

Kirkistown Primary School Newsletter

September 2021



Return to School

I am hopeful that you have all had a relaxing summer and been able to make the most of some of the wonderful weather we enjoyed in July particularly. It is a pleasure to have your children with us again in school and we're looking forward to a fantastic, and hopefully uninterrupted, year of learning ahead.

Families should by now have received a detailed letter outlining the ongoing mitigations within school in response to updated guidance from the Department of Education. I apologise again for the lack of timely notification as schools awaited the updated guidance which was published on 18 August 2021. As restrictions begin to be eased, in line with continuing advice, we are looking forward to taking steady steps back our more traditional routines. School appreciates greatly the continued support from children and families over what has been a challenging period of time for us all.

P6 & P7 Residential

School will be contacting families with children in Primary 6 & Primary 7 to ascertain their views regarding a residential visit this academic year. Residential visits provide children with wonderful learning experiences and help nurture and develop confidence and resilience. Smaller groups can quickly make the cost of residential prohibitive and we are keen to seek the views of our families. Please keep an eye out for an email from school in the coming days.

P.E Days

On P.E days, children may come to school in their P.E kit. **Please note that only school P.E kit should be worn.** For children not wearing plain navy tracksuit bottoms or plain navy shorts, leggings worn should be those used for sporting purposes with a heavier density and not be translucent. This is especially important as P.E lessons are increasingly likely to take place outdoors. Further information on school P.E kit is available via our website: <http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/school-uniform.html>.

Class	P.E Days
Reception	Tuesday & Thursday
P1	Monday & Thursday
P2 / P3	Monday & Thursday
P4 / P5	Monday & Wednesday
P6 / P7	Tuesday & Friday

Children in Primary 2- 7 will also have an additional P.E session on Fridays with expert coaching provided by Irish Football Association Coaches as part of our initiative to continue to promote health & wellbeing. P.E kit should be worn on this day by all pupils in these classes **on the dates specified below.**

Irish Football Association Coaching Sessions

We are delighted to confirm that three of our four classes will enjoy coaching sessions from the team at the Irish Football Association. Children in **P2 – P7** should wear P.E kit to school every **Friday** from **Friday 10 September 2021** to **Friday 11 February 2022.**



Tennis Club

P1 and P2 pupils can access Tennis Lessons at Kirkistown on **Wednesdays (starting 8th September)**. The sessions, taking place in our sports hall, will be run by former pupil and local tennis coach, Josh Bunting.



Children in **P3 – P7** can access lessons on Wednesdays (starting 8th September) from 3:15pm – 4:15pm at Cloughey Tennis courts. A member of school staff will walk children to the tennis courts and remain with them during the session. Children **MUST** be collected from the tennis courts promptly at 4:15pm. Any child attending Kids' Club after this time can be returned to school by a staff member.



Tennis lessons cost £2.50 per week and payment **MUST** be made on the day or in advance. Please keep an eye out for the letter that will issue from school.

Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice is in the process of changing. Five Stages will soon become Three Stages. **Children will NOT be affected by the change.** The move from five to three stages is simply a clearer and more user-friendly way of recording the level of provision that pupils with SEN need to help them make progress. **The provision currently being made for children will NOT change as a result of SEN registers moving to the three stage model.**

Further information for parents including a prental information leaflet is available from our website:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/special-educational-needs.html>

Parent Teacher & Friends Association

School will shortly be arranging a meeting as we look to re-engage more directly with our school community. With a number of new families having joined us over the past 18 months, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with parents / carers and would warmly appreciate the support of families as we look at how we can bring the wider community together to celebrate our success and raise vital funds for school.

School Trips and Visits

Last year, Primary 4 and 5 pupils were part of the 'Trailblazers Project' organised by Wheelworks.

I am delighted to advise families that this year **children in Primary 3, 4 and 5** have been invited to attend a fully funded visit to Todd's Leap Outdoor Activity Centre in Ballygawley. The coach hire, cost of the visit and lunch will all be provided courtesy of the team at Wheelworks with the visit taking place in September 2021. We are deeply grateful to the team at Wheelworks for their continued generosity.

<https://toddsleap.com/>



Healthy Snack

We strongly encourage our families to support healthy eating at morning break and lunch time. For the safety of all our children, **we are a nut free school.**

Mid Morning Snack

Our mid morning break is an ideal opportunity for children to get some fresh air and recharge their batteries with a small snack. As it is only just over an hour between morning break and lunch, ***the snack should be something small that be eaten easily in 10 minutes.*** Fruit contains natural sugars that will provide a healthy boost to help concentration prior to lunch while water quenches thirst and helps the body function well. Snacks that contain lots of sugars are unhelpful and make concentration more challenging in lessons. Some examples of other foods that maybe useful are provided below. For children in Key Stage Two (P5 – P7), we would ask parents not to send foods for morning break that will require a spoon or other form of cutlery to eat them.

