October 2026 Newsletter

The latest news and events from St. Colmcille's Primary School

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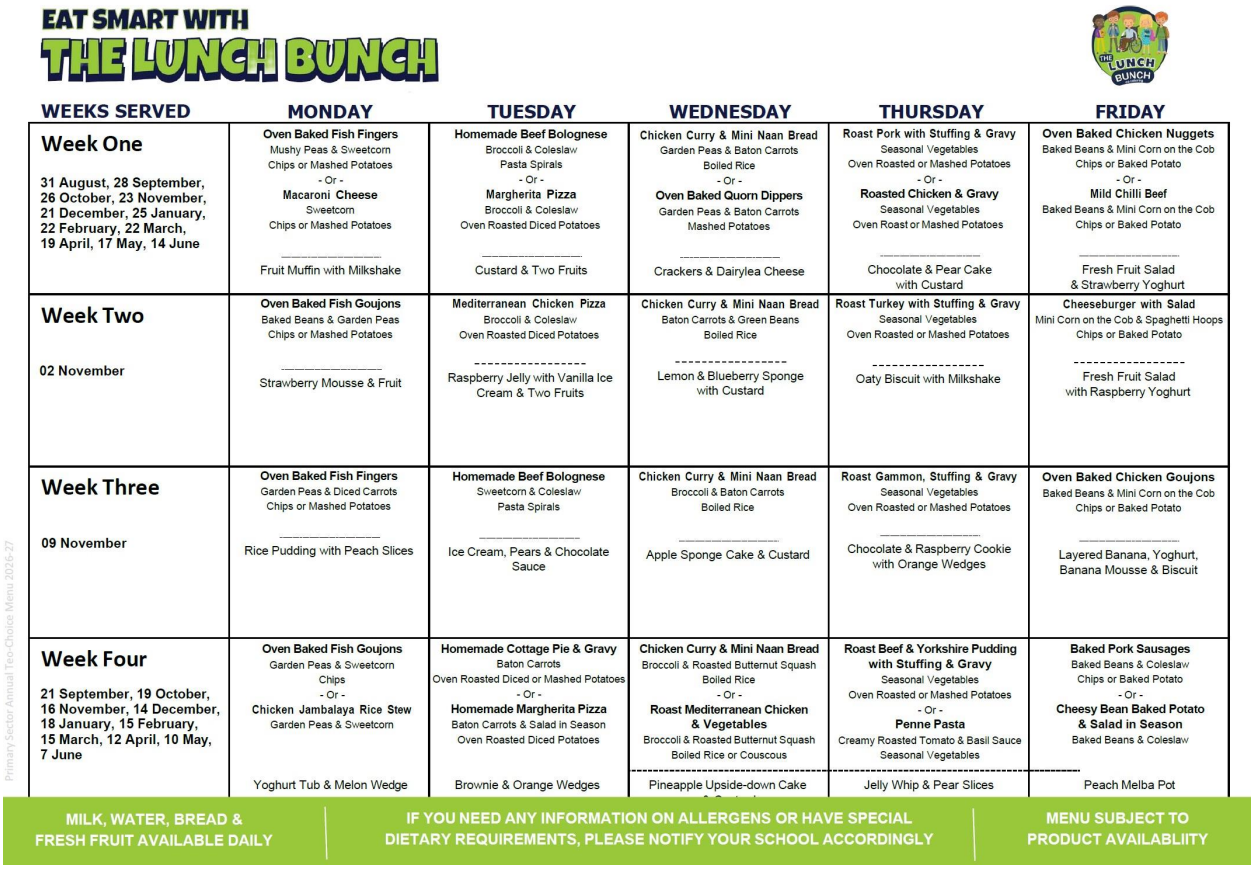
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School Meals Menu Change - Weeks 2 & 3



