

## Online Newsletter

This is the first paper newsletter that I've sent home in a while as we now use the interactive digital newsletter and this has proven to be very popular with over 250 views per week on average. Links to this can be found on our website, our Facebook page and our Twitter feed. I'm sure you will all appreciate that reduced funding for schools means we have to reduce expenditure in as many areas as possible without impacting on the children. Saving on paper and print costs for 300 newsletters per week is one of these measures.

I appreciate not everybody is online so we will send home a roundup of key dates at the start of each term to make sure you all know what's coming up. Dates Ahead can be found on the back of this page.

## AQE

Best wishes to our P7 pupils sitting the first of their transfer papers this Saturday at various settings in Ards, Bangor and beyond. All the pupils have been working incredibly hard and I wish them all the very best for the weeks ahead.

## Open Events

This year we will have several events on a different timetable to previous years to avoid clashes with post-primary school open nights and to facilitate the new timetable for P1 enrolment applications.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November – Open Night – 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November – Open Afternoon – 1.30pm to 2.30pm

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December – Open Morning – 10.30am to 11.30am

More info about P1 enrolment can be found on our website and the Education Authority website.

## Panto Trips

A trip to the pantomime has been once again been planned for all children with permission notes being sent home in the next couple of weeks. Instead of purchasing selection boxes or other small gifts for individual children, the staff once again are donating towards the cost of transport with the balance being paid for by school. The P1 to P3 pupils will be going to see the panto in the Queen's Hall on Thursday 29th November. P4 to P7 pupils will going to the MAC on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November to. Payment for tickets will be live via the school money website in due course.

## Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair will be held this year on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December. Keep an eye out for information online and in school bags later in November. Food will be available and with stalls already nearly sold out it promises to be a fantastic evening once again.

## PTA Fundraiser – Last Day of Term

On the last day of term, Friday 21st December, we have a bag pack organised at Tesco Castlebawn.

We will be sending the choir and musical groups down in the morning to entertain the customers with Christmas songs and musical pieces whilst at the same time showcasing some of the extracurricular opportunities that are available within our school whilst also raising money for the school by completing a bag pack and collection.

This is the most profitable event that the PTA ran last year and with more assistance we could make this even more successful this year.

As it is a very busy time we have come up with a plan that will allow you to not only support the school but also get some shopping done without the children hanging off the trolley.

If you spare an hour bag packing in the afternoon, we will provide child care for an additional hour to allow you to get your shopping done in Tesco.

In other words, if you volunteer to help pack bags from 2pm to 3pm we would cover the cost for Schools Out to mind your children from drop off at 145pm until collection at 4pm.

Hopefully this will be something that you would be interested in, further information will be sent home towards the end of November.

## Christmas Events

Dates and times for Christmas events can be found below. This year we will be holding two main events in school.

P1 and P2 pupils they will be taking part on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December @ 10.30am.

The P3 to P7 pupils will take part in a Christmas Service to be held on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December @ 9.30am.

All parents and grandparents are welcome to attend this event and I would urge you to keep an eye out for ticketing information in the weeks prior to each event as they are both very popular events and spaces are limited.

## Dates Ahead

Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> November	P1, P2 Ditch the Stabilisers Day with Sustrans
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> November	PTA Meeting @ 7.30pm in staffroom
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> November	P4 to P7 to the pantomime – MAC Belfast
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> November	P1 to P3 trip to the pantomime – Queen's Hall
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> November	Open Night @ 6.30pm
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> November	Open Afternoon @ 1.30pm. P1, P2, Speech classes and Social Communication classes finish 12.45pm
Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> December	Open Morning. 10.30am to 11.30am
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> December	P1, P2 Christmas Nativity @ 10.30 am
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	PTA Christmas Fair
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	P3 to P7 Christmas Service @ 9.30am
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	Choirs & Recorder group at Tesco, PTA Event
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	Last Day of Term - 12pm finish – no dinners available. Breakfast club running as normal, no food available.
Christmas Holidays – School Closed Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> December to Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January	Online applications for P1 places open @ 10am
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	School Reopens for Pupils
w/c Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	Sign-up week for new block of after-school activities
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	Block 2 after-school clubs start
Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> January	Closing Date for P1 and Pre-school applications @ midnight
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> February	Last day of term, 1pm finish – dinners available. P1, P2, Speech classes and Social Communication classes finish 12.45pm
Half-Term – School Closed Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> February to Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> February	School Reopens for Pupils Breakfast club running as normal After-school activities running as normal
w/c Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Parent Interview Week – 1pm finish all week – dinners available P1, P2, Speech classes and Social Communication classes finish 12.45pm
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	Last Day of Term - 12pm finish – no dinners available
Easter Holidays – School Closed Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> April to Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> April	
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> April	School Reopens for Pupils Breakfast club running as normal After-school activities running as normal
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	School Closed – May Day Public Holiday
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	PTA Summer Fair
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> May	School closed – Bank Holiday

Please note that a more extensive list of calendar events can be found on our website.

If there is anything I or any of the teachers can do to assist you or your child(ren) please get in touch via the office or email me directly on [jgray246@c2kni.net](mailto:jgray246@c2kni.net)

An interactive version of this newsletter is available on our website [www.castlegardens.org.uk](http://www.castlegardens.org.uk)

J Gray  
Principal

