

# Iona Star

Friday 29th April 2022  
[www.stcolumbasprimary.co.uk](http://www.stcolumbasprimary.co.uk)



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## Online Safety - Safety Cards

Please find attached the next two Safety Cards in our series of 'quick reads'. These are designed to give parents hints and tips around online safety when using specific social media apps or games.

The Safety Cards highlight age restrictions and give easy to follow information around how to block or report concerns.

Attached to the Iona Star tonight is a Safety Card for **Facebook Messenger** and one for **Roblox**.

Two more cards will be published next week.

If parents would like any further information about this, please ring the school office.

## Additional Bank Holiday

As parents will be aware, it is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June with an extra Bank Holiday falling in the May half term week. Schools are therefore able to plan one more day where they are **closed** to staff and pupils during this academic year.

In discussions with our Governors, and in conjunction with St. Thomas More, the extra day's holiday will be the last Friday of the summer term –

**Friday 22nd July 2022.**

Our planned training day will now move to **Thursday 21st July 2022.**

Therefore, school will close to pupils on **Wednesday 20th July 2022.**

## PE Days

Your child's allocated PE days for **this half term** are as follows. PE will be outside, where possible, so please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and is wearing suitable footwear. Many thanks.

Reception - Thursday and Friday

Year 1 - Tuesday and Friday

Year 2 - Thursday and Friday

Year 3 - Wednesday and Friday

Year 4 - Thursday and Friday

Year 5 - Swimming every afternoon from 09.05.2022 to 20.05.2022 (further information will be sent to Y5 parents today)

Year 6 - Friday plus swimming every afternoon from 23.05.2022 to 27.05.2022 (further information will be sent to Y6 parents in due course)

## Come and See Parents' Letter

Attached to the Iona Star tonight is a letter for parents from 'Come and See' - our RE curriculum provider. This details key dates in the Church's year for this term and information about the topics that the children will be learning during their RE lessons in the summer term. If parents have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher, Miss Quinn or Mrs Garbutt.

## Congratulations

Well done to Emily in Y3 who passed three dance exams at the weekend in Ballet, Tap and Modern at Primary Level 1. She achieved Highly Commended in all 3 exams! Keep dancing Emily.

Congratulations to Polly in Y2 who achieved her Level 3 and Level 4 award in trampolining over the Easter holidays.

Well done to Oliver McG in Y1 who has achieved a fabulous medal for his skills in football. He won a football competition at training last week.

Alfie in Y1 also has a wonderful medal for his hard work and skills during football training. His team are 3rd in the league.

Well done to Jooles in Y4 who plays in centre midfield for North Shields Blacks Under 9s team. His team won the Inter Club Football Tournament for 2022 at the weekend.

Congratulations to Eliza in Y4 who has a fabulous rosette for coming in 1st place in 'Dressage'. Eliza's horse is called Bambam; this was his 1st competition. Well done to you both!

## School Lunches

There will be a slight change to next week's published menu for the main 'meat' selection to take into account the Bank Holiday Monday.

On Tuesday 3rd May, the children will be served sausage and mash with gravy. There will be no lasagne option next week. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause. We will then follow the rest of the menu for week 2.

## School Gateway Accounts

Please could we remind all parents to top up their child's School Gateway account if schools meals are paid for. Following the Easter holidays, some accounts are in a small amount of deficit. Please remember to add credit to these regularly if your child orders a school meal. Thank you for your support and understanding.

## Class of the Month!

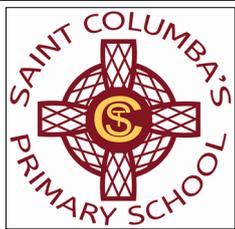
At present, we are working with North Tyneside 'Go Smarter Team' encouraging the children to walk or bring their bikes and scooters to school. Every week, the children take part in a travel survey and the results are collated.

Congratulations to **Year 5** who are our 'Class of the Month'. Keep up the hard work everyone!

## COVID 19 - Supporting your COVID recovery

Please see the link below to a site which has been developed by the NHS and is intended to support those who are recovering from COVID-19.

