



NEWSLETTER



September 2015

educational experience within an integrated setting.

Our new School Development Plan is now in place and will be available for viewing soon on our, soon to be launched, new school website. This document is a vital tool in directing whole school improvement across all areas of school life.

We look forward with renewed excitement and enthusiasm to what the new school year will bring for us all and please do not hesitate to contact us at any time if you have a query or need clarification on any aspect of school life. Parents always have and continue to play a vital role in our school and we look forward to working in partnership with you again this school year to make OIPS an even more excellent school in the spirit of 'Openness, Trust, Collegiality and Fulfilling Potential'.

Thank you.

A. Bradley

A Brief History of OIPS

Inspired by the launch of integrated education in Enniskillen in 1989 a group of pioneering parents, including long serving current governors Mr Aidan Bunting and Mrs Vida Lake, launched the Omagh Integrated School Project. One of the first appointments made was that of school secretary, Mrs Caroline McElduff who, we are delighted to say, is still with us to this day! Congratulations Caroline, Aidan and Vida. After a year of frenetic

activity the project became a reality and the school opened in September 1990. Housed in three mobile classrooms the school commenced with 32 pupils across years 1 to 7 with a further 24 children in a nursery class.

Establishing a small new primary - with no history, reputation or pedigree - on the outskirts of a town with seven large, well-established and successful schools is not a task for the faint-hearted and those first few years were indeed a struggle – a struggle to gain the trust and confidence of local parents, a struggle to finance the Nursery in the days before Tony Blair's Pre-Education initiative and a struggle to keep the temporary classrooms looking attractive at a time when other local primaries were moving into modern, purpose-built accommodation.

Governors, staff and parents however were not deterred by such adversities. Each morning's news bulletin came as an all too poignant reminder of the need to do everything possible to break down the barriers within our divided community.

In 1993 the first principal, Miss Maureen Butler, moved with unquenchable zeal from OIPS to establish yet another new integrated primary school in Belfast. When the incoming principal, Mr Eric Bullick, was asked about his vision for the future of Integrated education in Omagh, his reply was forthright. *"Even though OIPS is tiny in comparison to the other schools in*



Welcome back to one and all on the momentous occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the opening of Omagh Integrated Primary School on 1st September 1990.

On behalf of the school community may I first of all offer our condolences to our school bursar, Mrs Helen Kenwell, on the recent death of her brother. We also extend our condolences to Mr & Mrs Cathal McKenna on the death of his father over the summer holidays.

We also offer our congratulations to our caretaker, Mr Richard Thompson, his wife and family on the birth of their twins in August.

As we welcome back children and parents after the long (wet!) summer holidays, it is with a great sense of anticipation and excitement for the future of our school. Our absolute aim as a school and collectively is both simple and very clear... to ensure that everyone associated with our school enjoys a fantastic

Omagh and although it is housed in by far the poorest building, ten years from now there will be so many applicants coming up the driveway that we will be unable to cater for everyone."

So commenced a period of intense school expansion and improvement, targeted marketing and the implementation of strategies aimed at creating a school which would meet the aspirations of parents and the needs of children. OIPS gradually gained a reputation for being child-centred, progressive and parent-friendly.

To counteract the substandard accommodation, funds were targeted at creating particularly small classes of 18 - 24 pupils with a teacher and an experienced teaching assistant in every room. Pupils thrived in this environment and parents who saw the obvious merits conveyed their satisfaction by word of mouth.

In May 1999 the school gained an exemplary Inspection Report and in January 2000 it was awarded a Government Charter Mark - the first primary school in N. Ireland to receive such an award. On 1st Sept 1999 the 200th pupil was enrolled and eight years later in Sept 2007 the 300th pupil was enrolled.

A Development Proposal for a 14 class base school was submitted to DE but officials blocked the proposal for almost two years. Eventually in one of her final decisions as a direct rule minister Maria Eagle MP granted the expansion of the school's enrolment to 400.

In 2009 Mr Bullick retired and was succeeded in 2009 by Mr Nigel Cairns who served the school diligently until 2014 when Mr Bradley assumed the role of principal. They, along with all the

other staff, parents and governors through the past 25 years, have not only maintained the excellent reputation of the school but have continued to raise standards even further. Everyone within the school over the past 25 years has worked tirelessly to embed each new educational initiative, expand the school's provision and enhance the everyday experiences of pupils within an integrated system which promotes dignity and respect for all regardless of race, religion, culture or background.

The beginning of the new term in September 2015 sees the school celebrate the landmark 25th anniversary of its opening with the news that the long-awaited new building programme is scheduled to commence in spring 2016. Very exciting times lie ahead for our school community in the years ahead. As OIPS relocates next door to Drumragh Integrated College, everyone associated with the school, past and present, is acutely aware that the school has had an exciting past and given the enthusiasm and support of staff, governors, parents and pupils they can be confident that an equally exciting future lies ahead.

