



20 Carolan Road
Belfast
BT73HE

Telephone 028 90 492177
Fax 028 90 641858

Principal Mr. N Watson

14 May 2019

Dear Parent,

This year we are combining our Annual Sports Day with a 'Feet First Families' Day as part of our ongoing Sustrans Partnership.

There are two key aspects to this:

1. Sports Day will run on May 31st (weather permitting, or if postponed on one of the subsequent Fridays) Junior Sports Day (P1-3) will run 0915 – 1200 & Senior Sports Day (P4-7) will run 1200 – 1400
2. This will be a **Feet First Families day** meaning there will be **no vehicle access to school grounds and no parking** between 8.45am and 2.30pm.

School will finish for all pupils at 2pm on Sports Day to reduce the number of journeys parents need to make to collect children.

What is Feet First Families?

This initiative is to encourage us all to think about alternative ways to travel to school reducing pollution, congestion and freeing up space that would otherwise be taken up by cars. By doing it on Sports Day we will have more room to run sporting activities in the car park.

How will it Work?

We all have a few weeks to think about how we will get to school on May 31st. Many of us can walk, cycle or use public transport. For those for whom a car journey is an inescapable part of the journey we can think about some of the places we can park and stride, park and ride etc.

There will be no parking for anyone on school grounds on the 31st May (that includes staff). School gates will close at 8.50am and prior to that there will only be a turning circle/drop off facility between 8.00am and 8.45am. During this period, vehicles will be permitted to drop and go but **not** to park (neither within Forge or Wellington Grounds). Pupils dropped off will be supervised during this time in their respective playgrounds. This is primarily aimed at early birds who use breakfast club – please do not drive up to the gates even one minute after 8.45am on the day. The gate will be closed trying to get turned and out will cause problems!

Won't it be Chaos?

It doesn't need to be. Other schools have run Feet First Families days very successfully. It will work best if we all embrace the idea and find an alternative way of getting to school without the car. From a learning point of view, it demonstrates alternative thinking strategies to our pupils, frees up space for Sports Day and promotes the ethos of an active and healthy lifestyle that we seek to nurture through events like Sports Day.

I do appreciate that it will take a bit of planning and may add time to some journeys but I would really like to encourage you to look at it as an *opportunity rather than an inconvenience*. Who knows, it may open up new possibilities for some of us as to how we get to and from school!

[Email: info@forge.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@forge.belfast.ni.sch.uk)

www.forgeips.co.uk

Options

- **Hiking or Biking** – If you live within a couple of miles of the school, why not consider walking, cycling or scooting to school. It gets you outside with your children and adds to your day's physical activity. We have plenty of bike parking and it's a great way to catch up on chat as well.
- **Buses** - Check out the possibilities here: <http://www.translink.co.uk/Services/Metro-Service-Page/>
- **Park'n'Ride and Park'n'Stride**
If you travel a little further it may be worth considering facilities like the park and ride facility at Cairnshill where you can avail of free parking and travel into town by bus, or look for a place to park in the vicinity of the school where you can walk from. Obviously we do not want to obstruct or inconvenience our neighbours with irresponsible parking or driving so please be considerate in this respect.
We are looking into other park and stride options that we may be able to avail of as a last resort back up for those whose options are limited and we will provide details of these when and if they are confirmed.
- **Special Access**
We appreciate that there may be some parents or carers with disabilities who may wish to attend Sports Day and will need parking close to the school. If this is the case for you or someone in your family who is coming and has Accessible Parking entitlement, please contact the school, before 29th May so that we can make arrangements and allocate parking.

We know that many parents and children use these methods already and we're really hoping for a high level of participation on the 31st!

Sports Considerations

- Children will need their PE kit and suitable sports shoes.
- There will be no cooked meals available on Sports Day so all pupils need a packed lunch. Pupils entitled to free school meals will have a packed lunch provided by the school meals service so if your child takes free school meals you do not need to send a packed lunch.
- Parents are welcome to attend Sports Day and there will be tea and coffee available on the day. We do ask that if you bring younger children that you supervise them closely so as to minimise the potential for activities to be interrupted and also for accidents caused by very young children wandering amongst the children taking part in races and activities.
- Your child's teacher will inform you of any specific details regarding their group/class such as colours of clothing etc. In the event of the weather being very good, please apply sun cream to your child before school that morning as they will be outside for longer than usual.

Yours Sincerely,



Neville Watson