



St. Brigid's Primary School
6, Loughill Road
Cloughmills
Ballymena
Tel: 02827638318
Principal: Mr. Lawrence O'Kane
www.stbrigidscloughmills.com

Monday 24th August 2020

Dear Parents,

We last saw our boys and girls on Friday 13th March, now after five months we prepare to welcome them back to St Brigid's along with our new Primary One pupils. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with some information relating to the return to school and the arrangements which we have put in place to ensure that we are operating in as safe an environment as practically possible.

New guidelines were issued to schools on Thursday 13th August, over the last 10 days we have been able to draw up specific protocols for St Brigid's. Therefore, we would ask that you read this information carefully. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We have included all the information we think you will need to help make the restart as easy and as safe for everyone as is possible. The arrangements planned for other schools and the multiple press releases from Ministers may have created some confusion, it is our hope that this document is concise and to the point.

Each school is different in size, space, resourcing and staffing. As a small school we have our own unique features and assets allowing us to manage the current or any future situations which may arise. As you are all aware the Covid-19 pandemic is continuing and it is extremely important to practise all the advice from the Public Health Agency as well as the Department of Education. As a school we have worked hard to ensure a safe environment for all members of our school community. If your child is displaying any symptoms of Covid-19, they should not attend school and **you must inform the school immediately**.

Morning Drop Off/ Home Time Collection

We are operating a one-way system in school as of Wednesday 26th August. Children must ONLY enter via the front gate located on the Loughill Road. Children will exit school daily via the back gate, situated along the side lane. We would ask that those collecting your child(ren) observe social distancing guidelines and stand 2 metres apart. Appropriate markings have been introduced along the back wall to assist with this. Children will be released in family groups. We would ask that you please vacate the proximity of the school promptly. **NO ADULTS** are permitted within the school grounds unless they have an appointment, booked via the school secretary.

- Monday to Friday, children **WILL NOT** be allowed in school before 8:40am
- The school day will be as follows:

| Class | Time |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Primary One | 8.50am-12 noon (September only) |
| Primary Two | 8.50am-2pm (Monday-Friday) |
| Primary Three | 8.50am-3pm (Monday-Thursday) |
| Primary Four | 8.50am-3pm (Monday-Thursday) |
| Primary Five | 8.50am-3pm (Monday-Thursday) |
| Primary Six | 8.50am-3pm (Monday-Thursday) |
| Primary Seven | 8.50am-3pm (Monday-Thursday) |

ALL PUPILS WILL FINISH AT 2PM ON A FRIDAY TO ALLOW FOR A WEEKEND DEEP CLEAN

What to bring to school

- Children can bring a lunch box/bag to school, it **MUST** go home at the end each day.
- Children can bring their own water bottle to school, it **MUST** go home at the end each day.
- Children must bring their own packet of tissues to school, hand sanitiser is optional as it will be provided by school.
- Correct dinner money in a sealed, marked envelope which must be paid on a Monday (for the week). Envelopes can be purchased via the school office. Correct money must be paid as change will NOT be given out.

NO OTHER ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL, THIS INCLUDES SCHOOLS BAGS, OTHER STATIONARY, PENCIL CASES, EQUIPMENT, TOYS ETC

Hand Washing and Hygiene

All pupils must sanitise their hands at the front door before entering the main school building. Handwashing will take place at the beginning of the school day, and always before and after eating. We would ask that you talk to your child(ren) about the importance of proper handwashing and good respiratory hygiene.

Homework

Pupils will not receive any homework for the first two weeks of term. A specific letter regarding homework and online learning will be issued week ending Friday 11th September (this *may* be subject to change).

Communication

We will continue to use our two online plat forms for communication with parents, Twitter and Facebook. We will also continue to use our school text service. However, paper based communication from school will conclude. This includes our Weekly Note, Dinner Menu and all other correspondence.

We are now going paperless and all communication will be sent via email. Therefore, we would ask that you make sure to enter an up to date email address on our Data Capture Form. Should this address change over the course of the year you must notify Mrs Martin in the office.

Data Capture

Please complete the Data Capture Form which will be sent home with your child(ren) on their first day back at school. If your child has ANY underlying health conditions, these must be clearly recorded

The staff of St Brigid's are endeavouring to do the best they can for all our pupils in what are very challenging times for us all both personally and professionally.

**Everyone has a role to play in keeping our schools safe
and helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.**



- Do let the school know if your child will be absent due to COVID-19 symptoms
- Do encourage your child to socially distance, if it is possible
- Do encourage good hand hygiene
- Do use alternative transport if you can
- Do walk or cycle if it's safe and appropriate to do so
- Do avoid parking close to or at the school gates
- Do encourage the use of face coverings on school transport

Further information, including Frequently Asked Questions for parents and carers, can be found on the Department of Education's website at www.education-ni.gov.uk.

Your co-operation and support at this time is much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Lawrence O'Kane.