Happy 25th Birthday Omagh Integrated Primary School and Nursery.

Y1-Y4 MORNING DROP-OFF ARRANGEMENTS



There are a few new 'housekeeping' changes this term in relation to morning drop-off for

the younger children. On arrival Y1-Y4 pupils are asked to leave their bags in the assembly hall and then proceed directly to the playground. The teachers will then collect their classes from the playground as normal and proceed to the classrooms. On wet days the children will remain in the assembly hall until collected by their teacher.

OIPS FRIENDS PRE-SCHOOL AND AFTER-SCHOOL FACILITY

We have started another year at After School Club this week with many returning faces and we are looking forward to seeing many new children join us throughout the year. If you wish to register your child for After school Club phone 02882 258318 or email oipsfriendsclub@gmail.com

Opening hours – 2.00-3.00pm and 3.00-5.30pm at an hourly rate of £3. All payments to be received in advance.

We are excited this year also for the opening of our Playgroup. The playgroup is open for children aged 2 years 10 months to 4 years. It is situated beside OIPS Nursery Unit and we have 16 children registered with us.

As a sessional childcare provider we are registered with our local Social Services Trust Early Years Team. The main responsibility of the Early Years Service within the Western Trust is the registration, support and inspection of day care provision for children aged under 12. This includes us as we provide childcare within our Playgroup, Afterschool club and our Summer Club.



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AFTER –SCHOOL CLUBS COMMENCE NEXT WEEK

Tuesdays 3-4pm -
French for Fun (Yr4 only)

Thursdays 3-4pm -
Maiden City Soccer Coaching for
Yr6/7

SCHOOL DINNERS



IMPORTANT CHANGE IN PRICE.

From 1st

**September meals will now cost
£2.50 per day / £12.50 per week,
payable to the class teacher on
Mondays.**

If you feel that your child/ren may be entitled to free school meals/uniforms, please contact the Meals & Uniform Section at EA Western Section (Tel. 82411496) or call into the office for an application form. If your child already receives free meals, you would have received a renewal application in the post.



This should have been returned by now to ensure approval for meals from 1st September.

SCHOOL MILK

School milk will re-commence on Monday 5th October. Watch out for a letter shortly! Orders will be for the term and



no refunds will be given as milk is bought in advance.

'MIAMI HEAT'

By Ethan Rennick Y7

Over the summer holidays I went to a hip hop competition at Miami which is in USA. It was called 'Vertigo' and over 800 people took part. When the competition day came I entered and came first in my age group. At the end there was an over- all 'battle' and there were people aged from 7-30 years old taking part. I came second over- all. I couldn't believe it! I was the youngest winner they have



had in over 6 years. I was proud to show the school my achievements.

...and we're all so very proud of you and your fantastic achievements Ethan. Well done!



**Tutor available to teach piano
lessons to beginners or intermediates.
Tel: 07784563711 for further details.**

INSTRUMENTAL TUITION

Instrumental tuition has begun this week and days are as follows:
(maybe subject to change)

Violin on Mondays with Dawn Liggett – 1.15-2.15pm

Cello on Thursdays with Dawn Liggett – 9-11am

Brass on Fridays with Louise Edwards – 11am-12 noon

PASTORAL CARE AND CHILD PROTECTION

Staff at OIPS are always ready to listen to any problems or queries you may have. Sometimes you may have other concerns where you or your children may want to talk in confidence to an appropriate adult. Our Designated Child Protection Teacher is Mrs Daphne McKernan (Year 3 teacher) and Deputy Teacher is Mrs Siobhan Taggart (Year 7 teacher).

PARENTS' COUNCIL NEWS

The first Parent's Council Meeting of the year will be on Tuesday 8th at 7.00pm in the school. Everyone is invited to attend. New members welcome.

SCHOOL CHOIR...

Will be performing with

'The Irish Tenors' in

STRULE ARTS CENTRE

On Saturday 10th October.

**Book your tickets now from the
box office!**

SCHOOL CLOSINGS



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| September | 1 st | Term Commences |
| October | 29 th | Closure (Hallowe'en) |
| | 30 th | Closure |
| November | 2 nd | Closure - School Development Day 1 |
| December | | School finishes half day on Friday 18 th December (Christmas) |
| January | Monday 4 th | Closure - School Development Day 2 |
| | Tuesday 5 th | <u>Term Commences</u> |

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| February | 12 th | Closure - School Development Day 3 |
| | 15 th | Closure |
| | 16 th | Closure |
| March | 17 th | Closure (St. Patrick's Day) |
| | Wednesday 23 rd | March - School finishes half day. (Easter) |
| April | 4 th | Closure - School Development Day 4 |
| | 5 th | Term Commences |

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| May | 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th | Closure (May Day Bank Holiday) |
| | Monday 30 th | Harmonised Closure |
| | 31 st | Closure - School Development Day 5 |

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| June | | School finishes half day on Thursday 30 th June 2016 (Summer Holidays) |
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