

Markethill Primary School

Tomorrow's Success Begins Today...



Monthly Newsletter



19th

2024

Dear Parents

It is hard to believe that we have once again completed another year. 2024 has been a busy year in Markethill Primary School and we have achieved a lot during the year. We held our first ever Green Day to celebrate our success at achieving the Eco Schools Green Flag, the Rights Respecting Schools Silver Award and becoming an accredited Forest School. In 2025, we hope to achieve our Gold Sustrans Award and the Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award. A big thank you goes to the staff, our pupil voice groups and school community for helping us achieve these awards.

Our Conservation Area is now well and truly established. It is an area of the school that everyone is very proud of. What once was an overgrown forested area, now consists of a lovely green space with a sensory garden, herb garden, a polytunnel, bird hide, wildlife flowers, outdoor classroom and a woodland area. The children love their bird hide for bird watching and are fascinated at watching the camera footage of the variety of wildlife that visit MPS Conservation Area! Both the Eco School and Forest School assessors commented on how fortunate MPS is to have "an outstanding forested outdoor space which has been managed to its full potential." When visiting the school, the Eco Assessor made the comment that "the enthusiasm of the children was infectious and it's evident that there is a whole school approach and positive culture surrounding eco schools."

The next project that MPS is undertaking in 2025 is to add a chicken coup to the Conservation Area. Our new initiative of Welly Wednesdays, which started in January 2024, has been a bit hit with our boys and girls in P1 – P4. The children love their Welly Wednesdays, when they get to explore the outdoor area with their wellies on.

The school choir at Markethill Primary School has been rebranded this year. We have 2 choirs at the school, The Honey Bees Choir, P1 – P4 and The Harmony Bees Choir, P5 – P7. Both choirs have contributed to various Christmas events: Mountnorris Christmas Tree Festival, The Palace, Armagh, St Mark's Col, Armagh Christmas Tree Festival, Mullabrack Church of Ireland Dinner, Markethill Presbyterian Church, Bright Hour and Keady Day Care Centre. The choirs have certainly created a buzz wherever they have performed!

This year our P5 pupils from Mrs Smyth and Mrs Mill's class, along with the P5/P6 boys and girls from Mrs McCool's class led our Harvest Assembly. The P1, P2, P3, P4, P5 and P6 children had the opportunity to perform at our Christmas concert. We look forward to the P7 pupils performance at their annual Leavers' Assembly in June. In recent days, the children have enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner, Christmas class parties, a visit from Santa and the House Talent Show. Thanks go to the kitchen staff who pulled out all the stops on Thursday 12 December by serving Christmas dinners to over 200 children and staff.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our Christmas charity collection for The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Charitable Funds: The Royal Victoria Hospital for Sick Children.

Paediatric Intensive Care Unit and the Regional Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. We will let you know the final total in January 2025.

I would like to pay tribute to all of the staff in MPS, from our caretakers, secretary, kitchen staff, cleaners, classroom assistants and teachers, all who work hard to make MPS a successful, happy and caring environment for our children. Thank you to our parents and wider community for continued support in all areas of school life. We appreciate this support very much. As I have said before, in Markethill Primary School we are fortunate to have great children, supportive parents and committed, hard working staff.

With warm wishes for a happy and peaceful Christmas from everyone in MPS.

Dr H McLernon



Rights Respecting Schools Focus-December 2024 & January 2025
Article 42 (knowledge of rights): Governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention.

Article 15 (freedom of association): Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Monthly Award

During December our monthly value was **Be a Good Listener.**

Classes	Endeavour Award	Be a Good Listener Award	Handwriting Award
P1KG	Kinberly Wilson	Harper Diffin	Jack Wilson
P1/P2SB	Esmee Hodson	Eliza Lipton	Dzulija Ruska
P2KS	Lydia McCrum	Heidi Kilpatrick	Ella Gillespie
P3KT	Freya Smyth	Noah Trueman	Jacob Black
P3RC	Theo Rolston	Isla Young	Arbreigh Bekker
P4EG	Molly George	Amelia Irvine	Archie Kilpatrick
P5HS&SM	Hannah Boyce	Lydia Annett	Ollie Mackle
P5/P6PMcC	Thomas Black	Leah Dougan	Connie Gibney
P6AA/LP	Archie Ratcliffe	Daniel Kennedy	Jemson Gass
P6/P7KQ	Harry Shields	John Farrell-Montgomery	Jake Rountree
P7RCh	Hollie Sterritt	Reuben Wilson	Lucinda Bell

Monthly Award for January - Be Enthusiastic



...to everyone who received an Endeavour, Be a Good Listener or Handwriting Award at our December Celebration Assembly.



