



Monday 21st August 2023

Dear parents/guardians,

I hope that you and your family were able to enjoy a relaxing summer break.

Ahead of next week's return to school, I wanted to reach out to all parents/guardians to provide you with an update as to what this will mean for all of us in the St John the Baptist school community.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming the children back to school on Tuesday 29th August and to enjoying the school year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Donnelly
Principal

Return to School

All children (P2-P7) will return to school on **Tuesday 29th August, Wednesday 30th August and Thursday 31st August, finishing at 12pm on these days.** The pre-existing arrangements for the phasing in of Primary 1 pupils will remain in place (parents/ guardians were provided with the relevant details for their respective children during the June induction meetings in school.) Friday 1st September will be the first full day of school for P2-P7 children, with school finishing at 1.30pm as usual for Fridays. This will be the first day in which the children will stay for dinners/ lunches so please ensure they bring packed lunches or have paid for the dinner in advance. Parents of children enrolled in the Social Communication Units have been provided with alternative arrangements for the phasing in of children for the new term in the days to come.

Please note: the school can only provide free dinners to pupils who the EA have confirmed are on the list for the 2023/24 school year, so parents who have applied but not yet received confirmation should send their child to school with a packed lunch or pay until then.

- All classes will start at **8.55am** every morning, with pupils able to enter school grounds from 8.45am before proceeding directly to their classrooms. The entrance and exit points for children of all classes have been outlined in the table, in addition to the end of day times for all classes during the week.
- Parents should take careful note of the end of day times. All pupils will also end class at 1.30pm on Fridays.
- At the end of the school day, the P5, P6 and P7 children will be walked by their teachers to the Finaghy Road North exit points so parents are asked to remain in the car park or on the road until the children arrive.

Morning Access Arrangements

We are fortunate to have large school grounds with multiple entry points, and these will continue to be utilised fully in the morning and afternoon to minimise congestion when children are arriving and exiting school. We will be reinforcing with children the expectation that these arrangements are adhered to at all times and would appreciate your support in this regard. **Punctuality continues to be of paramount**

St John the Baptist PS

Finaghy Road North, Belfast BT11 9EH

Tel: 028 90614546 Email: info@stjohnthebaptistsps.belfast.sch.ni

Principal: Mr Donnelly

importance, and issues in this regard will be addressed quickly and directly with parents to ensure they are decisively resolved.



St John the Baptist PS Access Arrangements & Start/Finish Times 2023/24



Year Group	Gates open	Start	School Entrance	End (Mon-Thur)	End (Friday)	School Exit Points
Primary 1	8.45am	8.55am	Classrooms	2pm	1.30pm	Classrooms
Primary 2	8.45am	8.55am	Classrooms	2pm	1.30pm	Classrooms
Primary 3	8.45am	8.55am	Parish Entrance	2.30pm	1.30pm	Parish Entrance
Primary 4	8.45am	8.55am	Parish Entrance	3pm	1.30pm	Parish Entrance
Primary 5	8.45am	8.55am	Main Foyer	3pm	1.30pm	Main Gate
Primary 6	8.45am	8.55am	Main Foyer	3pm	1.30pm	P7AMcC: Main Gate P7KM/P6MP/P6AB: Side Entrance Gate (Finaghy Rd Nth)
Primary 7	8.45am	8.55am	Main Foyer	3pm	1.30pm	

Breakfast Club and **After School Club**

Breakfast Club will begin in the new term on Monday 4th September, and parents will be notified in advance to register their interest to secure a place during the preceding week (more information to follow.)

After School Club will also begin from Monday 4th September, and parents will be notified in advance with regard to arrangements and securing a place for their child. We are looking to expand the After School Club facility to allow pupils to be supervised until 4pm from September. There will be a limited number of places available so make sure you contact the school once notified that registration is open.

School Dinners

Dinners will be available for all pupils from Friday 1st September, and the dinner menu for the first term has already been shared with parents via text and on the school's website. Dinner money must be paid on the Monday (or first day) of each week in a clearly labelled envelope outlining which days your child will be going to dinners.

Seesaw

Class Seesaw accounts will be set up during the first week of term and parents/ guardians are asked to ensure that they have set these up appropriately at the earliest opportunity. These provide an effective and direct means of communication which is important, as was demonstrated during the pandemic-related school closures of recent years. Please note: Parents/ guardians wishing to arrange a meeting with teachers should do so via the school office (Tel 90-614546).

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New SJB School App

We will be moving away from our school texting service to a new SJB school app during the month of September, and this will require all parents following instructions to download an app to secure future messages from school. More information about this will be provided once the children return to school.

SJB Uniform for 2023/24

The school uniform consists of a blue shirt, tie and jumper with navy trousers and plain black school shoes, although girls may wear a blue skirt/pinafore in place of the trousers. The uniform should be worn **into school every day** without exception for all pupils (apart from the designated PE uniform day). Ties can be purchased from Truly Fare (Kennedy Centre) and Chaplins (Park Centre) along with the rest of the uniform items.

In summer, girls may wear the blue gingham summer dresses with the school blue jumper/cardigan (if required) but must continue to wear their black school shoes. Girls must wear navy tights or white/navy socks when wearing dresses/skirts. Boys may wear navy formal shorts- **not sports shorts**- in the place of navy blue trousers.

N.B. **Plain black school shoes** should be purchased for the new school year, **not sports shoes**.

PE Uniform

Parents and guardians will know that, in St John the Baptist PS, our children come to school in their PE uniforms one day a week. Parents will be notified of the designated PE day at the beginning of the new term. This is subject to change (i.e. to facilitate coach led sessions) and parents will be informed in advance of the new arrangements.

Children wear a **plain white polo shirt** (or a white polo shirt with the SJB logo) with their **school jumper/cardigan** on top and **plain navy track bottoms** in for the day.

Chaplin: The Sport Company in Park Centre have designed leggings and track bottoms embroidered with the school logo which parents may opt to purchase for their children to wear on PE uniform day. These are available to purchase from the Park Centre store or can be ordered online. Parents and guardians should note that this is not compulsory, and they may continue to send children to school on PE uniform day wearing **plain navy bottoms** so long as these are plain (this will be strictly enforced from September.)

Appearance (Jewellery, Nails and Hair)

We strongly encourage you to ensure that your child does not wear earrings to school but, if they must, then **only studs are allowed** on the grounds of health and safety.

Similarly, necklaces and bracelets must not be worn into school.

Children should not wear nail varnish into school and hair must be kept tied back when participating in sports on health and safety grounds.

Mobile Phones

Children should not bring mobile phones into school unless in extraordinary circumstances. At no time should a pupil have a phone in the school classroom. Failure to adhere to this policy could lead to disciplinary proceedings being initiated due to child protection concerns. In the event of a pupil requiring to bring a phone into school on a one-off occasion, a parent/ guardian must provide a written explanation as to why this is the case and the phone must be left in the school office in the morning and collected after school.