

Dear Parents / Carers,

As you are aware, the NI Executive has announced that children in Nursery, P1, P2 and P3 will return to school for a two-week period from 8th - 19th March. For the week beginning 22nd March, children will stay at home for remote learning. We are glad to welcome children back to school after a lengthy period of closure. We hope this will be the last period of closure and that school life will return to normal.

In preparation for re-opening I want to outline the processes which have been in place in Term 1. As we are still living with Covid 19, it is vital we continue to adhere to messages, guidelines and restrictions from the NI Executive and Public Health Agency.

Morning arrival

A staggered arrival will remain in place. The following times and surnames apply:

8:50am A - L

9:00am M

9:10am N - Z

Children must not arrive before these times. Children can be dropped off in the carpark and walk through the playground. Parents are asked not to come up to, or enter the school building.

Parents are reminded to maintain a social distance of 2m and to wear face masks in the school grounds. There must be no gathering of adults in the school grounds at any time.

Entry to the school building

P1AH, P1JH and P2MQ will enter the school by the main doors. An adult will be present to show the children where to go.

P2/3SMD and P3DK will enter their classes by the classroom external doors as was the case in term 1.

Hand washing

Children will continue the handwashing regime 5 times a day: arrival in morning, before and after break time, before and after lunchtime.

End of school day times

Children in P1 and P2 will finish the school day at 2pm. The arrangement from term 1 will remain in place. Teachers will bring children to the exit points. Adults are reminded of social distancing and wearing masks. Parents are not permitted to enter the school to collect children.

All P3 pupils will finish at 2.50pm for the period 8 - 19 March. If there is a full return to school after Easter, then the staggered finish times will apply as in Term 1. Further details will be updated once we receive confirmed dates from Department of Education.

Dinners / Lunches

I would like to emphasise the importance of healthy breaks and lunches. Crisps, chocolate and fizzy drinks are not considered healthy options.

Dinners will be available for children in the two week return period. A reminder that dinners cost £2.60 per day. This money should be paid on a Monday.

Symptoms

If your child is experiencing the following symptoms, they must remain at home:

- A new and persistent cough
- Raised temperature
- A loss or change in taste / smell

From our experiences in term 1, other symptoms not related to Covid have emerged. In all cases if a child is feeling unwell we will make a call to take them home immediately. We will advise you to book a Covid test and to let the school know the outcome of the test.

Positive cases and close contacts

As in term 1 we will continue to follow guidance from the Public Health Agency in regard to positive cases and close contacts. As always we will work quickly and communicate to parents at the earliest opportunity to contain any potential spread.

PE and Well-being

Parents will be rightly worried that their child/ren have missed out on so much. This is the case for everyone. Our task is to now build learning momentum and enable the children to succeed through high quality learning and teaching. As we embark on reopening I ask for the continued support of parents to help us in this task.

We will spend time settling children back into school and in forming friendships within classes. All staff members are aware and sensitive that the return to school may be difficult for some. We will provide support and reassurance to every child as they return to class.

We have employed Frances Rooney to host classes of 'Relax Kids' on Wednesday mornings. These are designed to promote the well-being of children and foster positivity.

Learning and Teaching

Teachers and school staff have been preparing for a return to classroom learning. No amount of remote learning can replicate the experiences in the classroom. For the first few days, teachers will be finding a new baseline for where children are in their learning. It is from that point they will be able to identify and build new learning in order for all children to attain, progress and succeed.

The focus for learning will concentrate on the following areas:

Learning through Play based activity

Literacy - Talking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Phonics

Maths - Number and Number bonds

PE

As always, we are available by telephone and email should you have any worries or want to talk to a teacher. Teachers will not be available during the teaching day but can follow up with a call at the end of the school day.

Nursery

Children in the Nursery Unit will return to school on Monday 8th March for a two-week period.

The Nursery school day remains unchanged:

AM session 9:00am - 11:30am

PM session 12:30pm - 3:00pm

Parents are reminded not to arrive before the start times. Only one parent is allowed in the foyer at any one time with a child. Everyone else must remain outside with a reminder to maintain social distancing of 2m and wearing a mask while in the school grounds.

Snack will be provided as normal during the two-week period.

Parents are reminded that children must not bring in anything from home.

All measures to combat Covid 19 will remain in place. In the case of any close contacts or confirmed cases we will act in accordance with procedures from the Public Health Agency to minimise potential spread.

If your child feels unwell they must remain at home. If they display flu-like symptoms at school, a call will be made to take them home.