



NEWSLETTER

**DATES TO
REMEMBER**

SUMMER UNIFORM

As we are now in term three, pupils are permitted to wear summer uniform. We have not yet had any summer weather but hopefully this will improve. Just a reminder that summer uniform for girls is the red gingham dress and white socks. Boys and girls may wear a red polo shirt instead of the shirt and tie but they must have another polo shirt to change into for PE. This should be worn with their normal grey skirt, grey school shorts or trousers.

BEST KEPT SCHOOL AWARD

We have entered the Best Kept School Awards and we are having judges coming to school on the **11th May**. Our Eco Committee have been busy planning various projects and will require some parental support. As the weather forecast is looking good for this week we are going to plan some 'working parties' for parent volunteers on **Wednesday and Thursday** of this week. Obviously it will not suit everyone but if you are available on either of these days for an hour or more we would welcome you to come and help.

We have a list of jobs that need done. We have picnic tables to sand and paint, tyres to paint and make into planters, flower beds to tidy and anything else you think you could help with. If you have any **spare paint, varnish, paint brushes, polythene, painting sheets, flowers/plants, compost, manure, bark, artificial grass or planters**, bring them along and we will put them to good use. Come in your working clothes and bring any tools with you. We are also looking for stones and old plastic chairs to make into a playbus.

We have already had a number of parents and grandparents volunteering and we are so grateful for this help. We couldn't do this without you!

NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR DROP OFF AND COLLECTIONS

We are really trying to develop the back playground into an outdoor play area for the children. We therefore have some changes to our drop off and pick ups arrangements as pupils will no longer enter or exit through the resource area doors. In the morning parents should leave their children at the black gates and allow them to walk to their cloakroom door. At afternoon collection times we would ask that parents wait in the waiting area outside the kitchen window. Mrs Davidson's class will exit from their cloakroom door and Mrs Erwin will walk her class to the parents' pick up area outside the kitchen window. Any child not collected by 1.55pm will be brought back into school and can be collected at the front door. If you are accessing the nursery from the back gate in the morning or afternoon could I ask that you walk around the front of the school through the side gate and not through the middle of the P1-3 play area. There will be a lot of equipment outside and this will only be used when pupils are supervised by staff. Please keep this area clear at arrival and pick up times. Could we also ask that younger siblings do not go beyond this pick up area as there will be a lot of materials, paint and tools sitting around. Also we do not want anyone getting injured from climbing on tyres or other school equipment. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

17th- 23rd April

Portadown Festival

19th & 26th April

Rugby Blitz

20th April

Netball Finals

3rd May

PTA AGM

4th May

P5 and P6 Shared
Education trip to W5

7th May

Bank Holiday

11th May

Best Kept School
Judging

8th- 24th May

Assessments

15th May

Swimming Gala

25th-29th May

Mid-term holiday

5th June

Sports Day

RE INSPECTION

Yesterday we had our annual RE Inspection and all the visiting clergy reported that the children were enthusiastic and had a great knowledge of the Bible stories and the moral issues that they had studied. Mrs Erwin's class led a brilliant assembly and the choir entertained us with a beautiful hymn.

PORTADOWN FESTIVAL

The school choir and a number of soloists will be taking part in the festival this week, As a school we are very proud of them all and wish to thank Mrs Neil and Mrs Allen for all the time they have invested in preparing the pupils for the festival. Please remember all pupils performing should be wearing full school uniform. Refer to the detailed note sent home for details of times and locations. **First place today in the Hymn singing, congratulations to Mrs Neill, Mrs Allen and the choir. They were fantastic. Now we can look forward to tomorrow.**

RUGBY

The boys' rugby team will be attending the Shelbourne Rugby Blitz on Thursday 19th and the Gilpin Fun Day on Thursday 26th April. Both of these tournaments will be held in the afternoon at Chambers Park. We will require some assistance with transport to and from these events.

NETBALL

The netball team will be taking part in the ABC Borough Council Primary Schools' Netball League on Friday 20th at the Lisburn Racquets' Club. We will also require some assistance with transport to this event.

IFA FOOTBALL COACH will continue to come school on a Thursday afternoon to work with P2/3 and P6/7.

P6/7 SWIMMING There will be one more swimming session for P6/7 on Thursday 26th April as they missed a session due to a snow day. The chosen team will also have a practice on Thursday 3rd May.

NEW PARENT GOVERNORS

If you would be interested in becoming a parent representative on our reconstituted Board of Governors, please contact school. Further details about the reconstitution process will follow later this term.

SHARED EDUCATION

P5 and P6 have now completed five contact days with the pupils from St Patrick's PS. They have been working on coding activities and have made new friends along the way. We were made very welcome at St Patrick's PS each day we visited and were very grateful that they had the capacity to accommodate us all. Both schools now have a trip to W5 look forward to on Friday 4th May. There is no parental cost for this trip as it is funded by the Shared Education project. A packed lunch will be required that day.

SCHOOL APP AND WEBSITE

Please remember to download the **Schools NI** app, which allows you to view school updates and receive messages via an app on your phone or tablet. To install the app, open **www.orchardcountyps** on your phone or tablet and click the 'Download App' button that appears at the top of the screen.



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Please also visit the school website and enter your email address to receive regular free messages from the school. If all parents sign up through the website, we can then make this our main method of messaging and will save the school money.

CONGRATULATIONS Well done to Lucy Taggart who was one of the winners of the Queen's University creative writing 'Head Over Heels' project. Yesterday she had her story brought to life by the illustrator Tarsila Kruse at the Seamus Heaney Home Place. Photos are on the website and twitter.

www.orchardcountyps.co.uk

