



Principal: S Cumper  
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Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Dear Primary 1 to Primary 7 Parent/Guardian



### Dogs In School

We would like to remind all Parent/Guardians about previous School guidance regarding dogs in school and would like to thank all adults in advance for their co-operation with the successful management of this issue.

- **Dogs' leads need to be held by adults only.** Dogs may be tied up away from door entry on a short lead for brief periods of time (giving enough time to take a child into class)
- **No dogs are allowed near places where children are playing or waiting in the playground or near entrance areas as children must feel free to be able to enter and leave school and play away from dogs.**
- Dogs should be walked around the perimeter of the main playground when collecting children.
- **Dogs must be under constant adult supervision and must be kept away from the school entrance areas so that children have a choice whether they want to come in direct contact with dogs.**
- **No dogs accompanying children to and from school are allowed inside any school buildings.**
- **Parents are responsible for cleaning up any soiling by their dog on the school grounds and failure to do so will mean the dog will no longer be allowed in the school grounds.**
- When bringing dogs on to the site, parents do so with an absolute understanding that their dog has no issues around children, has never displayed any aggression towards children and **that the owner believes the dog is fully trustworthy in a school environment.**

## Parents and School in Partnership

- ✓ Please make sure that all pupil equipment and clothing is clearly labelled.
- ✓ We would encourage parents to recheck their child's school uniform and if necessary re-mark any unidentified items. If anything is misplaced by your child at school, please make sure your child has told their Class Teacher or the School Building Supervisor, Mrs Lyttle, and we will then attempt to resolve the situation.
- ✓ We would request that all Parent/Guardians ensure that the contact details that parents provide as part of the school annual data collection are accurate. All contact information has been processed to date. **Any changes to addresses, email addresses or emergency contact numbers must be supplied via email to the school office.**
- ✓ Failure to do so can cause significant problems in an emergency situation. In particular, we would urgently request that all parents **should ensure that all their mobile contact phone numbers are accurate and also that your mobile phone has an answer machine message facility in order for school to make contact.**

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**We will be sending a test text message to all Priority 1 mobile numbers on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October to make sure that everyone is able to receive these urgent messages.**

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- ✓ If you have parental responsibility and **are the first point of contact** and you **DO NOT RECEIVE A TEXT ON THAT DAY** then we would please request that you would send an email to the school office on [info@hardingmemorial.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@hardingmemorial.belfast.ni.sch.uk) with your updated telephone number as soon as possible.
- ✓ **Please note that ONLY one Parent/Guardian is able to be set as Message Priority 1**
- ✓ We would request that all pupils from P1 to P7 have access to a suitable outdoor coat (with hood) in school, especially if they have travelled to school by car. We would prefer pupils not to use umbrellas in the school playground due to the possibility of a child being accidentally hurt by a child losing control of their umbrella. It may be particularly useful for older pupils to leave an "emergency coat" in school.



- ✓ At Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School we acknowledge that the whole area of "Child Protection" is a sensitive and difficult issue. The relationships which School Staff have with children and parents are often based on trust and confidentiality. Such relationships are acknowledged as underpinning the secure, caring environment for growth and learning which schools seek to provide for their pupils.
- ❖ However, all individuals connected to our School must recognise that, in order to protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation, a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families. As part of the Home/School partnership all Stakeholders are reminded that it is accepted School Policy that any Harding Memorial Pupil (whilst they are in the vicinity of the school grounds) **should not be approached by any adult other than their own Parent/Guardian or a member of Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School Staff.** If you have any questions about any aspect of School Safeguarding/Child Protection please speak to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mr Cumper) or Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Mrs Baird)

## How Do I Make Contact With School ?

- If a Parent/Guardian has a concern regarding their child this should be brought to the Class Teacher first. For the smooth operation of the school if a Parent/Guardian requires an extended conversation about an incident/event, an appointment should be made with the class teacher either through the school secretary or by letter. The issues should be clarified to enable the Class Teacher to make appropriate preparation.
- If the issue is not resolved a meeting with the Principal may be arranged. If it is necessary to discuss something with a Teacher, then a note should be written or a phone call made to arrange a mutually convenient time. Class Teachers may be available at the beginning and end of the school day to speak briefly to parents – but please note that every Teacher has Curriculum commitments both before and at the end of the normal school day.

