



School Reopens for P2-P7 children on Monday 2nd September 2024.

Nursery & Primary 1 children have individual start times.

School Uniform

- **School Uniforms can be purchased from Select Kidz, Spencer Road.**
- **Please label all pieces of uniform with your child's name.**
- **All children require a warm, rainproof coat, we will be completing the Daily Mile each day. Hoodies should not be worn as a coat.**
- **Long hair should be tied back.**
- **Due to health and safety: only stud earrings and a wrist watch should be worn.**

Nursery

Choice of coloured jumpers with crest (red, navy or teal) and
Polo-shirts (red, yellow or navy) plain or with the nursery crest
Navy jogging bottoms with elastic waist
Velcro shoes

Girls

Navy skirt/pinafore/school trousers
Navy V-neck jumper/cardigan with school crest

White Polo shirt with or without school crest (P1, P2 & P3)

White shirt and green/navy tie (Primary 4-Primary 7)

Navy socks or tights

Black shoes

Boys

Navy trousers

Navy V-neck jumper with school crest

White Polo shirt with crest (Primary 1, P2 & P3)

White shirt and green/navy tie (Primary 4-Primary 7)

Navy socks

Black shoes

PE uniform:

- P1/2: plimsolls to be left in school.
- P3-P7: **Plain** navy bottoms, plain white polo shirt/t-shirt and school jumper or plain navy zip up/jumper/hoodie and trainers. Individual class teachers will inform your child on what day they will have PE.
- Children in Primary 5, 6 & 7 will need a school bag.
- Children in Primary 1-4 will not require a school bag as they will use a school book bag/folder.



- Primary 1 & Primary 2 children will require puddle suits and Wellington boots for outdoor play



If you think your child is entitled to free school meals or uniform clothing assistance, please contact the Education Authority on tel: 028 82 411411 or on the following links:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants/frequently-asked-questions-free-school-mealsuniform>

<https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/get-a-proof-of-benefit-letter/>

Free School Meals and Uniform Allowances 2024-25

We are getting ready to launch applications for Free School Meals and Uniform Allowances for the school year beginning September 2024 - and hope the following will be helpful as you plan your New Intake meetings with parents.

Applications will be opening soon on EA Connect. We expect the system to be operational from the week commencing 17 June 2024.

More details will be available in due course, but we would ask you to share the information in this newsletter with parents ahead of the launch.



Proof of Benefit Letters

Parents/guardians in receipt of any of the benefits listed below, will need to upload a Proof of Benefit Letter with their application.

Qualifying social security benefits:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit

A Proof of Benefit Letter can be requested by [visiting this website](#). As it can take at least five days to obtain the letter, applicants are advised to request it now in advance of the launch.

We ask you to remind your parent community of this requirement - **as an application cannot be processed until we receive all supporting documentation for the applicant.**

Tax Credits or Universal Credit

Important update for Universal Credit recipients - the Department of Education has announced an **interim uplift** in the annual net household income threshold for eligibility for people who receive Universal Credit, **from £14,000 to £15,000.**

We would be grateful if you could advise your parents of this change to the 2024-25 application process.

If parents/guardians receive Tax Credits or Universal Credit, they do not need the Proof of Benefit Letter. **However, they will still need to upload evidence of their Tax Credits or Universal Credit benefits.**

If parents/guardians have difficulty in obtaining a Proof of Benefit Letter, or do not understand how to provide evidence of their Universal Credit or Tax Credits, **their local Social Security Agency office Digital Hub** will have staff on hand to help them obtain the correct evidence to support their application.



Further Assistance - Free School Meals and Uniform Allowance Helpdesk

The FSMU Helpdesk is available from Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm by telephone on 028 9041 8044 or email mealsanduniform@eani.org.uk



Healthy breaks for schools

At this school,
we are committed
to healthy eating

At break time we enjoy healthy snacks because they help us grow properly, do our best in school and make us healthy and happy in the future.



Milk

All whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed unflavoured milk



Water

Tap water or unflavoured, still, bottled water



Fruit and vegetables

All fresh fruit and vegetables



Bread based snacks

White or wholemeal breads spread thinly with a little low-fat spread, plain breadsticks or toast



Public Health Agency
12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.
Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).
www.gov.uk/health/hscnhs.uk



Please ensure your child has a healthy break with them each day as well as a bottle of water.

Canteen Dinner costs (P1-P7 £2.60) (Nursery £2.50) per day and can be paid via parent pay. The dinner menu can be found on the school website in the parent section.

September 2024: Restart Information

If your child is entitled to free school meals, it is important that you apply for this **each year**. Information on this can also be found on the EA link above.

Afterschool clubs will commence again from Monday 23rd September 2024. More information to follow.

HSC Public Health Agency

Do I need to keep my child off school?