EAT SMART WITH THE LUNCH BUNCH

WEEKS SERVED	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Week One 31 August, 28 September, 26 October, 23 November, 21 December, 25 January, 22 February, 22 March, 19 April, 17 May, 14 June	**Oven Baked Fish Fingers** Mushy Peas & Sweetcorn Chips or Mashed Potatoes - Or - **Macaroni Cheese** Sweetcorn Chips or Mashed Potatoes Fruit Muffin with Milkshake	**Homemade Beef Bolognese** Broccoli & Coleslaw Pasta Spirals - Or - **Margherita Pizza** Broccoli & Coleslaw Oven Roasted Diced Potatoes Custard & Two Fruits	**Chicken Curry & Mini Naan Bread** Garden Peas & Baton Carrots Boiled Rice - Or - **Oven Baked Quorn Dippers** Garden Peas & Baton Carrots Mashed Potatoes Crackers & Dairylea Cheese	**Roast Pork with Stuffing & Gravy** Seasonal Vegetables Oven Roasted or Mashed Potatoes - Or - **Roasted Chicken & Gravy** Seasonal Vegetables Oven Roast or Mashed Potatoes Chocolate & Pear Cake with Custard	**Oven Baked Chicken Nuggets** Baked Beans & Mini Corn on the Cob Chips or Baked Potato - Or - **Mild Chilli Beef** Baked Beans & Mini Corn on the Cob Chips or Baked Potato Fresh Fruit Salad & Strawberry Yoghurt
Week Two 02 November	**Oven Baked Fish Goujons** Baked Beans & Garden Peas Chips or Mashed Potatoes Strawberry Mousse & Fruit	**Mediterranean Chicken Pizza** Broccoli & Coleslaw Oven Roasted Diced Potatoes Raspberry Jelly with Vanilla Ice Cream & Two Fruits	**Chicken Curry & Mini Naan Bread** Baton Carrots & Green Beans Boiled Rice Lemon & Blueberry Sponge with Custard	**Roast Turkey with Stuffing & Gravy** Seasonal Vegetables Oven Roasted or Mashed Potatoes Oaty Biscuit with Milkshake	**Cheeseburger with Salad** Mini Corn on the Cob & Spaghetti Hoops Chips or Baked Potato Fresh Fruit Salad with Raspberry Yoghurt
Week Three 09 November	**Oven Baked Fish Fingers** Garden Peas & Diced Carrots Chips or Mashed Potatoes Rice Pudding with Peach Slices	**Homemade Beef Bolognese** Sweetcorn & Coleslaw Pasta Spirals Ice Cream, Pears & Chocolate Sauce	**Chicken Curry & Mini Naan Bread** Broccoli & Baton Carrots Boiled Rice Apple Sponge Cake & Custard	**Roast Gammon, Stuffing & Gravy** Seasonal Vegetables Oven Roasted or Mashed Potatoes Chocolate & Raspberry Cookie with Orange Wedges	**Oven Baked Chicken Goujons** Baked Beans & Mini Corn on the Cob Chips or Baked Potato Layered Banana, Yoghurt, Banana Mousse & Biscuit
Week Four 21 September, 19 October, 16 November, 14 December, 18 January, 15 February, 15 March, 12 April, 10 May, 7 June	**Oven Baked Fish Goujons** Garden Peas & Sweetcorn Chips - Or - **Chicken Jambalaya Rice Stew** Garden Peas & Sweetcorn Yoghurt Tub & Melon Wedge	**Homemade Cottage Pie & Gravy** Baton Carrots Oven Roasted Diced or Mashed Potatoes - Or - **Homemade Margherita Pizza** Baton Carrots & Salad in Season Oven Roasted Diced Potatoes Brownie & Orange Wedges	**Chicken Curry & Mini Naan Bread** Broccoli & Roasted Butternut Squash Boiled Rice - Or - **Roast Mediterranean Chicken & Vegetables** Broccoli & Roasted Butternut Squash Boiled Rice or Couscous Pineapple Upside-down Cake	**Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding with Stuffing & Gravy** Seasonal Vegetables Oven Roasted or Mashed Potatoes - Or - **Penne Pasta** Creamy Roasted Tomato & Basil Sauce Seasonal Vegetables Jelly Whip & Pear Slices	**Baked Pork Sausages** Baked Beans & Coleslaw Chips or Baked Potato - Or - **Cheesy Bean Baked Potato & Salad in Season** Baked Beans & Coleslaw Peach Melba Pot

