ST. OLIVER PLUNKETT P.S.

FAMILY NEWSLETTER • NOVEMBER 2026

Together we learn, together we grow, together we belong.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome Back

I hope everyone enjoyed a happy and restful Hallowe'en break. As we return to school and move into the winter months, our focus remains on keeping our children happy, healthy and safe.
Please send children to school with a warm coat with a hood, and encourage them to take extra care on their journey to and from school during the darker mornings and afternoons.
The dark evenings also give us a chance to enjoy the simple things: a cosy home, time together and a favourite book. Reading for pleasure is wonderful for children's learning and wellbeing. If children are spending time online, please continue to talk to them about staying safe and encourage a healthy balance between screen time, reading, play and rest.

Kind regards,
B. Niblock
Principal

CELEBRATING OUR PUPILS

Parent-Teacher Meetings

Our annual parent-teacher meetings will take place from 16th November. You will receive a link to book a time for your meeting during week of 2nd November. We value the strong partnership between home and school and appreciate the support you provide in your child's learning journey. Our formal Parent-Teacher Meetings are one of the many ways we communicate with you throughout the year about your child's progress, achievements and experiences in school.

Year 7 Leavers Hoodies

We are already preparing orders for our Year 7 Leavers Hoodies so the children have them right at the start of the new year! Thanks to a very generous donation from The Together Project, these hoodies will be heavily discounted. Payments will be made through SchoolMoney. More information on sizing and how to order will follow shortly.

A Fabulous Morning at St Dominic's Grammar School!

Our Year 7 girls had a wonderful time visiting St Dominic's Grammar School for a fantastic performance of Legally Blonde. The show was fabulous, and our pupils represented our school brilliantly through their outstanding behaviour. A huge thank you to St Dominic's for hosting us and providing such a memorable morning!

Inspiration from The Sound of Music!

Our Year 7 pupils enjoyed a lovely walk to St Genevieve's Secondary School for a spectacular performance of The Sound of Music. The production left everyone bursting with creative ideas for our own end-of-year show in June. Thank you to St Genevieve's for a fantastic and inspiring morning.

Future Doctors in the Making!

This month, Year 7 begin the exciting Medics in Primary Schools programme. Working with visiting medical students, pupils will explore the brain, heart, human body and healthy living. This hands-on programme will enrich health education and may even inspire future medical careers.

Superb Effort in the SEAG Test!

A massive well done to all our Year 7 pupils taking part in the SEAG transfer test. We know how much hard work and dedication went into preparing, and we are proud of every child for giving their very best. Take a well-deserved bow, Year 7!

COMMUNITY, FUNDRAISING AND HALLOWE'EN FUN

Europa Draw Success!

The Together Project would like to thank everyone who supported our Europa Draw by purchasing a ticket. Thanks to your generosity, we raised £870 which will go directly into school funds to benefit all pupils. Congratulations to Ciara, winner of the overnight stay!

Spooktacular Hallowe'en Disco!

Our Hallowe'en Disco was a huge success, and the children looked fantastic in their creative costumes. Congratulations to Cillian, Oisin and Michael, winners of our Hallowe'en hampers. Thank you to the Together Project for organising such a fun event and providing a party bag for every child.

Pumpkin Patch Fun in Our Eco Garden!

There were smiles, laughter and excitement as the children visited our Pumpkin Patch alongside family members. They loved choosing pumpkins, getting creative with carving and enjoying Hallowe'en activities. Thank you to all parents and carers for helping to make this such a special community event.

SAFE, KIND AND READY FOR WINTER

NSPCC 'Speak Out. Stay Safe.' Workshops

Year 3, Year 6 and Year 7 took part in the informative NSPCC Speak Out. Stay Safe. workshops. With help from Buddy, pupils learned about their right to feel safe, recognising when something is not right and speaking to a trusted adult or Childline. Our pupils engaged brilliantly in mature discussions.

Anti-Bullying Week: Break the Silence

Anti-Bullying Week begins on Monday 16 November. This year's theme is 'Break the Silence'. Pupils will explore what bullying means, how to speak up safely and how kindness and inclusion help everyone belong. Look out for further details about how we will celebrate individuality.



Road Safety Week: Ditch the Dark

On Friday 20 November, Active Travel Programme officer Beverley will lead Ditch the Dark assemblies. Pupils will learn how to stay safe on the roads as the days become darker. Everyone is invited to wear bright colours to school that day.

Year 2 and 3 Active Travel Scavenger Hunts

On Friday 13 November, Beverley will visit Year 2 and Year 3 to lead active travel scavenger hunts. Pupils will get outdoors and learn practical ways to make everyday life more active.

Steve the Street Sweep

On Tuesday 3 November, Years 3 and 4 will meet Belfast City Council's Steve the Street Sweep. Steve will bring equipment, share stories from life on the streets and may even sing a song or two. This fun visit will help pupils understand litter and its effects on the local environment and wider world.

READING, CREATIVITY AND LEARNING

Turning Pages, Opening Minds! • Book Week NI 2026

Our pupils enjoyed Book Week NI 2026 through exciting reading and literacy activities. Children discovered new stories, shared favourite books and brought books to life in the classroom. Thank you to families for supporting our young readers and helping to make the week memorable.

A Story Published by Year 5

During Book Week NI, Year 5 visited the Crescent Arts Centre for an unforgettable hands-on storytelling workshop. Pupils stepped into the shoes of writers and saw their ideas transformed into a published story.

Year 5 Visits Suffolk Library

Throughout November, Year 5 classes will visit Suffolk Library. Pupils will explore the library, discover new reading choices and select a book to take home and enjoy.

