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Principal: Ms S Wilson

Newsletter - Term 1 2023



I would like to warmly welcome you all back to school, as well as welcoming the many new children and families that have joined us this year. I look forward to working with you all during the next academic year, to ensure our children, staff, parents, carers and wider community have a very positive 2023/24 school experience.

Monthly Newsletters, dinner menus, holiday dates and other information will be accessed through the school website and your Seesaw App.

Information for starting back to school

Schoolmoney App

Payments for dinners, milk, school fund and other items through the year can be accessed in the payment tab or shop tab. Cash should no longer be sent into school. If you are having any difficulty with the system, please contact the school office and we will endeavour to help you.

- **Consent Forms**-You will receive a number of consent forms to complete and send back to school next week. Please return these as soon as possible.

If details change during the year, particularly phone numbers, addresses or medical details, please advise us in writing.



- **Morning Snack**-We are encouraging healthy eating in school and request that each child brings a wrapped ready-to-eat piece of fruit for their morning snack. Crisps, chocolate biscuits or sweets should not be brought. Please make sure your child can manage opening his/her break independently. For snack time, yoghurts should not be brought. **Please remember that no products containing nuts should be brought.**
- **Milk / Water**-Milk is available to all children and is paid for through the Schoolmoney App. We are encouraging all children to bring a small bottle of **water** (no juice) to school each day. Children who do not take milk will use their own water bottle at snack time.



Dinners-School dinner costs **£13.00 per week (£2.60 per day)**. You should by now have registered for the Schoolmoney online payment system. Dinners should be ordered for the week and paid for online by the Sunday evening prior to dinners being taken.

There is considerable administration involved with school dinners and so we would ask that you read the following information very carefully:-

- Anyone not registered when dinners commence will be required to provide a packed lunch. This includes those entitled to free meals.
- Throughout the year, please do not expect your child to receive a school dinner unless you have booked through the Schoolmoney system.
- **If you do not book your child's dinner by the Sunday night BEFORE the week ahead, you will need to provide a packed lunch for your child.**
- Please do not phone the office to ask if a dinner can be booked for the Monday as this will not be possible.
- If dinner is not booked and your child does not have a lunch with him/her, you will be contacted to bring a packed lunch to school for your child.
- It is very important that those entitled to Free School Meals also use the Schoolmoney system to book dinners.

If any parents think their child may be entitled to free school meals and have not yet applied, please contact the Education Authority or fill in a free school meals form which can be found on their website.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants/apply-for-free-school-meals-uniform-grants>

The school receives additional money for those children entitled to free school meals, so even if you do not wish to take a meal, please still apply as this will affect our budget.

We are only able to provide free school meals once we have official notification from the Education Authority. Sometimes children who are entitled to free school meals do not wish to have a meal every day and prefer to bring a packed lunch on certain days. Please book accordingly online.

- **Packed Lunch**- Parents are asked to send a healthy lunch. It is also important to ensure your child is able to manage what has been put into his/her lunchbox independently. In order to reduce the amount of waste which has to be disposed of in school any uneaten food along with wrappers etc. will be sent home in lunchboxes. As there are some children in school who suffer from a nut allergy, please do not send any nut-based products into school.
- **School Fund**- Each family is asked to contribute £10 per term to School Fund. This money provides various resources for school along with treats for the children. It also subsidises school activities, and activities associated with Fun Days in December and June are also paid for from School Fund. School Fund is due to be paid online by **Sunday 24th September through the Schoolmoney App**. We greatly appreciate your school fund contribution as it makes such a difference to your child's school experience.

- **Birthday Cake / Party Bags**-We are unable to accept any items from home to be shared with the class.
- **School Uniform**- It is lovely to see all the children looking very smart in their uniforms. Please remember that children should be able to put on/take off and fasten their shoes by themselves. **Please also ensure you have put your child's name on EVERY item of clothing.**
- **Jewellery/Hair Fastenings/Hair Styles**-Due to health and safety concerns, no jewellery (including earrings) is permitted to be worn in school. If your child's ears have been recently pierced and the earrings are unable to be taken out for a period of time, they must be covered with a plaster. Children wearing items of jewellery to school will be asked to remove them. Long hair should be tied back with a simple hair fastening.