MILK, WATER, BREAD & FRESH FRUIT AVAILABLE DAILY | IF YOU NEED ANY INFORMATION ON ALLERGENS OR HAVE SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS, PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR SCHOOL ACCORDINGLY | MENU SUBJECT TO PRODUCT AVAILABLIITY

Primary Sector Annual Teo-Choice Menu 2026-27

Due to staff shortages in the canteen, please see the amended menu for Weeks Two and Three. Please note that the second choice will not be available during these weeks.

The Education Authority is responsible for the provision of school meals and, as such, this matter is not at the Principal's discretion.

At present, second choices remain available in Weeks One and Four. However, this is subject to change should staffing levels be affected.

The school will provide a further update in two weeks' time.

Apologies for likely inconvenience caused.

School Calendar - Upcoming Dates & Events

Please note: This calendar includes whole-school events, curriculum enrichment activities and holiday dates currently published by the school. Additional class-specific activities, educational visits, sacramental preparation events and PTFA initiatives may be communicated separately throughout the term.

Halloween Break

Friday 23 October- School closes at the end of the normal school day for Halloween Break

Monday 26 - Friday 30 October- Halloween Holiday

November 2026

Monday 2 November - School reopens for all pupils following Halloween Break

Throughout November - Parent-Teacher Meetings

15 - 21 November - Road Safety Week

16 - 20 November - Anti-Bullying Week

Friday 20 November - Universal Children's Day

Throughout November - PTFA fundraising activities and events

December 2026

Thursday 3rd December - Open Night (4:30-6:30pm)

📅 Thursday 10th December - Christmas Dinner & Christmas Jumper Day

📅 Wednesday 16th December - Foundation Stage Christmas Shows

📅 Monday 21st December - PTFA Christmas Bazaar

📅 Tuesday 22 December - School closes for pupils at the end of the school day for the Christmas Holidays

📅 Wednesday 23 December 2026 - Friday 1 January 2027 - Christmas Holidays

📅 Monday 4 January 2027 - School Reopens

📌 Reminders for Parents

✅ Check the school website regularly for newsletters, curricular outlines and important updates.

✅ Follow our Facebook page for reminders, photographs and celebrations of pupil achievements.

✅ Please ensure the school office has up-to-date contact information.

✅ Watch for PTFA communications regarding festive events, fundraising opportunities and family activities.

We look forward to a busy and successful term at St Colmcille's PS and thank you for your continued support.

A Fresh New Look for St Colmcille's!



We're excited to share plans for a refreshed exterior paint scheme that we hope to progress in the near future (next 3-4 months).

The proposed design aims to brighten our school, tie in with our school colours, create a welcoming environment, and give our children a well maintained premises that they are truly proud of!

💬 We'd love to hear your thoughts. What do you think of the new look?

#StColmcillesPS #SchoolImprovement #OurSchool #ProudToBelong 🎨✨

🎃👻 Halloween Fun Day! 🎃👻



Our Halloween Fun Day was a tremendous success, with pupils enjoying a fantastic day filled with fun, creativity and laughter!

Children came dressed in their wonderful Halloween costumes and took part in a range of exciting activities throughout the day. Classes enjoyed a special Halloween party and movie, providing the perfect opportunity to relax, celebrate and spend time with friends.

Pupils also got creative during a variety of Halloween arts and crafts activities, producing some spooktacular creations that showcased their imagination and artistic talents. The highlight of the day for many was the Halloween disco, where pupils danced, sang and celebrated together in a fun and festive atmosphere.

