

**ST. PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
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### **March 2021 Reopening Arrangements**

Dear Parents,

In the last few days, the Minister for Education has said that schools will reopen for P4-P7 on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March and stay open until the Easter Holidays which in our case will be 12.00 on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March.

This letter is just a reminder of the arrangements that were in place the last time school was fully open. As always, these arrangements are subject to change if the Covid-19 situation alters.

#### **Reopening**

In the mornings, the school gate will be open from 9.00am – please do not send your child in before this time.

Staggered arrivals of families to prevent bottlenecks have been advised by government guidance.

**Surnames beginning A – McG are to arrive between 9.00-9.15am**

**Surnames beginning Mcl – W are to arrive between 9.15-9.30am**

Children arriving by bus will enter the school whenever it arrives.

A member of staff will use a scanning thermometer to ensure each pupil is safe to enter school. Hand sanitiser dispensing stations are present around the school. Please ask your child to use them regularly.

Children should not attend school if they, or a member of their household, displays any symptoms of COVID-19. If a child presents as unwell in school, he/she will be isolated and supervised by a member of staff until collected. If a member of a household displays COVID-19 symptoms, the school must be informed as soon as possible. All relevant PHA guidelines must be followed.

Teachers and CAs will be allocated classroom/corridor positions to ensure that each child arrives safely at the correct room and adheres to social distancing until they are in their class. On entering the school grounds, please tell the children they are to walk in an orderly fashion to their classroom and sit in their given seat.

**For the foreseeable future, Shoes will not be changed – indoor shoes will not be required.**

**(Trainers are advisable for play times and PE)**

**Coats will be placed on the back of their seat.**

**Parents, except for P1, will not be permitted to enter the school grounds. (For pupil development, it would be nice if P1 could make their way from the gate to the school unaccompanied)**

Communication with teachers will only be possible by phone from 3.00-3.30pm. It will not be possible to speak to teachers in the mornings due to the need for them to supervise children getting to class safely. Messages can be passed on by telephoning the secretary, Mrs Comber.

**If a parent must enter the school grounds for emergencies, they must supply and wear their own face mask.**

### **Break time**

2 classes will be able to go outside at a time, one class in each playground [weather permitting.]

### **Lunchtime**

3 sittings will be in operation with 2 classes at each sitting.

(1) 11.45-12.15

(2) 12.15-12.45

(3) 12.45-1.15

Social distanced seating will be observed by the children.

### **Home times**

Mrs Harris - 2.10pm

Ms Neill – 2.15pm

The remainder of the pupils will have staggered home times -

P3 (Mrs Neill) & P3/4 3.05pm (P3 going back to normal home time)

P5 & P6 3.10pm

P7 3.15pm

### **Miscellaneous**

The guidance stipulated that we were required to provide a 'diminished interaction' within the school day, which involved pupils occupying a classroom 'bubble' (isolated group). Leaving the classroom will only be permitted to use the toilet or to access the playground at break and lunchtimes or for PE. Children will be accompanied at all times by a member of staff when entering or exiting the building.

All pupils will return wearing normal full school uniform. We may allow PE kits to be worn on PE days when these are arranged.

Each child still will have their own pencil-case and stationery equipment provided by school. They will not be permitted to bring any materials from home, bar lunchboxes which should be brought in a plastic bag.

No pencil cases, book bags or school bags are to be brought to school.

As per Mr Weir's letter to us, *"School managed breakfast clubs, education visits, inter-school sports and after school activities will remain paused until advised otherwise. My department will liaise with the Department of Health to clarify the position before schools return after Easter."*

Assemblies, swimming or educational visits will not take place yet.

Only outdoor PE lessons will take place.

Buses – a letter from Education Authority can be found on the school website. Children should social distance and are advised to wear a mask if this is possible.

### **Money**

As parents are not yet permitted onto the school grounds, all money should be placed in a named, sealed envelope with the instruction for it to be given to the teacher as soon as they get into class.

It would be useful if parents reinforced the following areas as these will be expected in school. We will have child friendly posters to remind children of these important actions.

- Using a tissue: 'catch it, bin it, kill it'.
- Coughing / sneezing into a tissue or elbow.
- Washing of hands with soap (20 seconds).
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- 1m social distancing from friends (aeroplane arms) and 2m from staff.
- Independently putting on and taking off coat, opening lunch box and items of food.

School continues to be different, but I would like to assure you that our aim is to make school life as normal as possible. The staff and I look forward to welcoming everyone back and making sure that our boys and girls continue to have the opportunity to learn lots of new and exciting things in a safe environment. The safety and well-being of our pupils will be our main focus and personal hygiene and cleaning routines will be central to this.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me by email if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

***Peter Torney***

Principal