Morning and Home Time Arrangements

Please ensure your child arrives to school on time each day.

Our morning arrangements are: -

All children can come to school between the times of 8.45am- 8.55am. Parents are asked to note that there is no supervision in school prior to 8.45am. The classroom door will shut at 8.55am and any children coming after this time should come to the main door, where a record of lateness should be completed and signed by the parent.

Our home time arrangements are: -

- P1 finish at 2.05pm Monday to Thursday and 1.50pm on Friday.
- P2 finish at 2.10pm Monday to Thursday and 1.55pm on Friday.
- P3 finish at 2.45 on Monday, 2.15 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and 2.00pm on Friday.

Parents/carers **MUST** collect their children from the classroom doors. At the beginning of the year, parents will be asked to complete a form stating the names of adults with permission to collect their children. We are unable to send children home with anyone under 16 years of age.

- **Absence**- Please remember to send a note of explanation to the class teacher if your child has been absent from school. This can be sent using the seesaw App. If a child is removed from school before the end of the school day, the person collecting the child will be asked to complete a 'withdrawal slip'.
- **Car Parking**-Please remember that cars are not permitted in the school grounds. This includes taxis and day-care transport. You are also reminded that cars should not be parked on the double yellow lines at the Wilgar Street entrance. Please show consideration for residents, staff and other parents. In order to park in the disabled parking area, you will need to obtain a permit given by the school.

- **Bicycles/Scooters-** Children who come to school on bicycles or scooters should get off them at the school gate and walk in the grounds with them. We have used PTA money to purchase two cycle pods which have been situated in the back playground. Bikes and scooters should be parked in the cycle pods.



- **Grounds-**
 - For safety reasons pedestrians should not come through the main carpark gates– please use the small gate beside the main gate.
 - **Children should not be on the grass banks.** We have an increasing amount of outdoor equipment on the grass areas of the school. Children should be kept away from these areas when arriving at and leaving school. On Friday afternoons, children from Strandtown should only be in the grounds if they are accompanied AND SUPERVISED by an adult.
 - **Dogs-** Please remember that dogs are not permitted in the school grounds whether on a lead or being carried.
 - **School Security / School Gates-** The gate at Dundela Avenue and the gate at the steps in Wilgar Street are normally locked during school hours as a security measure. Entrance to school will only be by the gate and path beside the main double-gates. During September & October, as Nursery & Primary 1 children will be arriving and leaving at different times, gates will remain unlocked. Parents arriving at school during school hours should ring the main door buzzer and wait for a member of staff to assist them.

Information Session for Parents- These will be held in school week beginning 4th September. Your child's teacher will send out details of the meetings.

Parent/Teacher Consultations- These face-to-face meetings will take place weeks beginning 23rd October and 11th March.

Please read our Communication Policy which will be sent out through the Seesaw App today.



This year we hope to welcome you into our school as much as possible. You will be invited to watch your child take part in his/her Class Assembly, Christmas Concert and Sports Day, and we will also hold afternoon Stay and Play/Stay and Do sessions throughout the year when you will be invited into your child's classroom. Your child's teacher will send out diary dates through the Seesaw App.



The P.T.A. would warmly welcome any new recruits and so if you are able to volunteer your time, lend your skills or share ideas, please contact the school office or email the P.T.A at dundelapta@outlook.com



Friday Family Breakfast Club

Our free Family Breakfast Club will commence on Friday 8th September and will continue every Friday in the CFC Café on the Belmont Road from 8.15am to 8.45am. This is for all members of our Dundela families and is a lovely start to a Friday and end to the week. Everyone is very welcome so please do come along!

I look forward to embracing the year ahead with you and your wonderful children.

Thank you for your support and please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Kind regards,

S Wilson

Principal



