

BALLYORAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Principal | Mr R Woolsey, BEd (Hons), PQH



8th April 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian

Review of School Covid-19 Mitigations

The Department of Education has this week revised its Covid-19 Guidance for schools and as a result of this we have reviewed our own Covid Risk Assessment and mitigations. I now wish to update you on this review, in particular what will stay the same and what will change after Easter, from **Monday 25th April 2022**:

What will Remain the Same

- **Covid-19 Symptoms:** Children who display any of the following three main Covid-19 symptoms should not come to school and PHA guidance should be followed in relation to isolation:
 1. a high temperature
 2. a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
 3. anosmia - the loss or a change in your normal sense of smell (it can also affect your sense of taste)Any pupils who develop or display any of these symptoms during the school day will be continue to be sent home.
- **Morning Arrangements:** All pupils in Years 1 – 7 must continue to be dropped off at the main gate in the mornings, I will continue to be here to welcome pupils every morning with a Classroom Assistant remaining at the Nursery gate. Pupils will continue to enter school through the same door. Nursery parents must still accompany their child to the covered outdoor play area and will not be permitted to enter the class.
- **Ventilation:** The school will remain well ventilated with windows open and Co2 Monitors used.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Hand hygiene will permanently remain an important health and safety part of every day school life for pupils and staff. Pupils will still wash/sanitise their hands regularly throughout the school day and we would ask you to continue to remind your child/ren about the importance of this.
- **Respiratory Hygiene:** Respiratory hygiene will permanently remain an important health and safety part of every day school life for pupils and staff. We would ask you to continue to remind your child/ren about the importance of this.
- **Staggered Hometown Arrangements:** These will remain the same.
- **Extra-Curricular Activities:** These will remain paused for the remainder of this school year.
- **Cleaning:** The enhanced cleaning measures which were brought in, in response to Covid will remain in place.

What will Change

- **Items coming to school:** There are now no restrictions on items for example water bottles.
- **Staggered Arrivals Windows Based on Surname:** There will no longer be staggered arrival windows in the mornings and we will revert to one arrival window between 8.45am and 9am. The school gates open at 8.45am as usual and all pupils should be in school for the 9am bell.

Please ensure that pupils do not arrive on the school premises before 8.45am as there is no supervision.

- **Parents coming into school:** While parents are welcome to enter the school site and go to Reception, we would encourage parents only to do this if it is essential. Parents should continue to use phonecalls/emails/notes when they can.
- **Class Bubbles:** These will be removed.
- **Social Distancing:** This will be relaxed.
- **One Way Systems:** These will be removed
- **Staggered Breaks:** These will be reduced from three to two with the removal of single class zones meaning classes mixing in the playground.
- **Staggered Lunchtimes:** These will be reduced from three to two with more classes in the dinnerhall and zones again removed in the playground allowing mixing of pupils between classes.
- **Assemblies:** Pupils will move back to face to face assemblies in the assembly hall on a phased basis. This will start with Key Stage Assemblies and culminate hopefully in whole school assembly by the end of June.
- **Resources:** Use of resources will return to pre Covid times when there will be no limits on the resources used by pupils eg sand trays have returned in Nursery and Foundation Stage.
- **Trips:** Return of more class trips, all classes will go on an End of Year Fun Trip.
- **Changeover bells:** These will be used more frequently throughout the day.
- **Face Coverings:** These are now optional for parents coming into the school grounds but should still be worn if parents are coming in to the school building in certain circumstances eg a meeting.

All of the above changes will be kept under review.

In making all of these decisions we have tried to strike a balance between keeping everyone safe and a move back to normal school life. Please be assured that my main priority remains the health, safety and well-being of pupils and staff but as a school we must begin the process of living with Covid and moving back to normality as pupils have missed out on so much over the last two years. I know that our pupils will be delighted with many of these changes in particular the removal of Class Bubbles.

I would like to again place on record my thanks for your continued patience, co-operation and support through what has been a very challenging couple of years.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your family a pleasant and relaxing Easter break.

Yours Sincerely

Richard Woolsey
Principal