

Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School

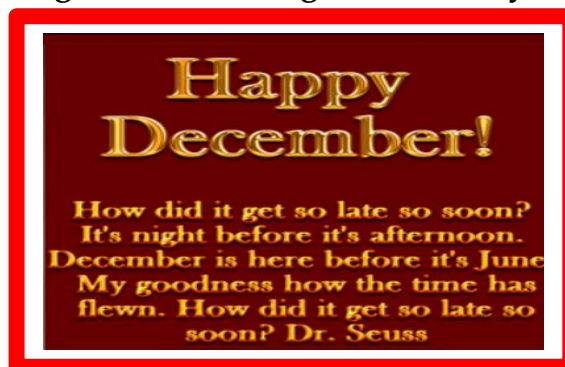


Principal: S Cumper
info@hardingmemorial.belfast.ni.sch.uk

105 Cregagh Road
Belfast BT6 8PZ
Telephone: 028 90458040
Fax: 028 90460917

Wednesday 1st December 2021

Dear P1 – P7 Parent/Guardian



As I was preparing to write this December 2021 Parent Information Update Letter, I reviewed the content of a previous Parent Newsletter from December 2019 and it clearly illustrated to me how much our *“normal day to day school life has changed over the last two years”* due to the devastating impact of Covid. Two years ago we were planning ahead for Parents to attend our School Open Day, Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 Christmas Concerts and our Key Stage 2 Carol Service but all of those traditional school activities have been massively impacted by “Covid”.

Every single member of our school community will have experienced drastic changes to their normal established routine because of the arrival of this awful disease into our wider society. Many of you may have vulnerable family members that you continue to be worried about and I have no doubt that for a very significant number of families the Covid Emergency has been and continues to be a “very challenging experience”. Clearly Covid has not gone away as we continue to learn more about a new more virulent variant. But despite these ongoing pressures, please be reassured that Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School will be there for you and your children.

I would like to once again publicly express my gratitude to all our Pupils, Parents and Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff for adapting so well to the *“new way of doing school”*. Harding Memorial has continued to adapt to the “new normal” and I am really proud of our children for all their hard work both inside and outside of the classroom. We have started to feel a real festive vibe in school this week, with Christmas decorations appearing all across the school and the sound of Christmas songs throughout the school in preparation for our “Virtual Christmas Show”

We are asking for all Children in our Primary 1 to Primary 7 Classes to wear their School Uniform To School on Wednesday 8th December and Thursday 9th December 2021 as we are hoping to “Video the Christmas Show” in School on both those dates. There will be NO PE in Harding Memorial Integrated P.S. on both those dates as the Assembly Hall will be closed

We are continuing to try our very best to provide children with as much of our school Christmas traditions as possible. Therefore, I am pleased to confirm that our Traditional Christmas Post Box will be back in operation. The children can “Post Their Christmas Cards” in the Red Letter Box that is situated beside the Front Staircase and these Christmas Cards will be delivered by **“P7 Elves”**. In order to ensure that the **Christmas Greeting Cards are delivered to the Right Child** – please make sure that the name of the child and class of the child/children who are intended to be the recipient is clearly and legibly written on the outside of the envelope

Pupil Name
Primary

Rudoph the Red Nose Reindeer
Primary 7 Classroom (North Pole)



If you know of any Parent/Guardian who has a child that is due to start Primary 1 in September 2022, please encourage them to make contact with the Principal of Harding Memorial so that we can arrange a telephone appointment with them to discuss our School. We are always keen to provide a Question and Answer Session about the future plans of HMIPS.

Admissions for Primary 1 will open in January 2022. We would normally hold a series of "Open Events" to showcase Harding Memorial Primary School in December and January, but unfortunately once again Covid has impacted on our traditional arrangements. Due to the rising cases of COVID 19, we have made the decision not to hold a face to face Open Day for our Prospective Primary 1 pupils. We would love nothing more to show off our school, however, the safety of our children and staff is at the forefront of our minds. We will be updating the school website with admission videos; illustrating the types of activities that the children do across the school as well as advertising what makes Harding Memorial so special. If you know of any prospective parents who would like more information, please tell them to get in touch. If you are due to send your child to Primary 1 in September 2022, or have a friend or family member who will be looking to apply for a Primary School in September, *"please feel free to send them my way".*



I am willing to have an extended telephone conversation with any and all Prospective Primary 1 Parent/Guardians about the ethos, atmosphere, resources and future plans for Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School

PRIMARY 1 ADMISSIONS: Academic Year 2022 - 2023

- If your son or daughter is starting Primary 1 in 2022, you must apply for their place online from **Monday 10th January 2022 @ 12 noon.**
- The closing date and time for applications is **Friday 28th January 2022 at 12 noon.**
- For more details regarding this process parents/carers should visit the Education Authority's website.
- The website address is: **www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions**
- The admissions criteria for primary schools will be published on the Education Authority's website on **Friday 17th December.**
- If you require information about the admissions process, please contact the school office or you can email EA at: **primaryadmissions@eani.org.uk**
- You can also contact the Admission's helpdesk: 028 95 985 595

