



14<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Reopening of Ballyoran Primary School – The ‘New School Day’**

I hope that you and your family are well at this time and that you are enjoying the summer holidays.

After receiving further guidance yesterday, I am now in a position to give you more detailed practical (and hopefully final) information about our plans for the reopening of school and what the ‘New School Day’ as the Department of Education are calling it, will look like in Ballyoran Primary School. I wanted to wait until I had as much information as possible before I sent you this final reopening communication rather than sending multiple messages which can cause confusion. I want to ensure that our reopening message is as clear and concise as possible and I would like to thank you for your patience in waiting for this.

#### **1. Reopening Dates**

- **Years 2 – 7**

- As already communicated, Years 2 – 7 will return full time on **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2020**.
- **Please also note that the EA are not allowing us to provide school dinners this week, therefore all pupils must bring a packed lunch to school.**
- **School meals will be available from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.**
- Please note school will be closed for the late Summer Bank Holiday on **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020**.

- **Year 1**

- Small Group Induction Day dates have been already been communicated to parents.
- All pupils begin as a whole class on **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020**.
- Year 1 will finish at 1pm every day until the 2<sup>nd</sup> October and from **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October** they will be in until 1.45pm Monday – Thursday and 1.30pm on Fridays.
- As Mrs Biggerstaff is currently on Maternity Leave, the Temporary Year 1 teacher will be Mrs Muldrew.

- **Nursery**

- Induction Meetings will take place during the week beginning **24<sup>th</sup> August 2020** when individual start dates and settling in programmes will be distributed.

#### **2. Daily Timings**

- There will be slight changes to daily timings to facilitate staggered arrivals and departures (See Sections 6 & 10).
- School will finish early for all pupils on Fridays until further notice. (See Point 8 under Bubbles and point 10 under Staggered Dismissals for further details).

#### **3. Managing Sickness**

Pupils must not be sent to school if they have any of the following Covid-19 symptoms and parents should follow the PHA guidance:

- **High Temperature**

- **New continuous cough** (this means coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hrs)
- **Loss of or change in sense of smell or taste**

As our priority during this pandemic is to keep children and staff safe, we must implement much stricter procedures for managing sickness so if your child feels unwell in any way, please do not send them to school. If a member of staff has any concerns about the health of a child you will be contacted to come and collect them and parents must make arrangements for such eventualities.

#### 4. School Uniform

- As already communicated, all pupils should wear normal full school uniform.
- Pupils will need a warm and waterproof coat as normal and these will be placed in cloakrooms as normal.
- As advised in the DE guidance, PE will continue so please ensure that you have PE uniform and a PE kit bag for your child. PE kit should be sent in on the day that your child has PE and brought home again that day for washing.
- As always we encourage all school uniform to be labelled as we will be unable to keep a large collection of lost property.
- To reduce the risk of spreading infection, we would ask that all school uniform is washed regularly.

#### 5. Items going to and from school

- **School Bags**

To reduce the risk of spreading infection we need to reduce the amount of physical items moving to and from school, however we believe that pupils need something to carry in and out of school each day, therefore **pupils should bring school bags to school as normal.** These will be stored in cloakrooms.

- **Pencil cases**

Pencil cases, including stationery should be sent in, however this will stay in school for your child's use only. Children should be encouraged not share pencils etc with other pupils and will not be able to borrow from other pupils so will therefore need their own. **Please send these in on the first day.**

- **Snack**

Pupils in Nursery to Year 2 should continue to pay £10 Snack Fund every month which covers the daily snack. Yr 3 – 7 pupils will continue to need a Healthy Breaktime Snack. Please remember as we are a Health Promoting School, no sweets, chocolate, crisps or fizzy drinks are permitted in school.

- **Water Bottles**

As always we encourage pupils to bring water bottles into school daily but children will no longer be able to fill these in school. So please ensure that these are filled at home before coming to school and please encourage your child not to share their water bottle with others.

- **Packed lunches**

These should be sent into school in a sealed lunchbox or container which is washable and to reduce the risk of infection, all rubbish or uneaten items must go home in the lunch box.

- **Notes/News Sheets etc**

We will become a paperless school this year. This has two benefits, firstly it will reduce the risk of spreading infection but it also fits into our Eco Schools agenda, saving paper and money. All

communication including Monthly News Sheets will be distributed electronically eg website, app, text and email. If you have not already downloaded our school app please do so. We are also asking for email addresses this year on the Pupil Information Form, which will go out on day one and we ask that you provide us with a working email address that you check regularly. I know that parents will not miss hunting for endless pieces of paper at the bottom of school bags!