During 2024 – 2025 we are focusing on handwriting across the school. We have purchased new resources to help with this. We have added a handwriting award to our monthly celebration assembly. Top marks to our Handwriting Award winners.



Celebration Assembly

Our December monthly class assembly was led by Mrs Smyth's P5 class. Their theme was 'Be a Good Listener' which links to our December monthly value. The P5 boys and girls gave everyone in the assembly the challenge of listening to different sounds and guessing what they were. We had some great listening with most of the sounds answered correctly. The assembly was concluded with a bible story about Jesus healing a deaf man. Well done to P5 and P6 for a very thoughtful and enjoyable assembly on listening.



Thank you to our ministers and to Ruth Lavery who help us out each week at our assemblies. The children really enjoy their contribution to assemblies at MPS.

P1 APPLICATION PROCESS 2025 – 2026

IMPORTANT DATES

- P1 Application Forms are completed online.
- Forms can be accessed through the Education Authority website: www.eani.org.uk .
- Information about the P1 admissions procedure and admissions criteria for schools will be published on the EA website on **Thursday 5 December 2024**. The Admissions Criteria for MPS is available on the school website and school app, which can be downloaded.
- The P1 application procedure opens **via the EA online portal on Friday 10 January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT)** and closes on **Friday 24 January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT)**.
- An application received **after 12 noon on Friday 24 January 2025 will be treated as late**.



Journey to Santa Challenge
Well done to everyone who participated in the **Sustrans Journey to Santa Challenge!**
Thank you to our parents who supported us with this initiative.



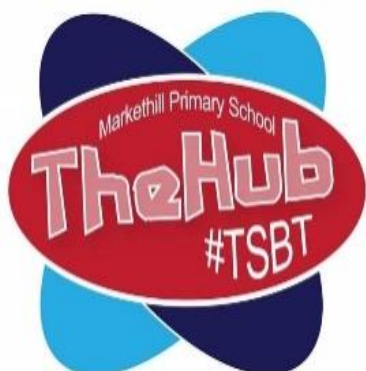
Walking Bus Day
Wednesday 6 January 2025

Meeting point
Rear entrance to school at Bunker Hill



Staff will meet the children at 8.45am to supervise them on their journey to school. The Walking Bus will provide a valuable opportunity to reinforce the importance of road safety. We ask that children do not bring scooters or bicycles as the emphasis is on walking to school.

Parents / carers are welcome to walk with the children to school. If you are late and miss the Walking Bus, it is the parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure children arrive at school safely.



The Hub News

Thank you to The Hub for organising the Movie Afternoon for the P5 – P7 children. Everyone, including the staff, enjoyed the movie. Thanks also to The Hub for organising the Christmas Raffle. We had a super hamper to give away and we are grateful for our local community who kindly donated prizes for the raffle. The money raised from these events will be used to purchase resources for the children.

Pupil Resources January 2025

When we commence our new term on Thursday 4 January 2024, we would be grateful if you could kindly replenish the following items:

- Hand wash
- Hand sanitisers
- Tissues
- Pencil case items such as pencils, pens, ruler, rubber (please name items).

Thank you!



Child Protection / Safeguarding

If you have concerns regarding Child Protection, please contact Mrs McCool or a member of the Safeguarding Team. Children are made aware that there is always an adult in MPS who will listen to any worries they may have. Please remind your child of this. We are here to help and the sooner we know about a problem the sooner we can resolve this.

MPS CHILD PROTECTION / SAFEGUARDING TEAM

DESIGNATED TEACHER:	Mrs Pamela McCool
DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHERS:	Mrs Sandra Black Mr Kenny Qua
GOVERNOR:	Mr Timothy Wilson
PRINCIPAL:	Dr Helen McLernon



If you need to talk to someone you can talk to...

Mrs McCool
Mr Qua
Mrs Black
Dr McLernon



An Easy Way to Raise Funds

Do you shop online? Did you know that every time you buy something you could be raising money for MPS?

Over 2400 well known retailers including Amazon, M&S, Tesco, House of Fraser, Expedia and many more, will donate a percentage of what you spend to Markethill Primary School when you shop with them, via [Easyfundraising's Page](#). Each purchase generates a donation.



Instead of going directly to a retailer's website, go to [easyfundraising](#) first and choose the retailer you want to shop with – then everything you spend with that retailer earns a free donation for Markethill Primary School. It's completely free to use. On average, each retailer will donate 5% of the cost of your shopping – and those donations soon mount up.

Whatever you need to buy, groceries, clothes, travel, mobile phones, buy it via [easyfundraising](#) and raise money for MPS at no extra cost to you!

Please register to support us when you shop online.