Lunch Time

At lunch time, children will have between 20 and 25 minutes to eat. We encourage healthy choices for all our children but understand that families may want to include a small treat in their lunch eg- a small chocolate biscuit to help keep their child going. School Meals are available to families with payments being made via 'SchoolMoney' or online payments system. The menu for each term can be found on our school website:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/school-meals-menu.html>

Examples: **Yes, please.**



Examples: **No, thank you.**



Contact Details

Please ensure you complete and return the 'Data Capture Contact Form' for your child(ren) as soon as possible and **no later than Friday 03 September 2021**. These contact details are vital in the event that school would need to contact you in an emergency and to ensure you receive information from school by text. **School should be informed immediately of any change to these details including mobile phone number, home address or e-mail address** as much of the communication from school is now sent digitally by text or email.



Letters home

As part of our continued plan to be more efficient and more eco friendly, school will continue to send the majority of letters to families by e-mail this year. It is therefore imperative that school maintains up to date contact for families.

Where a reply slip is required to be signed, school will still send these letters home in physical form. Families without access to e-mail can contact school to request physical copies of all letters but it is hoped that, wherever possible, families will be able to engage with the use of email to improve the efficiency of providing them information.



Medications

Families of children who have prescribed or emergency medication as part of a Healthcare plan are reminded that they should ensure the **appropriate medication** and **a copy of the latest Healthcare plan** are given to the school office, preferably in a sealed lunchbox containing:

- **Your child's name**
- **Parent contact details**
- **A list of contents**
- **A sheet indicating when medication is taken and dosage is available to complete at the school office and this should be placed with the medication also**

All medication should contain the label showing the name of the child it has been prescribed for.

While school makes every effort to periodically check the expiry dates of medication, it is essential that parents understand that they assume responsibility for this.

Home Learning

Phonics & Early Reading skills (P1-P4):

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/early-reading--phonics-at-home.html>

We've received some very positive feedback about our phonics guides that can assist children in the development of early reading skills. By watching and repeating what they see in our videos, children can practice the individual sounds that each letter of the alphabet makes before they start to put them together to read short words **e.g.** c-a-t, n-a-p, t-a-p. Children will learn the 'pure sounds' of each letter rather than the letter name. This helps make it easier to blend the sounds together to read. The videos will introduce families to the pure sounds of each letter before introducing children to the sounds made by digraphs (2 letters) and a trigraph (3 letters). Our thanks are extended to the wonderful children who helped create these really useful guides.

Children will continue to have access to the following apps:



Nessy- <https://learn.nessy.com/account/login#/accountLogin>

Nessy is an excellent website which helps children develop their phonic knowledge which is typically directly linked to both spelling and reading fluency. Children reported finding this app very helpful and we were delighted to secure funding for this app until March 2022.

Bug Club- <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0>

Bug Club provides online reading with the option for younger readers to have texts read to them. There are quizzes to complete also.

Times Tables Rockstars- <https://play.ttrockstars.com/auth/school/student>

Times Tables Rockstars allows children the option to practice times tables in a timed or untimed scenario. There are even competitions held periodically and also a world record exists!

In addition, a great number of **maths** teacher videos for children are available to view on our website:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/maths-at-home.html>

These maths videos are mirrored on our YouTube channel where now have nearly 70 subscribers with some of our videos having been viewed more than 2000 times!

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk2P4BsM0Ti7umhkr8Cw1pA>



Learning together,
building for the future

School Development Plan

Following on from another interrupted school year, school's development priorities will look like this during the 2021-2022 Academic Year.

1. Continue to develop outdoor learning to enhance the curriculum.
2. Preparation for implementation of the SEND Act and new stages of the Code of practice.
3. Continue to develop a 'culture of reading' which contributes to rising standards.
4. To improve understanding and practical application of knowledge involving measure.
5. To improve confidence and experience in assessment of the cross curricular skills.
6. Raise the profile of 'scientific learning' and health and relationships education in school.
7. Embed pupil voice across the school.

Safer Schools App for Parents & Key Stage 2 Learners



SAFER SCHOOLS

New pupil roles
now added!

