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Principal Mr. N Watson

17 June 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. It will be a busy but fun filled Friday! We have already sent a version of this letter out – this is an update! **Please see the 'Park'n'Stride' and 'Healthier People, Healthier Planet' paragraphs which are new or updated.**

There are two key aspects to this:

1. Sports Day will run on June 21st (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 June (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 be chaotic!

The gates will be opened again to allow pick up and drop off access to pre-school parents at relevant times and Pre School staff will be on hand to meet parents during those periods. Most of the car park will be fenced off will be a pedestrian area on Friday.

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**
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.
- **Park'n'Stride**
An alternative is to 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 do have special permission to park in the car park of Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church (St. John's) on the 31st May between 8.30am and 2.30pm.
We would like to minimise this so that we are reducing and not just displacing the traffic for the day and this facility is aimed primarily at those who live further away and can't use public transport or who want to pop in and out to Sports Day between work commitments. There is the possibility that the church will have to cancel their offer to help with this due to unforeseeable circumstances – the most likely example of this being a funeral. We continue to explore additional options and will update parents accordingly.

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.

Healthier People, Healthier Planet

As we are focussing on reducing negative environmental impact as part of Sports Day our Eco Club have met and made some further suggestions which our PTA are also very much on board with.

- In order to promote the Reduce, Re-use and Recycle message we will have recyclable waste bins alongside general waste bins on sports day. Please help us by separating waste.
- We are also encouraging parents to bring their own re-usable cups/mugs for tea/coffee if possible – disposable bio cups will be available but we want to stretch their use as far as possible. Our PTA have been very proactive in recent years in using Fairtrade Tea and Coffee and this will continue this year.

Yours Sincerely,



Neville Watson