

# Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School



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As you are aware Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School was closed to all Pupils on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January as part of the strike action by the Teaching and Non-Teaching Unions and the wider Public Sector Unions in Northern Ireland. I would like to personally apologise for the inconvenience that this decision to close our School will have caused both to Parent/Guardians and Pupils. **But the current and future financial outlook for schools is really awful and industrial action has escalated across just about every public sector.** There have been recent statements by political leaders stating that they recognise the plight of the most vulnerable and the importance of protecting the children in our society. But for a number of years it has been very evident that basic school funding is inadequate and this has a direct impact on provision in all schools. We rightly expect that our schools are adequately funded to provide the highest possible standard of educational experiences for our children and that our system ensures that the needs of our most vulnerable children, particularly our children with additional needs, are appropriately met. **This is simply not possible with the current level of funding in the sector.** The Public Sector Strike Action last week was unprecedented and came about as the direct result of the failure to take into account the very real concerns expressed by a very large number of educational experts and institutions. There has been a dramatic reduction in the levels of practical and specialist support available to schools from external bodies, such as the Education Authority and Department of Education. It is an increasingly untenable situation that is leading to very significant School Staff disillusionment and burn out at rates never seen before. Nevertheless we thank you again for your continued support for our school as we work together to do the best for the children in our care.

## School Emergency Closure Arrangements

We would like to remind all Parent/Guardians of our organisational arrangements for Emergency School Closure Situations. **We have a system in school to enable us to text parents to inform them if school is closed for any emergency situation.** In the case of extreme weather conditions, any decision whether or not to close the school will be taken as early as possible. The School Principal will consult with the School Building Supervisor and make a decision about whether School will be able to remain open. In the event of disruption caused by heavy snow our prime concern must always be the safety of the pupils and staff. We will also endeavour to list any School Closure Information on the BBC News Northern Ireland Website or the School Website

- **If you do not receive any closure information from the school,** please assume that "Harding Memorial is "Open As Usual" for all Primary 1 to Primary 7 Pupils.
- If anyone received a new phone for Christmas and has changed their number please ensure that you let the School Office have the number immediately, in case we need to contact you urgently. This is particularly important during the cold weather as in the event of the school being closed due to bad weather we will use text message numbers.
- **Finally can you please ensure that all Adult Contact Mobile Phones have the Answer Machine Facility in operation to enable school to leave a Phone Message in an Emergency.**

### After School Clubs

In Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School we aim to give our pupils the opportunity to further and widen their interests and offer 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. We would also like to remind Parent/Guardians about the importance of being 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. In particular, 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.

**The dates of the all the After School Club Sessions are available to view on the Display Board at the Front School Entrance Door.**

Finally we would like to remind Parent/Guardians of all children attending After School Clubs that participation in these activities is dependent on behaviour. For example if a child/children do not listen to what the Instructor is asking them to do or indulge in behaviour which is outside the norm expected inside the school classroom, the permission for a child/children to attend these After School Clubs may be withdrawn by the Outside Agency.

### No Toys in School

We are noticing an increasing number of children who are bringing "Toys" into school – this toy description would include a wide range of item such as Collecting Card Games, Miniature Action Figures, Dolls and Lego. We would seek to remind Parents of our established School Policy which is "**Please No Toys in School Except For Show and Tell**". Each Teacher will inform their class of their Show and Tell Day. The reason for this policy is that we are worried that a child's toy may get misplaced or damaged. We would formally request that **all Toys are left at home**, including stuffed animals as when children bring in toys from home, they become distracted and the other children do as well. I have explained to the children that we have more than enough amazing things to use in Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School and that they should save their Toys for Home time. We would like to thank all Parent/Guardians in advance for their support in implementing this important aspect of life in school.

### Applications for Primary 1 at Harding Memorial Primary School September 2024

Applications for Primary 1 at Harding Memorial Integrated Primary School September 2024 Children born between 2 July 2019 and 1 July 2020 will be due to start Primary One in September 2024 as they will be of compulsory school age and Parents/Guardians must apply for a place in a Primary School. The EA Connect School Applications portal opened at 12.00 noon on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 **and will close at 12.00 noon on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

**If you need any help with the online application process feel free to make e mail contact with school and we will be happy to help.**

If you know of any Parent/Guardian who has a child due to start Primary 1 in September 2024, please encourage them to contact the School Principal who would be willing to arrange a tour of the school and give them the opportunity to view our Foundation Stage Resource area.