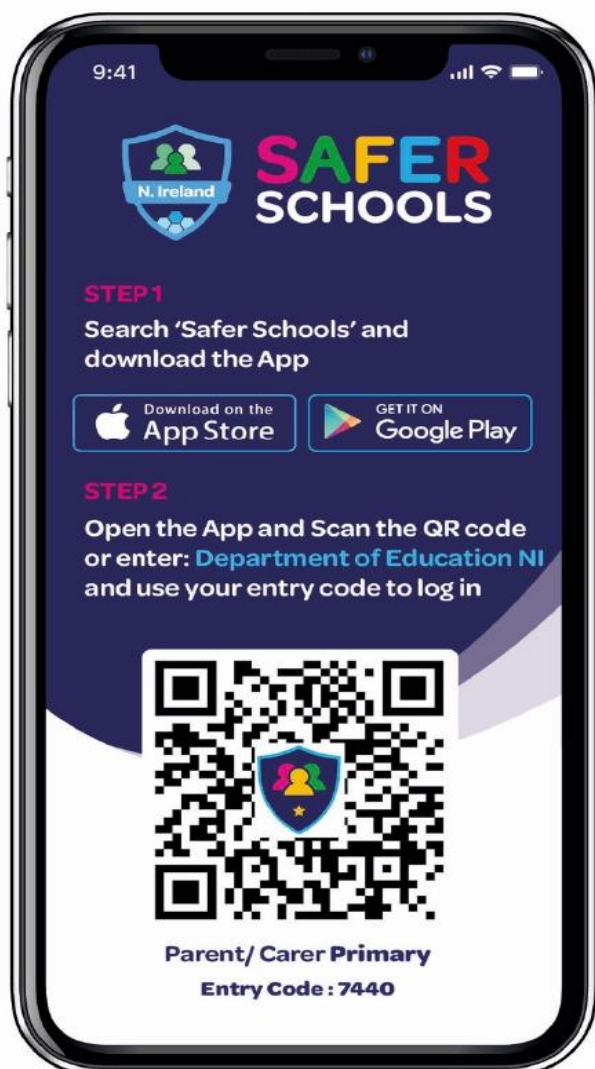
Educate, empower & protect the entire school community.

Dear Parents and Carers,

In these unprecedented times, we know everyone is spending more time online at home, including our children and young people. The Internet provides many benefits in keeping us all connected; however, for our children and young people especially, this can present more significant risks.

The online world can be a bit overwhelming at times, but it is important we understand what our children are doing online so we can help make them safer. The Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) Safer Schools App aims to help with this.

We are delighted to invite you to download the DENI Safer Schools App using the instructions on the following page.



About the App

The App is designed to support you, as you keep the children and young people in your care safer online. The App will provide you with information on how you can make your home and devices safer. It gives you an in-depth understanding of Social Media and the benefits and risks of apps such as Snapchat, Instagram and Houseparty to name but a few.

The App will also provide you with more information on inspiring healthy media habits and screen time, as well as making you aware of scams and keeping personal information safer online. The in-app Safety Centre also provides you with up-to-date information on how to block, mute and report anything you or the child in your care may find worrying or upsetting online, from images to comments from online bullies.

Don't forget to check out our **free** Home Learning Hub for more online resources to support you further at www.oursaferschools.co.uk/home-learning-hub



Make sure to enable push notifications to keep up to date with our tips, advice and guidance on how to make your pupils safer.



SAFER SCHOOLS

Educate, empower & protect the entire school community.

Download and Login Instructions

STEP 1

Search 'Safer Schools' and download the App.



STEP 2

When you open the Safer Schools App, you will be presented with the login screen. Here you will see your two options for accessing the App - numeric or QR.

1) Scan the QR Code

First, tap the "Scan QR Code" button (...or just Scan QR on Android...).

Hold your device so the QR code appears in your camera view (you may need to give permission for the App to use the camera). When it scans the code, you will be logged in!



2) Using the Numeric Code

First, start to type the name 'Department of Education NI' in the "Select your school" section. Then, Select Department of Education NI from the dropdown list and click 'continue'.

