Update

Over the coming weeks the school Facebook page will begin to include pictures of pupils and school activities and achievements.

There will also be links to the school website. If you have not already done so please remember to return the consent for inclusion on Facebook which was issued last month.

**Reminders**

We would also like to remind parents that:

* If pick up arrangements change, please inform your child’s class teacher.
* We ask you to be extra careful when using the car parks to collect children after school. Please be aware of other vehicles, adults and children as you are making your way into and out of the car parks.
* Please remember that black shoes are part of our uniform.

**PARENTS’ COUNCIL NEWS**

Pupils and parents are busy filling “Smartie Tubes” Fundraising activity for all pupils before Easter. Remember to send these in to your child’s class teacher so that prizes can be arranged. These will be presented at the Easter assembly.

Upcoming fundraisers and events include:

* Easter Draw. Pupil Council members will be selling 20p raffle tickets for the children to enter the Draws. Prizes include an Easter Hamper and various yummy Easter Eggs.
* Thursday 3rd May – Farewell Street Party. 6pm - 8.30pm at the school.
* All pupils, parents, staff and Governors; past and present, are invited to attend this event. Tickets will be on sale soon and can be purchased from the school office or at Drumragh College.

Transport

EA has started the process of assessing transport to the new school building. They will send letters to all parents before the end of March. Parents will be given the opportunity to apply for transport where appropriate. The school will support you in making an application. If you have any queries about this please get in touch with the school.

St. Patrick’s Day Art Workshop

Year Five participated in a St. Patrick's Day Children's Art Exhibition. They had the opportunity to work with a local artist, Genevieve Murphy, during the project. She led them in an interpretation of the story of St. Patrick and helped them to produce a piece of artwork, that will form part of the full story. The artwork, along with pieces from other schools are displayed in the Strule Arts Centre.

Y5 attended the launch in the Strule Arts Centre on the 9th of March 2018. We are extremely proud of what we have produced.

Book Fair

The Book Fair is in school from Monday 12th March to Friday 16th March. It is to take place in the school **Library**. The pupils had an opportunity to look at the items for sale. Parent/carers can purchase books with their children at the following times from Mon.12th to Fri 16th March 2018:

8.40-9.00 AM

2.00-2.20 PM

3.00- 3.20 PM

After the final total has been calculated from the Book Fair the school will receive an allocation to purchase books, for the library. THANK YOU for your support.

***World Book Day 2018***

World Book day took place on Tuesday 6th of March. Thank-you to the children and you, the parents, for helping the pupils dress up as their favourite book character! It was a great success.

Safety Internet Day 2018

Safer Internet Day 2018 was celebrated globally on **Tuesday 6th February 2018** with the slogan “Create, Connect and Share Respect: A better internet starts here.

More than 100 organisations across the UK got involved to help inspire a national conversation about using technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively.

In OIPS we celebrated the day by participating in e-Safety lessons within our classes.  Y3-7 participated in a poster competition.  Thank-you to everyone for all their fantastic entries.

**Mother’s Day Celebrations**

On Friday 9th March, the Nursery Unit invited mothers and grandmothers to their annual ‘Mother’s Day Tea Party.’ The pupils and guests were serenaded by our senior choir. It was a great success! Thank-you to the Nursery staff for all their hard work in making this event so memorable for the children and families of our school.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER

The school photographer will be in school on **Thursday 15th March 2018.** On this day they will be taking individual and family photos (children).

**Integration Month**

**‘EVERYBODY OUTSTANDING’**

Throughout the month of March, the school celebrating Integration. We have a wide range of planned events for the pupils and the wider community to become involved in.

*Week 1: Outstanding Character linked to World Book Day*

*Week 2: Outstanding Thoughtfulness!*

The school focused on random acts of kindness towards others (ARK).

Y6JW Art workshop in Drumragh College.

*Week 3: Integration is Outstanding!*

Integration Focus Group as well as Pupil Council are planning to speak to pupils in Y5-7 about why Integrated Education is important to them.

Y1-4 have invited parents/family members into their classes on Wed. 14th March between 9am-10.30am. Please return your expression of interest to your child’s class teacher.

*Week 4: Outstanding Respect for identity and diversity!*

Tuesday 20th Odd Sock Day. The school community will be wearing odd socks to school.

*My Community is Outstanding:*

Coffee morning for parents and school community. Further information to follow. Any proceeds made will be donated to local charities.

*Week 5: Conclusion to Integration Month!*

Y5-7 will be taking part in an ‘Everybody Outstanding,’ Talent Show for the pupils. Y7 pupils will be hosting the event.

Wednesday 28th March 1.30pm-2.30pm ‘Easter Stay and Play.

**Holidays and Closures 2017/18**

**Changes/new additions highlighted in yellow as the year progresses.**

Monday 19th March **Closed for St. Patrick’s Day.**

Thursday 29th March **Close 12:00pm (N-3) 12.30pm for (Y4-7).**

**There will be NO Transport, from school and No meals available.**

Fri 30th- Wed 11th April (Inclusive) **Closed for Easter Holidays.**

Thursday 12th April **Term 3 begins.**

Note: We are due to move to the new school in May/June. We will use the planned days on Tuesday 8th and 29th May with the three days allocated by the Department to move. We will confirm these dates as soon as we know our move day.

Monday 7th May **Closed for Bank Holiday**

Tuesday 8th May **School Open (Staff Development Day TBC).**

Monday 28th May **Closed for Bank Holiday.**

Tuesday 29th May **School Open (Holiday TBC).**

Friday 29th June **Close 12:00pm (N-3) 12.30pm for (Y4-7).**

**Dates for Your Diary 2017/18**

Month of March **Integration Month, ‘Everyone Outstanding’**

Mon. 12th March 2018 **PATHS Workshop for Y1-4 Parents**

Tue. 13th March 2018 **Y1-4 Parents invite to classrooms (9am10.30am)**

Thu. 15th March 2018 **School Photos**

Fri.9th –Thu15th March **Travelling Book Fair (In library).**

Fri. 16th March **Parents’ Council Smarties tubes deadline**. Fri. 23rd March **Parents’ Council Smarties/Draw Winners announced.**

Sat. 24th March **OIPS FRIENDS EASTER Extravaganza (11am-1pm)**

Wed. 28th March **Y7 Residential Parent Information Evening (7pm in hall)**

Mon. 16th April **Love for Life Workshop for Y7 pupils**

Mon.16th April-Fri 20th **Pupil Council Celebration Week (TBC)**

Tue. 24th April  **Y7 Folk Park Trip**

 Wed 25th -Fri 27th April **Y7 Residential Trip**

 Sunday 29th April **Y4 First Holy Communion at 12.30pm Sacred Heart Church.**

WB: 30th April- 18th May **Summer Assessments**.

 Thursday 3rd May **Celebration BBQ 6pm-8.30pm (Parents’ Council).**

Friday 4th May **Junior Sports Day (Y1-2AM) (Y3-4PM) Weather dependent.**

 Friday 11th May **Senior Sports Day (Y5-7AM/PM) Weather dependent.**

Tuesday 15th May **Proposed Completion Date of the New School Building.**

WB:11th-15th June **Y1 Baseline Assessments.**

Tuesday 19th June **Nursery/Y1 Induction Day (TBC).**

Thursday 21st June **Y7 Leavers’ Night at 7pm.**

Tuesday 26th June **Prizegiving (Y1-7).**

Thursday 28th June **‘Moving Up’ Day/ Y7 pupils last Day.**