It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces and to share such a positive day as a school community. A huge thank you to our staff, pupils, families and PTFA for helping to make the day so special.

Autumn & Halloween Safety: Be Bright, Be Seen, Be Safe!



This morning, our pupils at St Colmcille's PS took part in a special Autumn and Halloween Safety Assembly, focusing on the importance of making sensible choices, looking after one another and staying safe as the darker evenings approach.

Halloween is an exciting time of year, and we want all our children and families to have lots of fun, make wonderful memories and, most importantly, stay safe!

❤️During our assembly, we explored some important safety messages:

🚨 Be Bright, Be Seen – Staying visible and safe near roads during darker evenings.

🎆 Fireworks & Sparklers – Understanding the dangers and why fireworks are never toys.

🐕 Trick or Treat Safely – Staying with trusted adults, looking after friends and respecting our neighbours.

👻 Costume Safety – Choosing safe costumes and being mindful of candles and naked flames.

🍂 Autumn Awareness – Taking care on slippery paths, dressing for the weather and looking after our environment.

❤️ Kindness & Respect – Remembering that Halloween should be enjoyable for everyone in our community.

Our message to the children was simple:

🌟 Have fun, make good choices and always look after yourself and others! We encourage all parents and carers to take a moment to look through our Halloween Safety Poster with their children and reinforce these important messages at home.

From everyone at St Colmcille's, we wish our families a happy, safe and enjoyable Autumn and Halloween! 🎃🍁#BeBrightBeSeenBeSafe #KeepingOurChildrenSafe #SafeAndHappyHalloween

⚽ Football Success ⚽



Well done to the Primary 7 representatives from our school football team who took part in a series of games against other local schools on Thursday 8th October indoors at the Ballymote Centre.

There was some fantastic skill and sportsmanship on display and was a very enjoyable event to all involved.

Well done everyone! 🔵⚪🔵

❇ World Teachers' Day ❇



As World Teachers' Day was celebrated this month we would like to take the opportunity to recognise and thank the outstanding teachers of St Colmcille's.

Our staff bring dedication, professionalism and talent to every aspect of school life. From delivering high-quality learning experiences in the classroom to supporting pupils' wellbeing, organising extracurricular activities and helping our school community thrive, they consistently go the extra mile.

We are fortunate to have a team that is committed to helping every child succeed and who work tirelessly to provide the very best opportunities for our pupils.

Thank you to all of our teachers for the positive difference you make each and every day.
👏📚🍎

🎨💻 After-School Clubs in Full Swing! 💻🎨



Our pupils have been having a fantastic time at our Art and ICT after-school clubs, developing their creativity, confidence and skills in a fun and engaging environment.

🎨 In Art Club, pupils explored the exciting technique of straw painting, creating bright, colourful and unique pieces of artwork. It was wonderful to see their imaginations come to life

as they experimented with colour, patterns and different effects to produce some truly eye-catching creations.

💻 In ICT Club, pupils have been busy building their digital skills by creating their own codes and designing engaging presentations. Their enthusiasm, creativity and problem-solving skills have been on full display as they learn, create and collaborate. Well done to all of our pupils for their fantastic effort and enthusiasm.

🏫💙 Creating Brighter Spaces for Every Learner! 🏫💙



(Work scheduled for competition 14.12.26)

We are delighted to share a glimpse of the exciting improvements planned for our Specialist Provision Classes at St Colmcille's Primary School, Downpatrick!

Our Specialist Provision facilities are currently undergoing an extensive refurbishment programme, which will see the creation of modern, welcoming and inclusive learning environments, carefully designed to meet the diverse needs of our wonderful pupils.

While progress has unfortunately been delayed by the Education Authority's appointed contractor, we remain incredibly excited about the transformation ahead and the positive impact these improvements will have on our children.

💙 What can our pupils look forward to?