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All schools are encouraged to advocate a consistent message about healthy eating, as per the Food in Schools Policy

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/food-schools-policy>

This means all food and drink provided and consumed within the education setting should be nutritious and of good quality. School meals are a great choice, however if parents decide to provide a packed lunch, or morning break or snack, the following guidance may be useful for healthy eating tips and ideas



## Inclement Weather Arrangements

As we come into more consistent cold and wet weather, please ensure that your child has a coat with them every day. If it is at all possible our children will be outside at break and lunch as they need opportunities for exercise, running about and playing with their friends. It is of particular importance that each child has their name written on their coats as several children may have the same type of coat and identification can be very difficult.

- ❖ School would also like to remind Parent/Guardians that there is **NO MORNING SCHOOL SUPERVISION provided before 8.45am.** Any child in the School Playground before this time must be supervised by an appropriate adult.
- ❖ Please note that the KS2 Playground Entrance gate is opened each morning at 8.45am and that all children from P5, P6 and P7 should wait in the enclosed area off the Cregagh Road before 8.45am where they will be safe and away from busy morning road traffic. They should not be in the KS2 playground before the green front gate is opened by a member of School Staff

## Extra-Curricular Activities and After School Clubs

In Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School we aim to give our pupils the opportunity to further and widen their interests and once again in Term 1 we have offered our children an extensive range of After School activities. These clubs form an important part of our extended school life and are only possible because of the support of the various External Organisations associated with our school. In endeavouring to ensure the safety of our children it is important that Parent/Guardians are aware of the finishing times for all these after school activities and that arrangements are particularly clear for the collection of our youngest pupils at the end of After School Activities.

➤ **We would hope that all Parent/Guardians would be aware of the necessity to be punctual for P2 & P3 Pupil Pick Up Times as these pupils will not be dismissed until an appropriate adult arrives at 3.00pm.**

- In addition, we would request that all P2 – P7 Parent/Guardians please check which dates the Monday to Thursday After School Clubs will be taking place as they have been occasions in the past when a child has not been collected on time due to a Parent/Guardian forgetting that the After School Club is not on that particular date.
- Finally, we would request that all Parent/Guardians remind their children that participation in all After School Clubs is dependent on Satisfactory Behaviour in line with School Expectations.

## School Football Team

The School Football Team participated in their first tournament of the school year at Avoniel Leisure Centre on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024. This event was brilliantly hosted by the East Belfast Alternatives DARE project. Our school football team worked extremely hard, demonstrating excellent teamwork and sportsmanship. Our Football Team performed fantastically and at the end of the group stage were successfully placed at the top of their group and consequently secured a place in the First Place Final. Unfortunately, it wasn't meant to be and after a tough match they finished as the Runner Up. Our striker and Captain of the day, Alfie, was awarded the "Player of the Tournament". Everyone on the team had a brilliant day and they even got to explore the inside of a police van, talking to local police officers about how they look after the community. A big thanks to the DARE project for inviting Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School to participate.

## **There Will Be NO Request for School Fund During 2024/2025**

It has been customary at this time of the year to ask for a voluntary contribution towards School Fund from HMIPS Parent/Guardians. Such contributions are becoming more important and in fact are especially relevant due to current Funding Crisis in the Northern Ireland Education System. However due to the "Very Challenging Financial Climate" at the moment – **Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School has decided NOT to request School Fund during the current 2024/2025 School Year.** In these bleak economic times we, as a school, understand how challenging life is for so many people at the moment. If your family is experiencing difficulties at home, as Principal of Harding Memorial, Mr Cumper and Mrs Baird will always try to provide additional support at school and we understand that you are not always able to share details and that's okay. If your child is coming to school after a difficult night, morning or weekend, **then please email me or phone School to let us know to "keep a wee eye on them."** Nothing else will be said or asked. This will let Mr Cumper and Mrs Baird know that your child may need extra time, patience, or help during the day which will be communicated sensitively to appropriate school staff.