



Welcome to P1 at Macosquin Primary School

2023-24





Hello! Welcome to Macosquin Primary School! We are so excited to have you joining our school family. It's going to be a fun year full of lots of learning and new adventures and we can't wait to see what the year has in store. We are really looking forward to meeting you and helping you to start a new and exciting chapter in your life, your first day at school.



Dear Parent/Guardian

We are delighted that your child is beginning their school life in Macosquin Primary School. Starting school is not only a milestone for your child but for you too! Over the next 7 years your child will have a wealth of new experiences, reach many milestones and make countless happy memories at school.

The first days of school can be both an exciting and an overwhelming experience, but we will do our best to make their introduction to school as enjoyable as possible. We look forward to working alongside you as their parent and getting to know your child, helping to develop their character and encouraging their learning.

We hope that the information provided in this booklet gives you an insight into school life at Macosquin and helps you prepare your child for starting school. Please be mindful that the information is subject to change- any changes will be communicated to you via Seesaw.

If you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us via the school office (02870344317 or email info@macosquinps.coleraine.ni.sch.uk).

We are really looking forward to getting to know both yourselves and of course your child and working in partnership with you over the course of the year to make your child's early learning experiences the best they can possibly be!

Welcome to P1 ☺



Key Information about life at Macosquin Primary School



What will my child eat at school?

Children should bring a healthy snack and drink from home to eat at break time e.g. fruit/vegetables/bread-based product/yogurt (no jams/cereal bars etc.) or they can purchase a healthy break from the canteen each day at a cost of 50p (further details to be provided in September). On a Friday, children can bring a break of their choice (does not have to be healthy) in line with our Healthy Break policy.

For lunch, children can bring a packed lunch or have **school dinner** at a cost of **£2.60 per day**. The dinner menu is available on the school website <http://macosquinps.co.uk/parents-area/dinner-menu/>. **School dinners must be pre-booked and paid before 12 noon each Friday for the week ahead via SIMS Pay.**

Our school is a nut free zone- no nut products may be brought into school at any time.



How do I make payments?

We are operating a **cashless** payment system in school. **SIMS Pay** is our online payment system which enables you to pay for school meals, trips and extra-curricular activities etc. from home. You will receive information on setting up a SIMS Pay account from the school office via email before September. If you have any difficulties in accessing SIMS Pay, please contact the school office (info@macosquinps.coleraine.ni.sch.uk).



Do you have after school facilities?

Yes, we provide After School Care from 2-5.30pm daily (from 1pm for Reception children). We ask that at present, only those who have no other childcare options use this service due to high demand and restricted numbers. If you would like further information about After School Care, please contact the school office (info@macosquinps.coleraine.ni.sch.uk). We also offer a wide range of Extra-Curricular activities which P1 can attend from Term 2 (January), once they have settled in to school life.

How do I keep up to date?

As well as Seesaw, you can keep up to date with the goings on in school via our **school website and Facebook page**. You will find key information including dates, dinner menus and information about clubs on the website. You will see snippets of our learning on Facebook.



What if my child is absent or needs to leave school early?

Should your child have to leave school early, e.g. for an appointment, please **phone the school office**. Your child should always be **collected from and signed out at the main office**. If your child is absent from school, an **absence slip** should be completed and given to me on the day that your child returns. These are available on the school website <http://macosquinps.co.uk/cmsfiles/items/schoolletters/ABSENCENOTIFICATIONFORM2015.pdf>.

Please note- all absence from school is recorded and any child with less than 85% attendance is automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer.



How will my child's injuries/sickness be dealt with?

Staff are trained and qualified to deal with sickness and injuries. If your child is particularly unsettled and/or upset, or should they require further treatment, the parent/guardian will be contacted.

Should your child have an **existing medical condition** or develops one at any point and as a result, requires the administration of **medication** etc. please inform the class teacher immediately and you will be advised what essential paperwork should be completed.

Pupils who are given prescribed medication from their doctor must have an AM2 form filled out by their parent/guardian for this medicine to be administered by staff in school. Non-prescription medicines are **NOT** allowed to be administered by staff in school.



Should your child sustain a bump to the head, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. It is therefore **essential that contact details provided to school are regularly updated**.

Is there anything else I need to know?

Folders – Every child will need their own **home learning folder**. The folder costs £2.00 which should be paid via SIMS Pay. This folder will be given to your child on their first day and will hold all school related documents e.g. notes, homework activities, reading books etc. The folder should be **brought to school every day** and should be **checked by parents/carers on a daily basis**.

School funds are £10 per child or £20 per family per year, payable on SIMS Pay. This money is used for essential school resources.

Please contact the school office with any other questions you may have.



The Macosquin Primary School Uniform

What does my child have to wear?

Full school uniform should be worn at all times (with the exception of swimming/PE days when PE uniform is worn). **PLEASE ENSURE ALL UNIFORM IS CLEARLY NAMED.** Please check names regularly throughout the year as washing tends to cause labels to fade!