The website provides a number of areas of guidance for those individuals experiencing the after effects of COVID-19 and how individuals may look to manage those symptoms: [yourcovidrecovery.nhs.co.uk](http://yourcovidrecovery.nhs.co.uk)



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## School Meal Provisions and Debt Management Policy

As parents are aware, we have moved away from the Local Authority for our school meal provisions. This means that St. Columba's School is now responsible for collecting dinner money from parents and paying Mellors for the meals taken up by the children. Therefore, the school budget will be directly affected by any outstanding debts that cannot be recovered from parents who pay for their children's meals in Years 3 - 6. If our budget suffers through unpaid debts, this will in turn affect other resources for all pupils in school.

The Local Governing Committee have written a Debt Management Policy which outlines the steps that School will take if parents' School Gateway accounts fall into deficit. The policy is attached to the Iona Star tonight and will also be uploaded to our school website.

**We would encourage all parents to read this policy carefully. Section 4 details the management of schools meal debts and the informal and formal steps involved in the process of recovering monies for unpaid meals.**

We are confident that every parent will agree that our school budget can not support unpaid debt as it will affect the children's resources and provision. We encourage all parents to give this policy their full support.

**A small number of School Gateway accounts are in deficit. Mrs Wallace will begin sending initial reminders to parents from next week, as detailed in Section 4 of the policy.**

If parents have any questions, concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to speak to Mrs Garbutt. Thank you for your understanding.

## School Attendance

Now that we are, hopefully, returning to a greater sense of normality, we are reintroducing our historical school attendance monitoring and rewards procedures. As we learn to live with Covid-19, we have seen a positive increase in school attendance from March.

We are delighted to announce that our whole school attendance from Reception to Year 6 for this week is **97%**! This is rated as 'green' on our attendance monitoring systems. This is the first time we have been green for a number of months now; well done!

We are also delighted to announce that **Year 1** have **100%** attendance for this week and are the winners of our attendance trophy. Congratulations everyone! Over the course of this term, we are hopeful that we can *slowly* begin to reintroduce our historical attendance monitoring systems and procedures.

## Gardening Club

Mrs Rowan is very keen to set up a Gardening Club again in order to maintain our large school grounds. We are blessed with a wonderful outdoor space. However, this is hard to upkeep! If any parents, grandparents or family members would be willing to help, please could you email:

[gardening@stcolumbasprimary.co.uk](mailto:gardening@stcolumbasprimary.co.uk)

Our long term vision is to create a space for an allotment where children can grow their own fruit and vegetables. This would then link with their curriculum work. Any help would be gratefully received!

Mrs Rowan will gather expressions of interest. This will help us to plan future events and potential 'gardening days'. Thank you for your support.

## Breakfast Club / After School Club

Over the course of this week, a number of children have not had places booked in advance for Breakfast Club or After School Club. Pupils have then arrived unregistered at these clubs. This puts our school staff in an incredibly difficult position for a number of reasons:

\* capacity is limited at each club for safety reasons. Breakfast Club can hold 30 and After School Club, 22. If children arrive who are not booked in to these clubs, staffing ratios are compromised and space becomes an issue when serving food

\* at After School Club, food is cooked and prepared according to the number of pupils who have signed up to the club by 3:00pm. It is then incredibly difficult to cater for additional pupils who arrive at the last minute

\* pupils can become upset at the end of the day when they expected to be going to After School Club, their name is not called as they have not been booked on and they are left confused about what is happening.

Four last minute places were needed for After School Club one night this week at 3:30pm. This caused issues with catering, staffing and meant that additional phone calls to parents had to be made via the office.

The deadline for booking places does not close until 30 minutes before the club begins. We appreciate that life is difficult and that exceptional circumstances arise from time to time. We also appreciate that genuine mistakes can happen and parents can forget make bookings. However, could we please ask parents to try, where possible, to book their children into these clubs in advance. This would help us tremendously in school.

Parents will always receive the email confirmation that your place has been booked. If parents have not received this email confirmation, it is likely that the booking has not been completed successfully.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.