

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!

On Friday 13th December the school had its Christmas Jumper Day and hosted its annual Christmas Bazaar. There were a great variety of stalls, with everything from chocolate fountains, to nail painting, to naming the Elf on the Shelf! The children had lots of fun and raised lots of money for charity in the process. Again, this event proved very successful and definitely added some festive feeling within the school. Even the St Mary's staff got in on the act, proving there are no Scrooges in St Mary's!



Open Night

St Mary's opened its door to the wider community for the school's Open Night on Wednesday 27th November. Many families came to see first hand the excellent provision that St Mary's can offer their children. Families were entertained by our very talented musicians. Key Stage 2 children showcased how they have been using ICT to enhance their learning, through the use of iPads and the Green Screen app. However, it was the Foundation Stage classrooms that were of most interest, particularly amongst the pre-school children. We even had a special visitor attending our Open Night, Santa Claus! Pickles the Pony provided great entertainment on the night and all children even had the chance to get a ride on Pickles! As always, Shauna ensured Pickles was the best dressed pony in Draperstown!

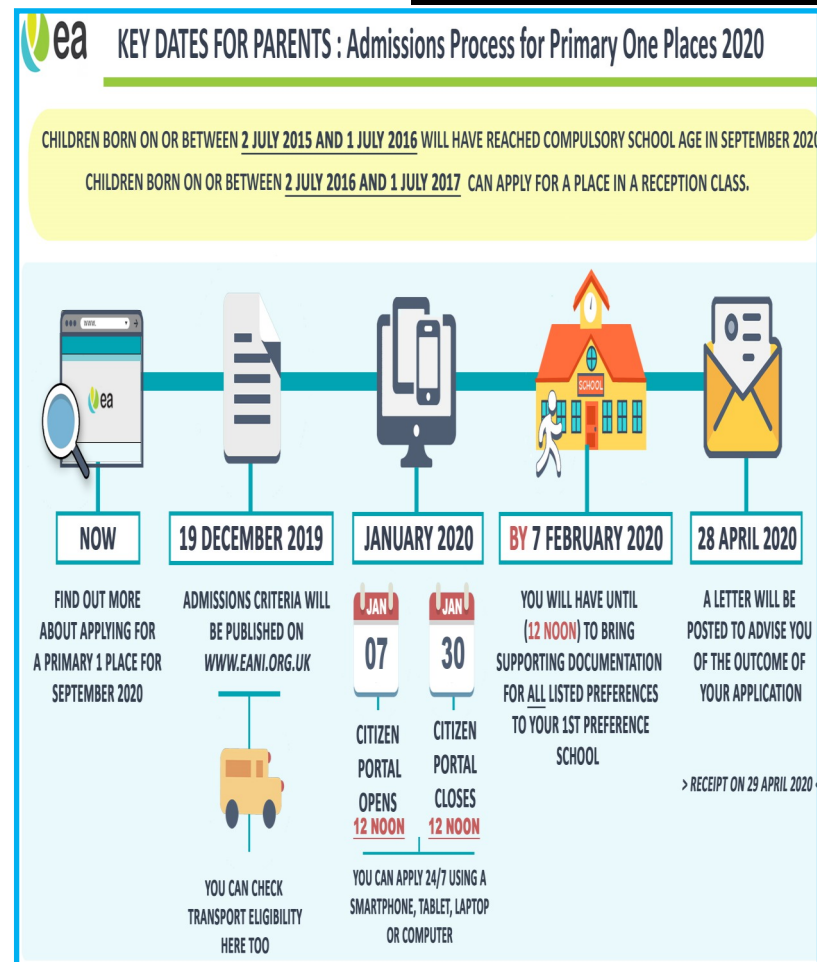


New Entrants 2020

A reminder for all those applying to start Primary School in September, this must be completed as an online application. The website for applications is:

www.eani.org.uk/admissions

This application must be submitted by **midday on Thursday 30th January 2020.**



Term One 2019



News at St. Mary's PS

Welcome to the latest issue of News at St Mary's PS and a particular céad míle fáilte to all our new pupils. We trust that they will enjoy their time with us in the knowledge that we work collectively to ensure that everyone gains maximum benefit from their time in St Mary's. Every term is a busy time in school and none more so than this particular one. The children have had the opportunity to experience a variety of activities both as part of their curriculum provision in class and the extensive range of extra-curricular activities. In November 2019, St Mary's was awarded official Forest Schools Status by Forest Schools NI to mark the work the staff and children have been completing over the last year. We are the only school in the Mid-Ulster area to have received this award. Also, during this term, our school was awarded the prestigious Primary Science Quality Mark. The Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM) is the only national award scheme to develop and celebrate the quality of science teaching and learning in primary schools. Schools achieve a PSQM through a year-long process of initial audit, followed by action and reflection. The Primary Science Quality Mark is awarded to celebrate a commitment to excellence in science teaching and learning. This Newsletter gives you a synopsis of some of the many activities that have happened during the term in St Mary's. I trust you will enjoy reading the articles as much as we have enjoyed participating in the different programmes.

Learning in St Mary's

Primary 1 Growing Up!

During our first term at school we have been learning about growing up. We talked about all the things we can do now that we couldn't do when we were little. We learned about growing up from a baby, to a toddler. Now we are school children. We had an exciting morning as a baby and toddler joined our class as part of our investigation. We had fun watching the baby show us how he moved and played. Luckily, the little baby was on his best behaviour in our class!



Primary 2 Space (Alia)

We have been learning all about Space. I know the names of all the planets and what an astronaut wears in Space. We made rockets and wrote our own Space stories.