We are also in the process of designing a video showcasing life at our School ahead of the start of the Primary 1 Digital Admission Process in January 2022. **Prospective Parents can arrange to collect an information pack from the Office during the School Day and “Question and Answer Telephone Calls” can be arranged for January 2022, with either myself as School Principal or with Mrs Baird, as School Vice-Principal.**

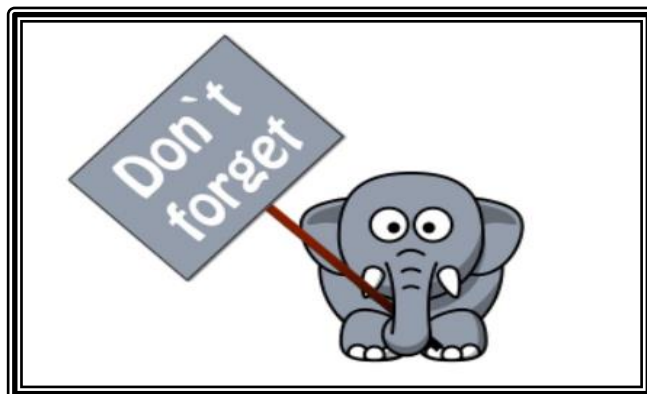


There will also be a limited number of Individual personal tours of our Foundation stage available in January prior to the application process closing. Any Parent/Guardian wishing to sign up for a personal tour should contact the school office at their earliest possible convenience either by Phone or E Mail.

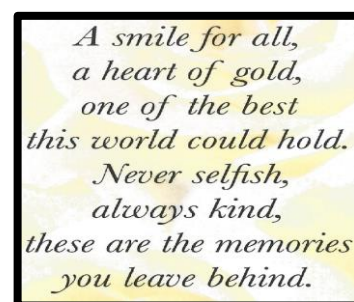
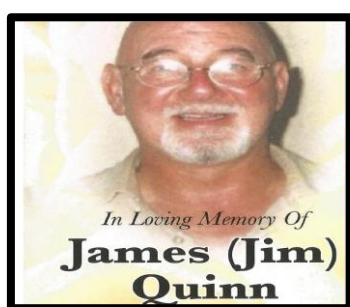


School Information Infection Control Update

Thank you to everyone for continuing to support our school arrangements. I know there is a lot of information and concern at the moment about the rise in cases and transmission, especially in the run up to Christmas. **Keeping the virus out of school is of vital importance to ensure that school remains open for our children.** The messages largely remain the same for us and simple things we can all continue to do REALLY make a difference, to protect ourselves and show kindness and consideration to each other. Keeping your social distance from other people as you come in and through the school grounds will really help prevent the transmission of the virus. Wearing a face mask has potential to make a contribution to reducing the spread of the virus to others. It certainly reduces the spread of any droplets we cough or sneeze. The combination of keeping our social distance and wearing a face mask makes a big difference to keeping the virus out of schools. The continued example to our children of regular handwashing routines is incredibly important. It is the first line of defence against the spread of many illnesses. It is so easy for children to transfer the germs on their hands just by touching their eyes, nose or mouth. We should not underestimate the value of time spent at the sink as it could save lots of time later on visiting with the doctor !



As winter closes in, please remember to send your children to school with coats and hats but also maybe an additional layer under their uniforms. Classrooms need to be well ventilated as Covid cases in Northern Ireland continue to move in the wrong direction. To provide this additional ventilation, we need to open a window or two. Obviously this also makes the rooms colder so **it's a very fine balance that we have to strike between ventilation and warmth.** You may have seen recent stories in the Press about potential early closures leading up to Christmas. This is news to School Principals as well but once again as soon as we receive any information update from the "powers that be" – you will be informed immediately by our School.



It is with great sadness that I need to formally inform Parents about the recent passing of Mr Jim Quinn. Jim was the school Morning Crossing Patroller at Harding Memorial and was adored by pupils and their families alike. For several years, his cheery wave and quick wit brought a smile to everyone's faces as he helped to keep all of the children safe as they crossed the road in the morning. Our sincere sympathy goes out to his wife and other members of his family at this sad time. Teachers have taken time today to explain the situation, acknowledge students' feelings and address their concerns in an open and honest manner. The death of a member of our school community will affect us in a variety of ways. It is important to remember that there a number of possible reactions to a death that may vary from upset, passivity or withdrawal to no response at all and that they are all normal expressions of grief. None of these reactions is more normal than others and it will be helpful to let your son or daughter know this. It is also important to be aware that these behaviours might not show themselves right away and may actually be in reaction to past losses in your family that this event has brought to the surface. I encourage you to speak openly with your son or daughter regarding his or her reactions and feelings regarding this sad news. Again, we are very saddened by this loss to our school community. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the Quinn family and their friends. He was a Gentleman who will be missed by everyone who had the pleasure of spending time with "The Mighty Quinn"

Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School Facebook Update

Thank you to everyone who entered our PTFA Raffle. The draw took place this morning and the winners are listed below.

1st William Douglas
2nd Danielle McClean
3rd Roy Baird
4th Eileen Thomas



Thank you to everyone for all your support and to the PTFA Committee and Mrs Baird for their excellent organisation of this very successful fundraising event

**THANK
YOU**