



15th March 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Monday 18th March is a school holiday for all pupils.

Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th are the Parents meetings for Pupils in Year 10-14. Year 8 and 9 pupils should remain at home these 2 days.

Pupils will finish for Easter holidays on Wednesday 27th March and should return to school on Monday 8th April.

Parents Days 19th and 20th March for Year 10-14 (Sports Hall)

19th March session 1 from 9.00am to 11.00am Surname A-Dillon

19th March session 2 from 11.15am to 1.00pm Surname Doherty - Hyndman

19th March session 3 from 1.35pm to 3.35pm Surname Johnston - McCusker

20th March session 1 from 9.00am to 11.00am Surname McDermott - McMurray

20th March session 2 from 11.15am to 1.00pm Surname McNally – O' Kane

20th March session 3 from 1.35pm to 3.35pm Surname O'Loughlin – Z

Pupils have been assigned to a session to avoid overcrowding.

Where possible please come to the appointed session.

Please allow staff to have their breaks from 11.00am to 11.15am and 1.00pm to 1.35pm.

Mrs Higgins will be available during the Parents Days for anyone who wishes to pay their school fund. Alternatively, the money can be paid into the bank account 59337986

Sort code 904982 or through our parentpay app:

<https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Uniform/Default.aspx?shopid=5989>

Thank you to all the parents who have already paid.

Contacting the College

We appreciate that parents may want to contact the College about concerns or when issues have arisen. Please remember that this should be by a phone call to the Head of Year or via the school email info@stpatricks.maghera.co.uk

Please don't email a member or staff directly or approach them outside of school to discuss concerns about events in school. We appreciate your support with this.

Key Stage 4 and 5 After School Study Club

The Study Club is open to all pupils in Years 11 - Year 14. It will commence on Monday 26th Feb from 3.35pm – 5.30pm and will provide a quiet space for pupils to revise for their upcoming GCSE, AS and A-Level examinations. Pupils are only allowed to be in the centres (not around the school). There will be refreshments provided for pupils therefore pupils will not be allowed out to shop before the study sessions. If pupils are unable to stay until 5.30pm they must let the supervisor know.



Season of Lent

Mass will take place during the Season of Lent every Wednesday in the St Patrick Site Oratory at 8:40am. Staff and pupils are welcome to attend.

Trocaire:

In the St Patrick's building the Year 13 Pope John pupils will carry out a spare change collection every Wednesday and Friday at the beginning of Period of 5 during the season of Lent.

In the St Mary's building the class captains will carry out a spare change collection every day during period 5.

Dates for the Diary

28 th March – 5 th April	Easter Holidays
9 th – 12 th April	Track 3 Assessments Years 11-14
28 th – 31 st May	Track 3 Assessments Years 8-10
30 th November	60 th GALA DINNER in the Crown Plaza Belfast

Year 13 Careers week 17th -21st June 2024

To support Year 13 as they prepare for their final year of school, we have organised a Careers week which will run between 17th and 21st June.

Pupils will be expected to complete three-day work experience on the 17th-19th June. Students have received the forms this week and their Careers teachers will provide more information on this over the next couple of weeks. Forms need to be returned before or on **Friday 26th April 2024**.

On 20th and 21st of June, pupils will then return to school to complete part of the compulsory Sixth Form programme. During this time, they will receive training and guidance on the process for applying for further and higher education, including talks from local institutions and alternative routes. They will receive essential guidance on how to complete a UCAS form for university and apprenticeships and how to write a personal statement which will give them a better chance of being offered a place. They will also be given hands on support while they write this statement which will draw on the experience they gain when out on work experience.

By getting this work done at this time, pupils will be able to focus on their Y14 studies which in turn will reduce the pressure they are under in their final year. The College feels that this is a vital part of our Sixth Form pupils' education and, as such, pupils must attend.

Year 13 must attend for the full week, as work will be completed for UCAS application that will ease the burden in Year 14.



Friends of St Patrick's

26th March

The PTA are hoping to hold a disco night in SMB for Y8 pupils. To be able to run this event we will need approximately 10 volunteers to make it safe and effective. If you are able to help us out, please let us know, particular if you can DJ!