Formal uniform (Worn every day with the exception of PE days)

BOYS: Grey shorts or trousers

Blue V-neck pullover with school badge

Light blue shirt

Blue, silver & red tie

Grey socks

Black velcro-fastened shoes

Outdoor coat with hood

GIRLS: Grey pinafore or skirt

Blue V-neck pullover with school badge

Light blue shirt

Blue, silver & red tie

White or grey socks

Black velcro-fastened shoes

Outdoor coat with hood



Informal uniform (This uniform is only permitted on PE/swimming days)

BOYS & GIRLS: Blue tracksuit bottoms

Blue PE jumper with school badge

Light blue poloshirt

Velcro fastened shoes/trainers

P.E days will be confirmed in September.

What does a school day look like?

**Please note the school day for P1 is different in September as they settle in to school life.*

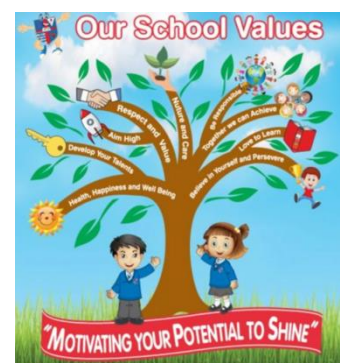


- **School is open from 8.45am.** P1 should be dropped off at the back gate and will go straight to their classroom at this time. Breakfast Club is available from 8.05am, more information available from the school office.
- **It is important that all children are in school for 9am** to ensure their day gets off to the best possible start. Being on time will allow your child time to organise their belongings and relax into the classroom environment. If a child comes in late, the chances are they have missed the register, finding out activities for the day and even the beginning of a lesson. **All lateness is recorded and will affect attendance.**
- **School finishes at 1.45pm for P1** excluding extra- curricular activities/After School Care. *P1 will be phased in with the school day gradually increasing in length- details will be provided at a later date.*
- Children should be collected at the **BACK GATE at 1.45pm** if not attending After School Care. Please collect your child promptly.
- As you can see, we have a very busy school day and we have no doubt that your little person will be tired when they get home, particularly during the first few weeks of school life. Once settled in, children will begin to receive some homework tasks to support their learning in school. Information will be provided in September.



Our School Values

Our school vision 'Motivating your Potential to Shine' and values, (as you can see on the values tree) give you a little insight into what life at MPS is like...each child is special, unique and will be encouraged and celebrated for the little person they are, throughout their time at school. To read more about our school vision and values, visit our school website **www.macosquinps.co.uk**



The Curriculum at Foundation Stage

- ☺ **Language and Literacy** including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing. Language and Literacy is a key area of learning and will happen every day, both through specific Literacy time and naturally through other areas of learning and as we go about our daily routine.

We teach Literacy through the '**Jolly Phonics**' programme and are confident that you will be amazed at what your child can do by the end of P1! **Don't panic** if you are not familiar with Jolly Phonics as we will be here to guide you as to how best to support your child. Children will start to learn their sounds in the second week of school. Then once they are secure with the beginning sounds, they will start to put sounds together to blend and segment words. **Phonics is at the heart of learning to read and write** and so your support with learning sounds, when the time comes, will be really invaluable.



Literacy time is very **practical** in P1 and often is in the form of task time, whereby children will have the opportunity to visit different stations to develop different skills. Task time is also very beneficial in ensuring **all learning styles** are catered for as just like you and I, children learn in different ways.

- ☺ **Mathematics and Numeracy**, including Number, Measures, Shape and Space, Sorting and Patterns and Relationships .

In P1, Numeracy is very **fun and hands on**. Practical resources are used every day, lots of **talking** will take place and much of our Numeracy will be linked to our **thematic topics**. We will learn how to give the gingerbread man 3 buttons, make stars using triangles and collect data about our favourite pets to name just a few P1 numeracy tasks!



We place an emphasis on giving the children **real life contexts and experiences**. For example, it's great knowing what a 2p coin looks like, but what children really need to know is how to use that coin in day to day life. Therefore, our children won't only learn what the coin is but will use it to pay for a new pet in the role play area during play. We also place focus on building **positive attitudes** towards Numeracy, something that many people lack.

- ☺ **The World Around Us**

Children are taught through a range of exciting cross-curricular topics which not only cover World Around Us areas but **aspects of the entire curriculum**. Our topics in P1 are; Once Upon a Time, Under the Stars, People Who Help Us, Animal Crackers and Under the Sea.



☺ **The Arts**, including Art and Design, Music and Drama.

Through 'The Arts' children will have many varied opportunities to develop their **curiosity, imagination and creativity**. Children will have daily arts experiences through Play Based Learning and also have the opportunity to pursue their interests and talents further. At Macosquin, children can learn an instrument at school, with musical **tuition** offered from P2 upwards. We also offer Speech and Drama coaching and the opportunity for all children to **perform on stage** which really helps to develop confidence and self-esteem.



☺ **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**, including Personal Understanding and Health and Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community (and PATHS programme). Paths stands for Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies and it forms part of our PDMU curriculum. The programme **empowers all children** to develop the fundamental **social and emotional** learning skills which will enable them to make **positive choices** throughout life.