Chicken Pox At least 5 days from onset of rash and until all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhea & /or Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Respiratory Illness (e.g colds & flu) Can return when no longer have a high temperature and well enough	Glandular Fever No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	
Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay off if well enough, but school or nursery should be informed	Impetigo Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotics	Head Lice No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	German Measles (Rubella) 5 days from onset of rash
Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Scabies Until after first treatment	Slapped Cheek No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis Can return when no longer have a temperature and well enough, school or nursery should be informed	Whooping Cough 48 hours after commencing antibiotics

Use this guide to find out when they should stay off, and when they can go back if they are well enough to do so.

Important **INFORMATION**

Attendance Matters!

As you are already aware it is essential that your child attends school regularly and maintain a pattern of good attendance throughout their school career.

Excellent attendance at school is important to allow children to fulfil their potential. Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

In school we have an obligation to monitor children's attendance very closely and to report attendance percentages to the Education Welfare Officer on a regular basis.

Punctuality is essential as each time a child is late to school they are marked late and when they arrive after registration has closed (09:00am)- this impacts on their attendance.

If your child's attendance is causing concern, we will follow the agreed procedures in school:

- The class teacher will inform you of your child's attendance percentage (below 90%)
- If attendance continues to cause concern, then you will receive a letter from DTCP in school
- If attendance continues to cause concern, then you will be invited to a pre-referral meeting in school. Our EWO Mrs Aine Hudson may be in attendance
- If your child's attendance is 85% or below/causing concern, we are obliged to make a referral to EWS.

It should be noted that holidays must **not** be arranged during the school terms. Sufficient notice of school holiday dates is given to parents/guardians in order for holidays to be arranged during these times.

The school holiday list for 2024-25 can be found here:

https://storage.googleapis.com/siteassetsswd/475/docletter/20240220014414_63_Holiday_List_PARENTS_2024_2025.pdf

We as a school, want to help support you in improving your child's attendance in order for them to reach their full potential.

If you need to discuss any issues surrounding absences or support strategies that can be put in place to improve attendance, during the school year, please contact Mrs McCafferty or Mrs Harley at the school.

Communication

We communicate using the following platforms:



Please download the schools NI app and ensure notifications are switched on-click on the question mark and follow the prompts to activate.



- Mobile phones
- Photographic devices
- Smart watches with cameras or messaging facilities

In compliance with our safeguarding policies, these items are strictly forbidden in school for use by children at all times.

The school holiday calendar can be accessed via the school website in the Parents section:

<https://www.goodshepherdps.net/parents-area/holiday-list/>

Information on the importance of good attendance from the Department of Education can be found below:

https://storage.googleapis.com/siteassetswd/475/docletter/20201110092825_28_a_parents_guide_to_attendance.pdf



Start/End of the school day

- Nursery and Primary 1 children all have their own individual start dates. They finish early as part of their settling in period. These details will be in their induction packs given out in June. Class teachers will keep parents/guardians informed.
- **All Primary 2-7 children start school on Monday 2nd September 2024.**
- School doors open at 8.45am. Children should be in class to start learning at 9am. Finish times: 2pm for Primary 1 & 2 children. 3pm for Primary 3-Primary 7 children.
- Nursery, Primary 1 & Primary 2 children should be escorted to their allocated door with a parent/guardian each day. **The school drop off and collection policy can be found on the school website in the policy section, under ‘our school.’**
- Children are encouraged to cycle, walk and scoot to school each day. Children should park all scooters and bicycles at our bike shelter situated at the front of the school. Children should wear a helmet if cycling or scooting.



**Brothers and Sisters after school provision (2-3pm)
for Primary 1 & 2 children.**

In order to support our school community, we will be offering afterschool supervision for children in Primary 1 (from Monday 23rd September) and Primary 2 (from Monday 2nd September) **who has an older sibling in Primary 3-7 currently at the school.** This will allow for 1 family pick up. Children staying should pack a healthy snack for this time. Please let your child's class teacher know if you want to avail of this service. Children should be collected by an adult **only**, from the canteen door (beside front reception area) at 3pm if they are attending. Book your interest here: <https://forms.office.com/e/UHJkuyZ3SB>



- Breakfast club will commence on Monday 2nd September for Primary 1-7 children, and then on Monday 14th October for Nursery children also.
- Breakfast club is open from 8.10am-8.30am.
- **Please only send your child if they are independent when eating to ensure their wellbeing.**
- Children should be accompanied by an adult to the canteen door.
- Please enter the **school grounds via the upper nursery gate** and directly into the canteen via the steps located beside the school reception area.
- The cost of this will be £1 per day, per child. This should be paid in cash each day to breakfast club supervisory staff. This charge covers the cost of food, cleaning supplies and staff.
- Children will have a choice of toast, cereals, fruit juice and milk each day.

Children are not permitted in the school grounds before 8.45am unless attending the breakfast club as there will be no supervision. Children should not be left unsupervised at the school gates.