- **Money**

For obvious reasons we wish to reduce the amount of money and staff/pupil/parent contact with money. To this end we are looking at implementing a Cashless Payment System. However, until then we will accept money into school but only if it is in a sealed envelope with the child's name, amount and what it is for written on it. **Dinner Money will only be accepted for the week on a Monday.**

- **Homework**

Homework will continue but as you will appreciate our priority in the initial weeks is getting our pupils settled back into school routine so there will be no homework for the first couple of weeks. To reduce the amount of items moving to and from school, homework for the entire week, for all pupils will be set on a Monday and have to be returned on Friday. We will communicate with you again with more details on how homework will operate in due course.

## 6. Morning Arrival at School

- **Staggered Arrival Times**

To aid social distancing and reduce the risk of transmission staggered arrival times will be used. To make life easier for parents we have organised this alphabetically by families, so that you are not having multiple drops off times, if you have more than one child in the school. Gates will be supervised by staff. The Staggered Arrival Times are as follows:

- 8.40 – 8.50am: A - F
- 8.50 – 9.00am: G - L
- 9.00 – 9.10am: M
- 9.10 – 9.20am: - N - Z

**Please note these timings will be used on a trial basis and may need to change.**

- **Multiple Entry Points**

Again to aid social distancing and reduce the risk of transmission, multiple entry points will be used:

- Red Nursery Outdoor Play Area Gate: Nursery - Year 2
- Front Door: Years 3, 4 & 6
- Back Red Gate in Car Park 2 beside Caretaker's Residence: Years 5 & 7

- **Breakfast Club**

This will operate daily from 8.15 – 9.10am daily but will be for working parents only. This is to keep the numbers smaller than usual and aid social distancing as pupils will be in attendance from different class bubbles (see point 8). If you require the Breakfast Club you must book this in advance on a weekly basis by email by the Friday of the week before. If you know that you will need to use this service during the first week back please email [rmayers268@c2kni.net](mailto:rmayers268@c2kni.net) by **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2020, giving the days that you will require it and the pupil's names. Please note the cost remains 50p per day but must now be paid on a weekly basis in a sealed envelope to reduce the handling of money.**

- **Parents**

- We must ask, to aid social distancing and ease congestion, that only one person per family comes into the school grounds to drop a child off. A reminder that only pupils from Nursery

to Year 3 and LSC pupils need to be accompanied to and from school. **Year 4 – 7 pupils should come into the school grounds unaccompanied.**

- When dropping your pupils off at school we ask that you adhere strictly to social distancing guidelines and do not congregate in large groups.
- Please drop off your child/children and leave the school grounds immediately.

## 7. Parents coming into school

- You will understand that to protect the school community, only staff and pupils will be allowed to enter the building.
- If in a very exceptional situation, a parent needs to enter the building, they must wear a face covering and sanitise their hands at the front door.
- All communication as far as possible should be conducted by telephone, note or email.
- Nursery parents can drop off and collect their child in the covered outdoor play area but will not be able to accompany them into the building.
- Yr 1 parents can bring their child to the Yr 1 covered outdoor play area until the end of September but will not be able to accompany them into the building.
- As normal all other pupils who are being accompanied to school must be dropped off at the entrance.

## 8. During The School Day

### ● Protective Bubbles

- The guidance states that the purpose of Protective Bubbles is to limit the number of interactions in any single day. Following this guidance, each class will become a Protective Bubble. Pupils will remain in these bubbles as far as possible for the entire time they are in school and will not interact with any other groups of pupils throughout the school day.
- Social distancing for pupils in school has been relaxed so class bubbles are the safest way for schools to operate at present.
- Pupils who get extra support with Mrs Barkley will still receive this but only with other pupils from their class bubble.
- A staggered timetable for use of the toilets will be in place so that pupils stay with their own class.
- To maintain the integrity of the bubbles as far as possible, our normal afternoon timetable has been suspended until further notice. This is where other teachers would have taken classes from 2.10pm onwards to give teachers planning and preparation time. **As a result, until further notice, school will finish for all pupils on Fridays at 2pm.**

### ● Hand Hygiene

- Staff will encourage pupils to employ the following good hand hygiene measures and regularly go over these good hygiene messages with pupils: washing your hands often and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Pupils will have to wash their hands frequently throughout the day with soap and water:
  1. On arrival in class
  2. Before Break
  3. After Break
  4. Before lunch
  5. After lunch
  6. Before leaving
- Pupils may bring in small personal bottles of hand sanitiser but they must be encouraged not to share these with other pupils.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers have been placed at the main entrance for staff and visitor use.
- Posters encouraging hand hygiene have been placed throughout the school.