15th June

As part of the 60th anniversary, the PTA would like to run a community event on June 15th. Again for this to be successful we would need volunteers to man stalls and collect money. We would also be interested in providing opportunities at our summer fun day for catering or for other relevant local businesses to hire a spot. Again if you are able to help please let us know. Finally if anyone knows a business who could sponsor the event to allow us to invest in more activities that would be great!

Current job vacancies

Part time work within the kitchens- - contact Elaine McCrystal

Elaine McCrystal | Area Catering Manager

Catering Office

T: 028 94482241



Have a lovely weekend

Mrs K Crilly

Top Tips for Supporting Children Who Are EXPERIENCING BULLYING

In a DfE survey, 36% of parents said that their child had been bullied in the past year, while 29% of secondary school headteachers reported bullying among students. Public Health England states that young people who maintain positive communication with their family were less likely to experience bullying – so it's important that parents, carers and educators know how to talk to children about bullying.

1. WATCH FOR BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

Children who are experiencing bullying may become quiet, withdrawn, or anxious; however, they may also act on the pain and anger that they're feeling. A shift in attitude towards their existing friends (or not mentioning them any more at all) or alluding to new friendships which seem notably different could also be warning signs. It's important to be alert to such changes and talk to your child about them if they occur.

2. THINK THINGS THROUGH

Before acting, ask yourself if this is the right time and place to address concerns about bullying. Might your worries trigger strong feelings – perhaps from your own experiences – that could discourage your child from opening up to you? You could try discussing what you've noticed with another trusted adult who knows your child well.

3. BE OPEN AND UNDERSTANDING

Try to outline to your child the changes that you've noticed in their body language, appearance, behaviour, or tone of voice – and do so without sounding judgemental. Help them to describe what they're feeling – be it anger, sadness, fear or something else – as accurately as possible. If they say they're "angry", do they mean "enraged" or "frustrated"? This will help them to understand how they're feeling and why.

4. LET THEM SPEAK FREELY

Use open questions and a welcoming tone to encourage your child to talk. Listen closely and summarise what they've said at appropriate points (ideally without interrupting) to demonstrate that you're understanding clearly. Bullying may have undermined your child's sense of control, and they may fear that you'll judge them, overreact or impose consequences – so this conversation can reassure them being honest with you was the right decision.

5. CALL A TIME OUT

A conversation about bullying could leave both you and your child feeling distressed. It's important to recognise this and pause at suitable moments to calm down. Take deep breaths, enjoy a hot drink or even have a cathartic cry. This can reinforce trust, while also helping you both feel that you have control over the situation and the emotions that you're feeling.

6. STAY INFORMED

Make sure you know your child's school's definition of, response to and relevant contacts for bullying. This information should be in their anti-bullying policy, which ought to be available on the school's website. Class teachers or form tutors are usually the first point of contact, though there may be dedicated support teams or key workers to help your child, depending on the specific situation.

7. PREP YOUR CHILD FOR THE RESPONSE

Schools' responses to bullying vary depending on whether they're resolving disagreements and arguments, or addressing unintended verbal or physical harm and so on. It's important to work out with your child whether any harm was intentional, how much control they had over the situation and how often such incidents have occurred. Reporting concerns accurately will get the best outcome for your child more quickly.

8. SUMMARISE YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

When you contact the school, make sure you've precisely described what your child experienced: what happened; when; where; and who was involved. This will help the school to investigate further, identifying any witnesses, as well as those who were directly involved. It can also help the school to know how your child is feeling and how they'd like the matter to be resolved.

9. LIAISE WITH THE SCHOOL

Any school has a duty to ensure that the members of its community feel safe and included. It's important for children to learn their role in this. The school must determine how best to restore these feelings of safety and respect. It's often best for schools to keep parents and carers informed of any action taken – and for families to avoid taking matters into their own hands.

10. CHECK IN FREQUENTLY

Once the issue has been resolved and the bullying behaviour has stopped, your child may still feel anxious and might find it difficult to rebuild relationships or develop new ones. Parents, carers and the school should all keep an eye on how the child is feeling and acting over the following months. Any relevant information should be shared, so that further support can be planned if necessary.

Meet Our Expert

Bob Basley is the Director of Anti-Bullying Quality Mark-UK, which challenges and supports schools to develop sustainable whole-school approaches to prevent bullying, including working with parents and carers. More than 80 schools in England and Wales currently hold the quality mark.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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