🌈 Enhanced Sensory Facilities – Calming, engaging spaces to support sensory development, emotional regulation and wellbeing. 🌳 Specialist Outdoor Canopy Areas – Safe, sheltered and stimulating environments where children can play, explore and learn throughout the year.

🚻 Modern, Accessible Toileting Facilities – Bright, child-friendly facilities designed to promote independence, dignity and accessibility.

🧼 Dedicated Hygiene and Personal Care Facilities – Purpose-designed spaces to ensure every child's individual care needs can be met comfortably and respectfully.

✨ Inclusive Learning Environments – Facilities that will provide even greater opportunities for learning, independence, confidence and personal development.

❤️ Our children deserve the very best!

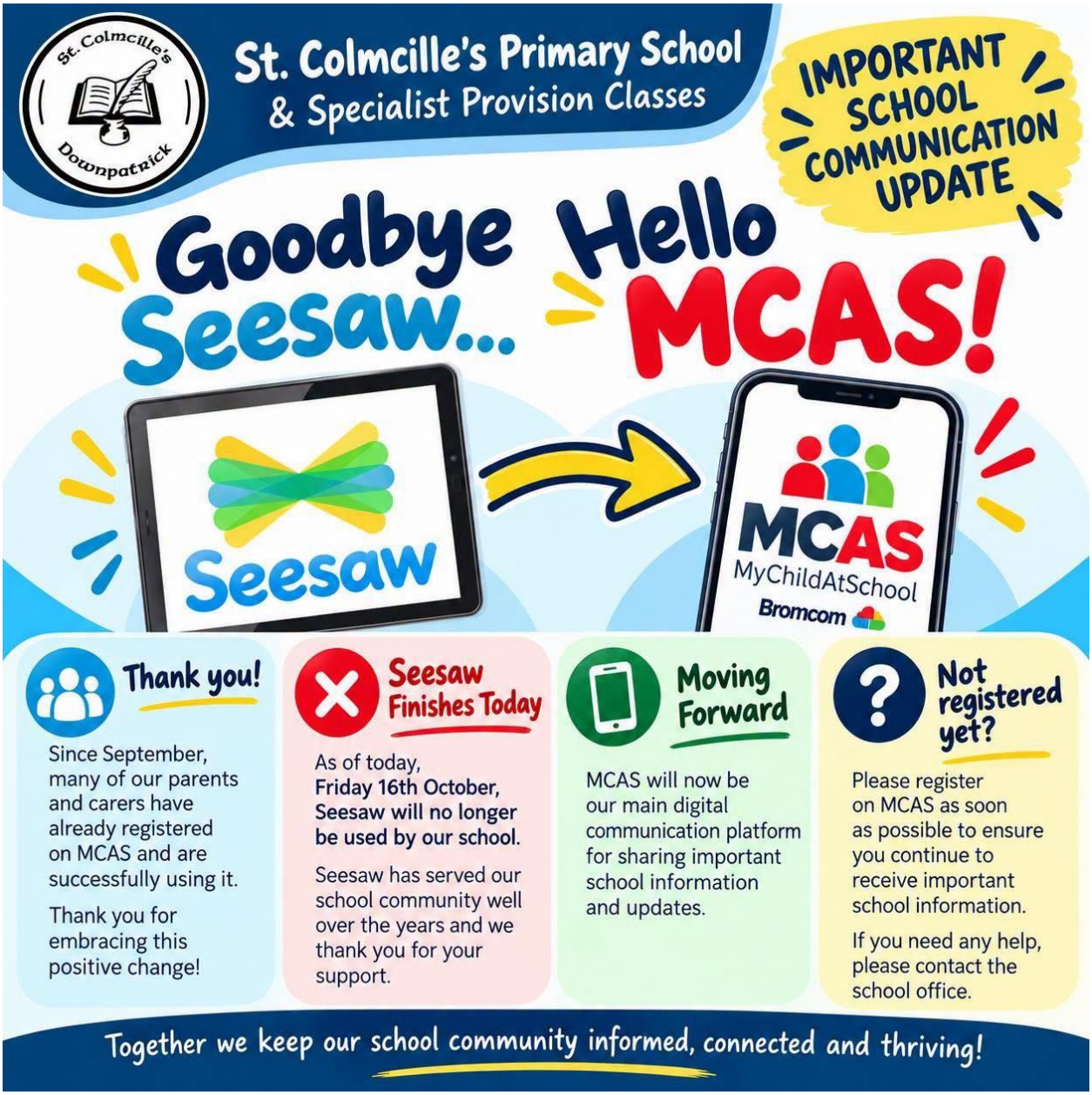
Although the delays have been disappointing, our commitment to providing exceptional learning experiences for every pupil remains as strong as ever.