Primary 3 Newspaper report writing (Dean)

This term our topic was all about Winter. We have been learning about how we can keep animals in the Winter. We have noticed lots of birds outside our school and playgrounds and decided to help them in these cold months! We practised our instruction writing as we made a set of instructions to follow when making our bird feeders. Miss Mc Allister asked us to bring in a plastic bottle each. We were able to use these as a way to hold the seeds inside for our bird feeders. Firstly, we had to put two holes in the top of the bottles to put string through. Secondly, we put a small hole at the bottom of the bottle to drain out any water. Then, we made two sets of holes on each side to put pencils through the bottle. The pencils are used as a stand for the birds to rest on. Next, we put two more holes on top as a way for the birds to access the seeds. Finally, we poured the seeds into our bottles and then they were ready to hang up on.



Primary 4 Our Raincloud Experiment (Colleen)

In P4 our topic is Weather. We learned about a raincloud and how it works, and we also learned a new word — 'precipitation'. Our class carried out an experiment to find out how rain comes from a raincloud. Miss McCloskey brought in some shaving-foam and blue food colouring. The first step in the experiment was to come up with a hypothesis. Our hypothesis was, "When we put the food colouring into the foam cloud, it will drip down like rain." The whole class got a plastic cup and Miss McCloskey came around with the shaving-foam and food colouring. We each had a pipette and dipped it into the food colouring. The shaving-foam was the cloud.

We dipped the food colouring into the shaving foam. It made the food colouring come down as rain. We had a results page to complete after the experiment. It had information and questions about the wonderful experiment. We noted on the sheet that our hypothesis was correct. I have really been enjoying the experiments that we have been doing this term and I can't wait to do more!



Primary 5 Halloween Fun! (Alfie)

On the 25th October, our school held an exciting Halloween concert. It was full of fun, music and laughs. Each of the classes were dressed up, from witches and wizards, to skeletons and zombies. All the classes from P1-P7 performed really well but the class that stood out amongst the rest was P5. They were fantastic! There was an excessive amount of expression during every act. The poem that the P5 class recited was, "My next door neighbour is a witch!". The poem was about a witch who cooked a girl called Tilly. They had actions to go along with each line of the poem. After the show, the Scór musicians performed for the audience. It was a really fun day and I can't wait for next year! show!



The Governors, Principal and staff of St Mary's PS wish you all a very holy and happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

"Learning, Caring and Sharing Together"

More learning in St Mary's!

Primary 6 Coding with Cozmo (Ben and Cahir)

Coding is how we communicate with computers and involves giving the computer or device commands and messages to be carried out. One of our favourite apps to use when Coding is Cozmo the Robot. We've been using him throughout the term and we love it! Cozmo has software that allows him to recognise our faces and call us by our name! We were able to create Cozmoments which involved giving commands and instructions and letting him perform a scene we created. Using 'Explorer Mode' we have the opportunity to see how Cozmo sees the world using the camera built into the robot. The Code Lab feature is our favourite and using it we are able to develop our coding skills and control the movements and actions that Cozmo carries out. We have loved using the app this term in our Numeracy and ICT work and we can't wait to continue to explore all the possibilities with Cozmo!



Primary 7 Shared Education (Nicole and Cara)

This term, Year 7 travelled to Moneymore Primary School for a Shared Education introductory day. We carried out lots of STEM activities. STEM means:

S= SCIENCE T= TECHNOLOGY E= ENGINEERING M= MATHS

We learnt that electricity only runs through a circuit if it is complete. We built bridges from different materials and designed play parks out of K'nex. We also completed some computational thinking tasks using Sudoku and a game like Pic-tionary.

It was great to meet our friends from Moneymore again. We are very excited about all the STEM activities that we will be doing through Shared Education in P7.



My Marathon

During November, the ever-talented and resourceful Nula organised a new initiative called "My Marathon." The Year 5, 6 and 7 children and staff participated and ran every day in November, until they had each completed a marathon! There was a fantastic buzz in the school during the month and the children thoroughly enjoyed it. Thanks once again to Nula for leading the way in this. Also, a big thank you to the whole school community for the tremendous support and we can't wait to 'run' this initiative again next year.....with even more participants! There was a grand total of £4029 raised for school funds. Mr Kearney had told us not to mention that he was the first teacher to complete the marathon, so we decided we wouldn't mention it in the Newsletter!



Forest Schools Award!



We are the first Primary School in the Mid-Ulster area to be awarded official Forest School status by Brian Poots from Forest Schools NI. A special thanks to Olive and Sarah for all your hard work and dedication throughout the initiative. Also, congratulations on achieving ONC NI Level 3 Award in Forest Schools.



"Learning, Caring and Sharing Together"

The Christmas Story

Lines learnt? Check. Instruments tuned? Check. Christmas Carols practised? Check. Covered head to toe in tinsel? Check. It's Christmas Show time! Year 1-7 performed 'The Christmas Story' in the Holy Rosary on Tuesday 17th December. What a truly memorable evening it was. The children retold the Christmas Story through readings, song, music and drama. It was a beautiful celebration involving all the children in the school and attended by families and parishioners alike. The children reminded us that it is important for everyone to take time from our busy lives to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas—the birth of Jesus. The children wish everyone much joy and peace this Christmas.



Spirit of Christmas

The whole school community came together to gather food items for our local community. Well done to everyone involved.

The school choir entertained the staff and customers in our local business with Christmas Carols and raised £250. Well done.



"Learning, Caring and Sharing Together"