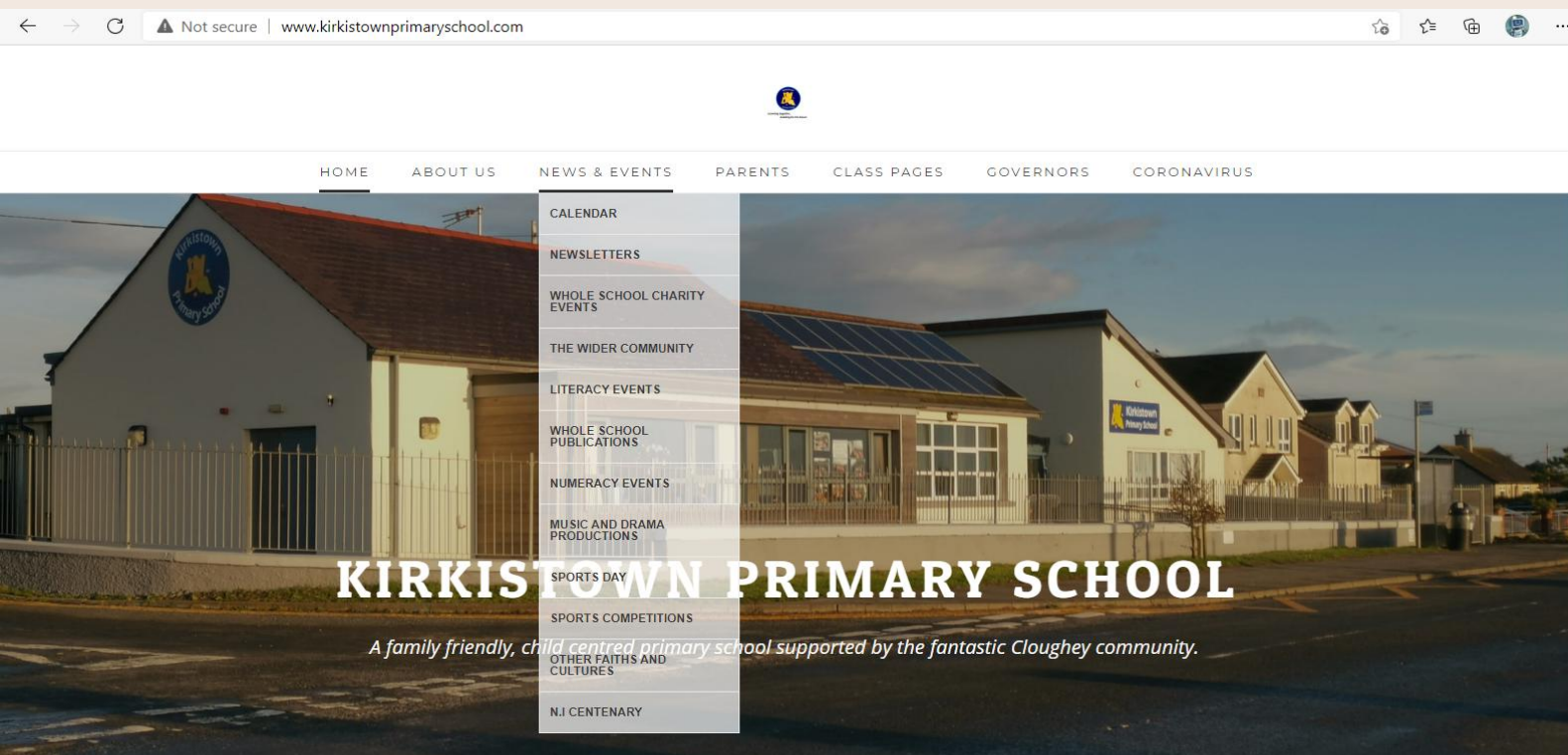
Next, simply enter the 4-digit access entry code for your role within the school (parent/carer, staff or pupil).



School Website

Further pages and updated policies continue to be added to our school website. Our website is now a very useful source of information for our school community and we hope this may be helpful to families who require any assistance.

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/>



Class Pages

A reminder that all class pages can be viewed on our website to provide insight into what your children have been up to.

Reception & Primary 1:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/reception-class--primary-1.html>

Primary 2 & Primary 3:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/p2--p3.html>

Primary 4 and Primary 5:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/p4--p5.html>

Primary 6 and Primary 7:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/p6--p7.html>

Alongside our use of Seesaw (Foundation Stage and Lower Key Stage 1), Google Classroom (Upper Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2) and our Facebook page, we believe we're doing everything we can to keep you well informed.

Diary dates

Our calendar, denoting any significant weekly events can accessed via our website. This has been updated to include Autumn Term 2021-2022:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/calendar.html>

Term dates

Term dates for the 2021-2022 academic year can be accessed via a document on the following page:

<http://www.kirkistownprimaryschool.com/term-dates--holidays.html>

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www.facebook.com/KirkistownPrimarySchool



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk2P4BsM0Ti7umhkr8Cw1pA>



**Learning together,
building for the future**