We look forward to seeing these exciting improvements completed and welcoming our children into facilities that will make a meaningful difference to their everyday school experiences.

📸 Please note: The images shared are artist's impressions, designed to illustrate the vision and potential of our refurbished facilities. They are not photographs of the completed works, and final designs and finishes may differ.

🌟St Colmcille's Primary School & Specialist Provision Classes - Inclusive Spaces • Confident Learners • Brighter Futures 🌟

📣 Important Communication Update 📣



Friday 16th October marked the end of our transition from Seesaw to MCAS (MyChildAtSchool). A huge thank you to all parents and carers who have already registered and are successfully using MCAS. Your support has helped make this change a smooth one for our school community.

Seesaw will no longer be used for school communications. MCAS will now be our main platform for sharing important updates, messages, attendance information and other key school information.

If you have not yet registered for MCAS, please do so as soon as possible to ensure you continue to receive all school communications. If you need any assistance, please contact the school office.

Thank you for helping us stay informed, connected and thriving together. 💙

💷 P7 Young Enterprise - Business Beginnings 💷



Our Primary 7s joined an online webinar this month with other schools throughout the country hosted by Young Enterprise NI. Primary 7 explored how to go about starting a business and were provided some hints and tips on how to be successful when running their own business.

Primary 7 also had their teamwork tested when they were challenged to create a mascot for their company using recyclable materials. There were some excellent ideas on display and hopefully we have some future entrepreneurs in our ranks.

P7 will get the chance to put their skills to the test over the next weeks when they start their own business.

🏆 Comhghairdeas, a mhúinteoir Watterson! 🏆



Well done to Ms Watterson who was part of Kilclief team who recently won the Down Camogie Junior Championship. Ms Watterson was kind enough to bring in the Championship trophy. A fantastic achievement maith thú to Ms Watterson and the Kilclief Camogs.

Ms Watterson will be demonstrating her skills with our Primary 1 and 2 pupils very soon when we launch our Gaelic Games After-school Club from 2-3pm on Wednesdays. Keep an eye on our socials for start dates.

Maths Week Ireland – Estimation Champions!



A huge congratulations to our three fantastic winners of our Maths Week Estimation Challenges! The winners were Daniel and Aoibheann from SPL3 and Hollie from P2B.

These super mathematicians put their estimation skills to the test and came up with the closest guesses, earning themselves some well-deserved vouchers!

Well done to our winners and to everyone who took part! It has been wonderful to see so much enthusiasm, mathematical thinking and problem-solving throughout our Maths Week celebrations!

🔍☆ Maths Week Ireland 2026 - What a Week! 🔍☆



We had a fantastic week this month celebrating Maths Week Ireland, with pupils taking part in a wide range of exciting and engaging activities.

From interactive live lessons and estimation stations to challenging problem-solving tasks, there were plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical thinking while having fun. A huge well done to our Mental Maths Champions, who impressed us all with their speed, accuracy and determination!

Friday's assembly also helped pupils see how maths extends far beyond the classroom, exploring the important role it plays in a variety of future careers, from engineering and architecture to healthcare, sports and technology.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the week such a success. It was wonderful to see so much enthusiasm, curiosity and confidence in mathematics throughout the school.



We love to connect with our school community!

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