Health

If a child has been ill during the night, it is in the child's best interest to stay at home. If your child requires medication during the school day, the form *Procedure for the Administration of Medication* **must** be completed by the parent/guardian. **Please note, medication e.g. antibiotics, cough bottles etc will not be given to your child unless this form has been completed.** Forms can be obtained at the School Office. Inhalers and all medication must be clearly labelled with your child's name. If your child is absent from school, a note or the Absence Notification Form (see school website) must be sent to the teacher when he/she returns. It is also essential that you inform the school beforehand if a child has to leave school early or may be in late due to attendance at medical or other appointment.

COVID-19

Please do not send your child to school if he / she is unwell with the symptoms of COVID-19.

Nut Free School and Birthday Cakes /Treats

Please remember that Markethill PS strives to be a NUT FREE ZONE. We are very grateful for your support in helping us keep our children safe and well. **Should your child have an EpiPen for an allergy, please keep a note of the expiry date so that a replacement can be obtained from your G.P. and sent into school.** Due to some children having nut and gluten allergies, cakes, buns and biscuits are not permitted in school to celebrate birthdays or special events.



Early Bird Club and 123 Club

Breakfast Club opens at 8.00am in the School Hall and costs £2.00 for supervision and breakfast.



Parents should collect their child / children from the 123 Room. Please wait outside the room and Mrs Whiteside will meet you at the door.

PLEASE NOTE: CANCELLING A SESSION AT 123 CLUB MUST BE DONE THE DAY BEFORE IN ORDER TO GET A REFUND.

Parents must book places for these clubs on the school app. The school is no longer receiving cash for the provision of clubs.

Children should not attend these clubs without pre booking on the school app or contacting the secretary to enquire if spaces are available.

Breakfast Club and 123 Club places for the week must be booked by 9.00am the Friday before. Please note that after the Friday 9.00am deadline, no further bookings can be accepted for the incoming week. If you require a place during the week you must contact the school office to check for availability. Spaces are limited so we advise booking early.

If you have booked a slot at either club and your child does not avail of this, for example, due to sickness, you will be refunded via the app. It is not possible to carry over sessions.

Thank you to our breakfast and 123 club staff, Mrs McKelvey, Miss Stewart, Mrs Davidson and Mrs Whiteside

PLEASE NOTE

PARKING IN THE BUS BAYS IS NOT PERMITTED. THESE MUST BE KEPT CLEAR AT ALL TIMES. PLEASE KEEP ENTRANCES TO ESTATES AND ROADS CLEAR TO ENABLE RESIDENTS TO ACCESS THEIR HOMES AND TO HELP PREVENT ACCIDENTS.

We ask that caution is exercised in the car park when reversing out of spaces. Children who come by bike or scooter should dismount at the school gates and walk along the path to enter the playground areas.

Parents should not drive into the staff car park to drop their child off. This car park is for staff use only. There is ample parking available in the bottom car park and we would appreciate if parents used this area.

PLEASE NOTE: PARKING IN THE BUS BAYS IS NOT PERMITTED. THESE MUST BE KEPT CLEAR AT ALL TIMES. PLEASE KEEP ENTRANCES TO ESTATES AND ROADS CLEAR TO ENABLE RESIDENTS TO ACCESS THEIR HOMES AND TO HELP PREVENT ACCIDENTS.

We ask that caution is exercised in the car park when reversing out of spaces. Children who come by bike or scooter should dismount at the school gates and walk along the path to enter the playground areas.



Important Dates

DECEMBER 2024

Fri 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">School finishes for Christmas Holidays: P1 – P3 finish at 11.30am and P4 – P7 finish at 11.40am.
Mon 23 Dec – Thur 2 Jan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Christmas Holidays

JANUARY 2025

Fri 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">School reopens for the new term.PLEASE NOTE: NO BREAKFAST CLUB OR 123 CLUB AVAILABLE ON FRIDAY 3 JANUARY 2025.
Wed 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Walking Bus @ 8.45am
Fri 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">P1 application procedure opens via the EA online portal at 12 noon (GMT) and closes on Friday 24 January 2025 at 12 noon (GMT).
Mon 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assessment Week
Fri 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">P1 application procedure closes at 12 noon (GMT).Spring 1 Friday Clubs commence
Wed 29	Celebration Assembly – Be Enthusiastic P5/P6PMcC

FEBRUARY 2025

Mon 3 – Thur 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parent-Teacher Interviews
Wed 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Walking Bus @ 8.45am
Fri 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No school buses are available and no 123 Club.P1 – P3 pupils finish at 1.50pm and P4 – P7 pupils finish at 2.00pm.
Wed 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Celebration Assembly – Be Loving P1KG

If you require any information or would like clarification on any issue, please contact me via email or phone.

H McLernon