Drop off and Pick Up Information:

CLASS & TEACHER	DROP OFF/PICKUP TIMES	DROP OFF POINT	PICK UP POINT
Nursery	8.45am-9am 1pm-1.15pm	Specific Nursery classroom door	Specific Nursery classroom door
Primary 1 & Primary 2	8:45am – 9:00am – Pupils to classroom 2:00pm – Home Time	Foundation Stage Door	Inside the school gates
Primary 3	8:45am – 9:00am – Pupils to classroom 3pm – Home Time	Side door below nursery	Inside school gates via top gate (near nursery entrance)
Primary 4	8:45am – 9:00am – Pupils to classroom 3pm – Home Time	Side door below nursery	Inside school gates via top gate (near nursery entrance)
Primary 5	8:45am – 9:00am – Pupils to classroom 3pm – Home Time	Right side door as before above the canteen	Main Gate
Primary 6	8:45am – 9:00am – Pupils to classroom 3pm – Home Time	Same door as before-shared area at back of school	Main Gate
Primary 7	8:45am – 9:00am – Pupils to classroom 3pm – Home Time	Right side top door as before	Main Gate

Safeguarding Information



In the interests of health and safety we now ask that children do not bring any shellfish products or nut products to school for either break or lunch. This includes Nutella.



We would like to take the opportunity to remind parents/guardians that **no cars are permitted inside the school grounds at any time** unless this has been pre-arranged with Mrs McCafferty or you are a blue badge holder. Please share this information with grandparents and childminders as refusal often causes offence.

Please ensure that the school gates are kept clear. Cars should not be parked on the yellow zigzag lines outside the school gates at any time. Please talk to your child about general road safety. Enter and exit the school using the pedestrian gates only. **Once your child is collected from school, please keep them beside you at all times.** These measures are in the interest of everyone's health and safety. Thank you!

Members of the Schools Safeguarding team are:

The Chair of the Board of Governors (Mr P. Duffy)

The Designated Governor for Child Protection (Dr M Gormley)

The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mrs Maria Harley)

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mrs S. McCafferty).

Other members of Safeguarding Team:

Mrs P. Houston/Mrs R Warne /Mrs Kyle/ Mrs A Kivlehan/Mr D Herron.

School policies can be found on the school website under the 'My School' section. There is also a wide range of support information for parents in the 'Parents Section' of the school website. This is updated regularly.



The Department of Education, employing authorities, sectoral support bodies and teacher unions have written to schools stating that:

“It is recognised that school-based staff are working within a demanding environment. In order to assist with workload demands, schools should notify parents of the normal operating hours of the school and when and how parents may contact staff within the school.”

Accordingly, please see below the normal operating hours where the school office is contactable:

- Monday 8.45am-4.30pm
- Tuesday 8.45am-4.30pm
- Wednesday 8.45am-4.30pm
- Thursday 8.45am-4.30pm
- Friday 8.45am-3.15pm

Should you need to contact the school please email info@goodshepherd.derry.ni.sch.uk or telephone 02871348446.

Should you need to speak to your child's teacher please contact the school office to request an appointment.

Preparing Your Child For the First Day Back in School

As schools begin to open to more children, parents and children may well be feeling anxious. Here's some ideas of how best to prepare.

Be Calm.

Your child will take their lead from you and be reassured if you are steady and matter of fact.



Be Curious.

These are strange times and their imagination may run away with them. Listen, and try not to dismiss or minimise their fears but validate how they are feeling – “it’s completely fine to feel like that at the moment” or ‘I can really understand why you would feel like that’



Be Positive.

Remind them of all the ways they have learnt to keep themselves safe: washing their hands regularly, sneezing and coughing into their elbow, not hugging others and staying in their own space.



Be Thankful.

Help your child think of things they are looking forward to: being with their friends, seeing their teacher, favourite activities but be mindful some of these may not be available for them



Be Supportive

Younger children particularly may struggle with separation anxiety and may become tearful, clingy or act out. Reassure them that you will miss them too and think of them through out the day. It might be helpful to draw a little heart on their wrist and one on yours too. You can call it the hug button and when they find they are missing you they can press the heart and know that you will be doing the same at home. Sometimes having a little object to remind them of you through the day helps but please check this out with your school first.



Be Prepared.

Support your child to be aware of changes that may have happened to their classroom environment since they were there last and rehearse any new routines that school may have shared. Rehearse and practice your 'goodbye' routine and create a 'hello' greeting for the end of the day for them to look forward to.



A Prayer for the New School Year

Heavenly Father

At the start of a new school year, we give you thanks for the work of all schools (and particularly in our own parish).

We pray for all children starting at new schools, and for those returning. Help them to explore what they can achieve, and give them confidence to play their part in shaping our world.

We pray for all those who work in schools. Care for them as they care for our children.

We pray for all governors of schools. Grant them wisdom and sound judgement, and help them to keep children's well-being at the heart of everything they do.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen



I would like to thank our entire school community for their support to date. We as a school look forward to working with all those who care for the children to enable them to reach their full potential, ensuring they have a happy and safe school year ahead.

Mrs S. McCafferty