



12 Courtenay Hill, Newry, Co Down, BT34 2EA
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Dear Parents

I am so sorry for the inconvenience caused by the closure today. I have no doubt that in a few hours the snow will be gone, and everyone will wonder did we really need to close? Can I assure you that I did not make the decision lightly? When I was principal in the old St Clare's building we rarely had to close due to snow- I recall that it happened only once during my 11 years there and that was because the heating had also broken down. Access to that old building was never compromised as it was on the flat and in the middle of the town, subject to lots of use. However, our current site beautiful as it is, is a very different scenario in conditions like today's. Myself and the caretaker were on site very early and the journey up to the school door was very challenging, both within the school grounds and outside. The 4wheel drive in my car kicked in coming up Courtenay Hill and yet the car still skidded. That actually helped me to make the decision. It is always a very difficult call to make to close school, so I thank you for your understanding today.

Big events this week

It has been a busy week for our P7 pupils, each class attended a Minecraft day in W5 which they thoroughly enjoyed and as per usual they were great ambassadors for St Clare's Abbey whilst there. Our children know that this is a non -negotiable expectation when they are taken out of school for an experience and they always rise to the occasion.

Yesterday they celebrated an absolutely beautiful 'Service of Light', which is the first public step that they take in their sacramental preparation. Family members were in attendance and along with myself and the staff, enjoyed watching the children share the sacramental names that they had chosen and make their commitment to step into a more grown up stage in their faith development. We are so very proud of our P7 year group. We also have several children in this year group who are not of the Catholic faith or who have decided that they are not yet ready to receive the sacrament of confirmation. I wish to commend them for the respect that they extended at this time- very impressive!!

As a follow up to the work that we have been doing with our older pupils re NSPCC and the Childline service, we hosted a workshop in P6 with NSPCC staff. It was wonderful, please talk to your P6 child about this.

I wish you all a lovely weekend and have 2 hopes re the snow:

1. That your children will enjoy playing in it today and
2. That there will be no reoccurrence- one snow closure is more than enough!

Yours in partnership

Mrs Monaghan