Read the Year 5 story introduction: Mystery Dirt Bike

Travelling Book Fair We are delighted to welcome the Travelling Book Fair to school from 16th–19th November. This is a wonderful opportunity to encourage a love of books and reading for enjoyment. The Book Fair also generates additional funds for our school, helping us to purchase new novels and reading materials for our children. Mrs McBrien will be in touch with further details closer to the time.

VISITORS AND LIFE-SAVING LEARNING

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Visits Year 5

During November, Year 5 will receive its annual visit from the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. The visit focuses on recognising hazards, taking responsibility for safety at home and knowing what to do in an emergency.

Springfield Fire Station Visits Year 3

Year 3 thoroughly enjoyed a visit from Springfield Fire Station. Firefighters spoke about safety at home and the importance of knowing your address in an emergency. Pupils also explored the fire engine and learned about its equipment. It was an informative and enjoyable morning.

Family Gardening

Parents, Carers and Grandparents are invited to have fun planting bulbs in our school grounds, followed by some light refreshments in our school garden.

Year 2: Tuesday 10th November from 9am -11am

Year 3: Wednesday 11th November from 9am -11 am

MUSIC, PERFORMANCE AND FESTIVE DATES

Peace Proms

The choir will attend a Peace Proms workshop at The O2 on 11 November, and we cannot wait to hear the new songs. The Peace Proms concert will take place on Sunday 7 March at 7.00 pm. Presale tickets open on Monday 2 November at 10.00 am; please check your email for the link. General sale opens on Monday 9 November at 10.00 am. This event sells out each year, so early booking is advised.

P1: The Wriggly Nativity

Our P1 pupils are preparing for The Wriggly Nativity and are busy learning songs and practising. Please save Tuesday 8 December and Wednesday 9 December. Further details will follow. We cannot wait to see our little stars shine!

P2 Christmas Sing-Along

Our P2 pupils are getting ready to share festive cheer with a special Christmas Sing-Along for parents. Please save Wednesday 9 December. Further details will be shared closer to the time.

A Christmas Trip to the MAC!

On Tuesday 15 December, P1 will travel to the MAC, Belfast, to enjoy Goldilocks and the Three Bears. This promises to be a wonderful festive experience with friends. More details will be shared closer to the date.



OUR VALUE OF THE MONTH: FRIENDSHIP

Friendship: Helping Everyone Feel They Belong

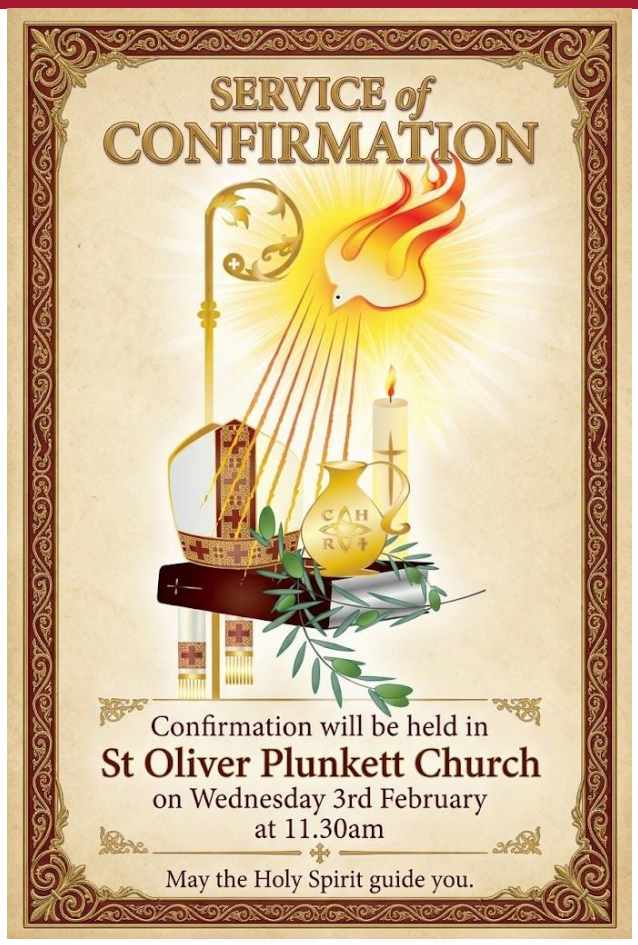
Throughout November, our focus is Friendship. Friendship grows through small, everyday choices that help others feel welcome, valued and included.

Children can show friendship by inviting someone to join a game, listening carefully, sharing, using kind words, including others in group work and asking for help when a friend is worried. Staff will model respectful relationships, notice and celebrate kind choices, provide opportunities for teamwork and help children resolve disagreements calmly.

Families can support this value by talking about what makes a good friend, encouraging children to notice anyone who may feel left out and praising kindness, honesty and forgiveness. Together, we can build a school where every child and adult knows that they belong.

FAITH, PRAYER AND PREPARATION





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DATE	EVENT
2nd November	Peace Proms presale opens 10am Links to Parent-Teacher Meetings sent this week.
3rd November	Steve the Street Sweep visits Years 3 and 4
10th November	P2 Family Planting 9-11am
11th November	P3 Family Planting 9-11am
11th November	Choir at Peace Proms Workshop in The O2
13th November	Year 2 and 3 Active Travel Scavenger Hunts
16th November	Anti-Bullying Week begins Book Fair begins Parent-Teacher Meetings begin
20th November	Ditch the Dark assemblies • Wear bright colours
23rd November	**School Closed to pupils: Staff Development Day**
4th December	Christmas Dinner and Jumpers!
7th December	P7 Service of Light in the Church 1.15pm
8th and 9th December	P1 Wriggly Nativity 10.30am
9th December	P2 Christmas Sing-Along 1.00pm
15th December	P1 trip to the MAC
To Be Confirmed	Carol Service