☺ **Physical Development and Movement** including swimming lessons at Roe Valley Leisure Centre (to be confirmed depending on Covid-19 situation). Physical development is vital to the holistic development of the child. We will secure fine, gross and fundamental movement skills through a range of **fun and engaging** activities.



☺ **Religious Education**

Children are taught about Christianity in an age-appropriate and **relatable way** through assemblies and story time.



Play Based Learning

Much of our learning in P1 will take place through play. We will engage in meaningful play experiences every day in P1, either indoor, outdoor or a mixture of both. Play Based Learning is invaluable in Foundation Stage, not only to develop curricular skills and knowledge including Literacy and Numeracy concepts, but to develop each child holistically.

Play improves confidence, communication, independence, relationships, self-management and imagination to name just a few! You would be reading all day if we were to give you a full run down of the benefits of play however it is a fundamental part of learning in P1 and so we value it as such.

We are very lucky to have such a well-equipped outdoor play space in the form of our Sensory Garden and P1 playground area. Here the children will engage in a wide range of play activities, both structured and open ended. We will be out in all weather conditions so please ensure your child is prepared accordingly. We apologise in advance for the odd soggy sleeve or muddy trouser! But we can assure you that all of your extra washing is very much for a good cause!



Shared Education

At Macosquin, our children have the opportunity to engage in Shared Education with children from their own year group from Damhead PS (Coleraine) and St Eoghans PS (Moneyneena). Our P1s will meet with P1 from the other schools on a number of occasions throughout the year to engage in fun, positive learning experiences both in our school and at the others. The Shared Education programme affords our children many different opportunities and allows them to mix and meet new people from an early age.



A Positive Learning Environment



Underpinning all of the important curriculum areas is your child's personal development. We will be very focused on your child's happiness and wellbeing at school as all children must be happy and settled in their environment to learn to their full potential.

As a school, we have a positive behaviour ethos, meaning children are praised and rewarded for positive behaviour rather than a focus being placed on any negatives which occur. We have a set of 5 golden rules, which your child will be introduced to and reminded of regularly.

We have different reward systems in school on individual, table group and whole class levels which your child will soon become familiar with and will be encouraged to work towards. Please be reassured that all children will make mistakes at some point- that's ok and you should encourage them to learn from the choices they make, as we do in school. We encourage you not to dwell on the negatives with your child, but rather to praise the positive choices that they make.

We have Golden Time every Friday afternoon, which children will choose each week, as a reward for making positive choices. From having a disco, to making buns, watching a movie to playing football, Golden Time is always so much fun!



Please help me get ready for school...

What I need to take/wear to school



1. School uniform (as above) with my **name on EVERYTHING**.
2. School shoes fastened with velcro.
3. A waterproof coat with a hood everyday regardless of the weather.
4. PE uniform (**named**) and velcro trainers. I wear this to school on PE days (to be confirmed).
5. PE bag (named) with black/grey velcro fastened or slip-on gym shoes (named) inside. These will stay in school.
6. Large school bag (named). It has to hold an A4 sized folder.
7. A wipeable lunch box (if I am not taking school dinners).
8. Stationary items- please send in a disposable bag; 2 pencils (jumbo triangular Staedtler HB Norris are best), a good quality white eraser, a pritt stick, a set of colouring pencils (jumbo triangular are best) and an enclosed sharpener (ensure that pencils/colouring pencils fit). **Each item must be clearly labelled with your child's name.**
9. Home learning folder (will be provided by my teacher).
10. A healthy snack and drink for break each day (or 50p for canteen break).
11. Wellies (named) for outdoor play. These will stay in school.

What I need to do my homework activities

(These items should remain at home)

1. Colouring pencils
2. Sharp pencils
3. Rubber
4. Scissors
5. Pritt Stick



How to help prepare your child for learning



Preparation for Reading

- ☺ Children love stories and love to share books with an adult. Please read to your child on a daily basis and make it an enjoyable time, e.g. bedtime.
- ☺ Encourage them to look after books and discuss what is happening in the pictures.

Preparation for Writing

- ☺ Most children are keen to write their name before they have been taught how to form letters correctly. It is important that children learn to shape letters the correct way.
- ☺ You can help your child improve their fine motor skills which are important for writing by:

- Cutting out and sticking pictures
- Colouring in or drawing pictures



Preparation for Numeracy

- ☺ Oral counting, e.g. how many potatoes are on your plate?
- ☺ Matching, e.g. can you set the table giving everyone a knife and fork?
- ☺ Sort for colour/size e.g. put all the yellow clothes pegs in the basket.



General Preparations for School

- Talk about starting school regularly and what to expect/who they will see- show them and talk about Seesaw, the website and this booklet
- Read positive stories about starting school
- Allow your child to try on their uniform and organise their belongings



Please encourage me to...

- Learn to dress myself (put on and take off my shoes, trousers or skirt, sweatshirt and my coat)
- Look after my own belongings (my coat, lunch box and school bag)
- Become more independent by encouraging me to tidy away my toys and listen to and carry out simple instructions
- Use the toilet independently

Thank you. We can't wait to see you soon! ☺