- We continue to operate a 'no handshakes' policy in school.
  - We ask that you go over the importance of good hand hygiene regularly with your child.
  - Staff will also adopt the same stringent hand hygiene practices.
- **Respiratory Hygiene**
    - Staff will encourage pupils to employ the following good respiratory hygiene measures and regularly go over these messages with pupils: covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See Catch it, Bin it, Kill it. If a tissue is not available cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
    - Posters encouraging good respiratory hygiene have been placed throughout the school.
    - We ask that you go over the importance of good respiratory hygiene regularly with your child.
    - Staff will also adopt the same stringent respiratory hygiene practices.
- **Social Distancing**
    - Social Distancing for pupils has been relaxed.
    - Social Distancing for staff between staff remains in place at 2 metres.
    - Social Distancing between staff and pupils remains in place and the guidance states that it should be as far as practicable.
    - To aid social distancing, when pupils are moving around the school when there is potential for them to come into contact with pupils from other bubbles - arrows, signs and one way systems will be in use. **Pupils must walk on the left at all times and keep as close to the wall as possible in corridors.**
    - Our aim is to keep pupil movement in the corridors during the school day, to a minimum.
- **Assemblies**

There will be no large gatherings of pupils including assemblies until further notice.
- **Seating Arrangements**

Children will not sit facing each other where possible. However, we believe that this is not appropriate in Nursery and Foundation Stage. In Years 3 – 7 pupils will all sit at desks facing the front of the classroom. Collaboration and group work is a major part of the learning process so pupils will be still be able to work in groups within their bubbles.
- **Resources**
    - As far as possible resources will not be shared within classrooms and any resources that have to be shared will be cleaned after use.
    - We believe that it is still important that pupils read books, so Guided Reading will still take place and pupils will be given their own personal copy of the book to keep under their desk.
- **Breaktime**
    - Staggered Breaks will be in operation meaning a smaller number of pupils in the playground.
    - Pupils will play in their Class Bubbles in a dedicated area of the playground.
- **Lunchtime**
    - Staggered Lunch times will be in operation but pupils will be able to go to the Dinner Hall in their class bubble to eat.
    - Again pupils will be able to play in their class bubbles.
    - A reminder that there are no school meals during the week beginning 24<sup>th</sup> August so pupils need to bring a packed lunch. **School meals will be available from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.**

- A reminder that packed lunches should be sent into school in a sealed lunchbox or container which is washable and to reduce the risk of infection, all rubbish or uneaten item must go home in the lunch box.
- **PE & Swimming**
  - Physical exercise is vitally important so PE will continue as normal in line with the guidance.
  - As per the guidance, we will endeavour to use the outdoors for this as much as possible but the assembly hall may also be used.
  - Pupils should bring their PE kit home after every session to be washed.
  - There will be no Yr 5 – 7 swimming until further notice.
- **Shared Education**

There will be no joint Shared Education events with Bocombra Primary School until further notice.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
  - The guidance states that routine use of PPE within schools is not required other than for certain tasks deemed to be of higher risk of transmission ie - Working with children, young people and pupils whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE, due to their intimate care needs; and giving children medication.
  - PPE should not be worn by children.
- **Face Coverings**

The guidance states that face coverings are generally not recommended for routine use in schools. Staff and pupils may wish to use them during the routine school day and this is acceptable.
- **Cleaning**
  - Strict cleaning procedures are in place as per the PHA guidance with more regular cleaning throughout the day of high touch hard surface areas eg desks, chairs, door handles, telephones, computers and toilets.
  - Enhanced cleaning will be carried out within any classroom in which an individual who has developed COVID-19 has been, to minimise risk of the spread of the virus. This will be clearly communicated to parents to provide assurance that the environment is safe.

