

Newsletter

1st September 2021

Welcome back

We are so happy to see everyone

We welcome everyone back to school for a new year, especially our new Nursery, Primary 1 and Speech & Language Unit children. Circumstances particular to last year allowed us take the decision to keep classes with the same teachers and classroom assistants in most year groups. We believe this will help everyone get off to a more seamless start as routines are already established. We believe this to be particularly important for the children's wellbeing in these challenging times.

Some changes:

We wish a very warm welcome to **Miss Coulter** who will be teaching one of our Primary 2 classes in 2021/22. Miss Coulter has worked in our school many times so the children are quite familiar with her.

Mrs Kingh takes up her new role as Vice-principal on 1st September. We wish her every success as she assumes this management position.

With our Primary 7 children moving on **Mrs Cunningham** has taken over Mrs Kee's class in order to enable other classes remain with their same teachers as much as possible.

Miss McGeady got married on a lovely hot day in July and is now **Mrs Harkin**. We wish her many years of happiness.

RETIREMENT

Mrs Florence Finlay

After 27 years of loyal service to the children of Sion Mills Primary School, Mrs Florence Finlay has decided to retire from her role as School Crossing Patrol Lady. Florence has faithfully stood at her assigned position in the mornings and afternoons, in all weathers, to ensure children get safely across the road.

There are many quiet and hidden roles that ensure schools function smoothly every day and School Crossing Patrol is one of those. Having a sure and consistent person ensuring children make their way safely across busy roads is important both to safety and to developing independence as parents can be more confident in allowing children walk to/from school, in the knowledge a recognised adult is there for them. Florence has been that person for many years.

Friday 10th September will be Florence's last day. *If you would like to contribute to a gift for Florence, the school's Paypal account is available or submit in an envelope to your child's class teacher.*



School Dinners

School dinners remain at the same price — **£2.60 per day.**

Dinner Money should be paid at the beginning of the week and with continued health & safety arrangements in a named sealed envelope.

Dinner menu is available in the Parent Area on www.sionmillps.com. We are currently on Week 1 (30/08/21)

Please Note: Free School Meals must be applied for each year. Apply on the EA website at <https://www.eani.org.uk/>

School Milk

Please let your child/ren's teacher know by Friday morning (3rd Sept.) if you wish your child to have milk in school. The cost for September is £3.60, to be paid in advance. Thank you.

INFORMATION & CONSENT BOOKLET

Your children will have brought home an Information & Consent Booklet today. There are many items to be brought to parents'/carers' attention at this time of year. To make this easier the regular items are contained in this booklet. **Please read it carefully and sign where requested before returning to your child's teacher.**

Key policies listed on page 7 are available on the school website (www.sionmillsps.com) in the **Parent Area**. For anyone wishing to have a paper copy, these are available, on request, from the School Office.

Summer Scheme

July 2021 saw our first Summer Scheme venture due to funding provided by the Department of Education. With our on-site facilities it proved to be a great success with children and staff both enjoying the activities, despite ongoing restrictions.

Our evaluation provided us with many positive responses and some ideas for the future, such as more day trips, should the opportunity arise again in 2022.

81.6% said that the information provided was excellent

84.2% said that the activities on offer were excellent

86.8% said that the resources provided were excellent



Keeping COVID-19 out of school

Symptoms include: raised temperature, persistent cough, loss of taste and loss of smell.

If anyone in your household has tested positive for Covid-19 your child **should not** attend school and take a PCR test on Day 2 after contact. If their test is negative they may return to school. PHA request that the PCR test is repeated on Day 8. At any point if symptoms arise the child should stay at home and parent/carer notifies the school.

Your household should isolate in accordance with the **latest** Public Health advice.

If your child should begin to display symptoms during the school day they will be placed in supervised isolation until they can be collected by a parent/guardian.

If there is a confirmed case of someone in the school having the Covid-19 virus the school will adhere to the Department of Health's 'Test, Trace and Protect' strategy. This requires the early identification of such cases, rapid testing, tracing of close contacts and isolation to break transmission chains.

Morning Arrival at School

As advised in the Return to School letter on the website, children should enter through Gate 1 (P1, P2C, P2H and P3C) Gate 2 Nursery and Gate 3 (P4L, P5K, P6/7C and P6/7McG). **Gates will be supervised from 8.45am until 9.05am. Staff will walk around the perimeter of the upper section of the school to ensure all P4 – P7 children have got into their classrooms safely.** If supervisors have left their posts parents/carers should escort their child/ren to the main door to ensure they have entered the school safely.