## 9. If a pupil becomes ill during the school day

- Parents will be contacted immediately to come and collect them.
- The child awaiting collection will be moved to a dedicated room where they can be isolated and supervised by an adult.
- Other siblings in school will also have to go home.
- We will keep a full record of such actions and request parents to record their acknowledgement of this action.
- Please note the guidance is very clear that if any pupil becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature/fever or anosmia (a loss or a change in your normal sense of smell, which can also affect your sense of taste), they and any members of their household within who also attend school must be sent home and advised to follow the PHA guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

## 10. Afternoon Departure from School

- **Staggered Dismissals**

Pupils will be dismissed as follows:

  - Nursery – pick up times will be distributed at Induction Meetings

- Year 1 – 1pm daily until 2<sup>nd</sup> October and then 1.45pm Monday – Thursday and 1.30pm on Fridays
- Year 2 – Monday – Thursday: 2pm & 1.45pm on Fridays
- Year 3 – Monday – Thursday: 2.30pm & Fridays: 2.00pm
- Year 4 – Monday – Thursday: 2.45pm & Fridays: 1.45pm
- Year 5 – Monday – Thursday: 2.50pm & Fridays: 1.50pm
- Year 6 – Monday – Thursday: 2.55pm & Fridays: 1.55pm
- Year 7 – Monday – Thursday: 3pm & Fridays: 2pm

**Please note these timings will be used on a trial basis and may need to change.**

- **Multiple Exit Points**

Again to aid social distancing and reduce the risk of transmission, multiple exit points will be used:

- Red Nursery Outdoor Play Area Gate: Nursery - Year 2
- Front Red Gate: Year 3
- Back Red Gate in Car Park 2 beside Caretaker's Residence: Years 4, 5, 6 & 7

- **Parents**

- We must ask, to aid social distancing and ease congestion that only one person per family comes into the school grounds to collect a child off. A reminder that only pupils from Nursery to Year 3 need to be accompanied to and from school. **Year 4 – 7 pupils should come into the school grounds unaccompanied.**
- Year 1 – 3 parents should wait outside the front red gate as normal and the pupils will be dismissed by the teachers here.
- When collecting your child, we ask that you adhere to social distancing guidelines and do not congregate in large groups.
- When you have collected your child, please leave the school grounds immediately.

- **After School Clubs**

There will be no after school clubs until further notice.

## **11. Test, Trace & Protect**

- Pupils and staff who exhibit any symptoms associated with COVID-19 should not attend school. The NI Executive has rolled out a Test and Trace and Protect strategy designed to control the spread of COVID-19 and symptomatic staff are expected to follow the advice and obtain a test for COVID-19.
- Where an individual has had a negative result, it is important to still apply caution. If everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result, the pupil or member of staff can return to work providing they are well enough and have not had a fever for 48 hours.
- Anyone who tests positive will be contacted by the Contact Tracing Service in the Public Health Agency, and will need to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom you have been in direct contact, or been within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes. Passing in corridors and short periods of contact does not therefore present a significant risk to staff or pupils. All household members should follow PHA isolation guidance which currently requires everyone in the house to stay at home. Isolation guidance will then be provided that is context specific and may result in friendship groups, regular contacts and potentially an entire class or 'bubble' being instructed to self-isolate at home.
- The guidance is as follows:
  - if you have symptoms of coronavirus or a positive test, you will need to stay at home for at least 10 days;
  - if you live with someone who has symptoms or a positive test, you will need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in the home started having symptoms;

- however, if you develop symptoms during this 14-day period, you will need to self-check in accordance with Test and Trace guidance and stay at home for 10 days from the day your symptoms started (regardless of what day you are on in the original 14-day period);
- 10 days after your symptoms started, if you do not have a high temperature, you do not need to continue to self-isolate. If you still have a high temperature, keep self-isolating until your temperature returns to normal. You do not need to self-isolate if you just have a cough after 10 days, as a cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone;
- if you have symptoms and live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else they can stay for the 14-day isolation period;
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

Enhanced cleaning will be carried out within any classroom in which an individual who has developed COVID-19 has been to minimise risk of the spread of the virus. This will be clearly communicated to staff, parents and pupils to provide assurance that the environment is safe. Pupils or members of staff can return to school when they have completed the necessary period of isolation as advised by the Test, Trace and Protect service. This will help contain any potential transmission to those staff/pupils and will also assist in protecting the wider community.

## **12. New Stop Covid NI App**

We would encourage all parents to sign up to the new Stop Covid NI App and more information will be sent to you about this.

All of our plans will be kept under constant review and may need to change as the situation develops but we will keep you informed of this.

Finally, I appreciate that this is an anxious time for all parents but please be assured that when school reopens, the safety and well-being of our pupils will be our main priority.

We appreciate that these past few months have been very challenging for all of you and we look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school very soon.

In the meantime, If you have any questions or queries on any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours faithfully

Richard Woolsey  
Principal