



# St. Mary's Primary School

20 Cloughcor Road, Ballymagorry, Strabane, Co. Tyrone. BT82 0BE.

Telephone No: 028 7184 1237

Principal: Mrs A Devine

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent / Person with Responsibility,

As you are aware we are nearing our Mid Term Break! I do hope to find you safe and well.

Recent advice from the Department of Education states "Following consultation with the Department of Health, it is the Department's expectation that all schools will take their scheduled holidays over the February Mid Term and Easter breaks, when parents would be expected to have made their normal arrangements for childcare."

As a result, our school will be closed for Mid Term Break for all pupils from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February-Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February.

I hope you can take the time to be together, share some laughs and breathe especially now that Remote Learning has stopped for one week! I would like to thank you for your engagement, patience, commitment and for your understanding.

You are all doing a fabulous job and I know that our teachers are impressed with the levels of engagement and most importantly by your support. You are driving your children through this pandemic, you are the ones setting the example and you are doing this by showing them the need to engage and the importance of keeping up with their classwork. On behalf of the teaching staff I would like to congratulate you all and extend my sincere thanks to you!

You will need Pack Three for week commencing **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February and it will last until Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March.** As of yet, we have not been made aware of the date for school



return, but once informed I will be in touch. Please ensure your child DOES NOT touch this pack until the date specified above there will be NO remote learning next week.

Please take next week to recharge your batteries, make memories with your child/ren and enjoy - spend some quality golden time together as you all deserve the break! You will find a certificate of Congratulations in your folder. This certificate is for YOU and for your engagement! I have also included a certificate for all my wee heroes. I have absolutely loved seeing photographs of their smiling faces and of the great work they have completed remotely from 5<sup>th</sup> January- 12<sup>th</sup> February! They are an absolute credit to you all! Well done!!

### **Remote Learning Policy**

In your pack today you will find a Remote Learning Policy as all schools are required to have a Remote Learning Policy. I would ask that you read the policy enclosed so that you are aware of what we are doing here at Cloughcor to ensure pupil, teacher, parent engagement.

### **Remote Learning Survey**

I sent out a link via Teachers2parents during the week asking if you would kindly fill in a questionnaire I had devised on how you were finding the remote learning process for yourself and for your child/ren. I'd be most obliged if you could please complete it by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 3pm, Sincere thanks to you if you have completed it already.

### **Pupil Engagement/Unauthorised Absences**

The Department of Education has asked schools to monitor and to record pupil engagement throughout this period of remote learning. I can assure you that it is not my intention to put unnecessary pressure on any family in the current climate. I can relate to the challenges you are facing as I am working as usual whilst trying to home school our son when I get home, so I feel your pain!!! If you are not able to engage due to a family situation or if you or your child is sick, I would ask that you give the school a wee buzz on 71 841 237 or you can e mail me on [adevine835@c2ken.net](mailto:adevine835@c2ken.net) and I can let the class teacher concerned know.

We require evidence of work being completed and this is why teachers may be asking you to upload photographs via Google Classroom. If you are experiencing difficulty uploading photographs via this means you are more than welcome to e mail the photographs to the above e mail address. I have asked teachers to provide me with a weekly register of pupils



who are not engaging and I have been in contact with some parents regarding why their child is not engaging online so please keep trying- we are here to help and to support each other.

### **Post Primary Admissions**

The online application process will open between **12 Noon on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March and 4pm on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021** if your child/ren is due to start post primary school in September 2021. Please note that this is NOT a first come first served basis and post primary schools will only begin to make decisions on applications after the closing date for applications has passed.

The admissions criteria for post primary schools are now available on <https://www.eani.org.uk/search-schools>

Before you start your application it is very important that you read the admissions criteria of all the schools you may be interested in sending your child to. We have been told that the online application is very straight forward to complete and you will be guided through each page. In addition to the guidance videos and documents on the EA website, the Admissions Helpdesk will be available for digital assistance if you require it. You can telephone 02895 98 5595 or email: [postprimaryadmission@eani.org.uk](mailto:postprimaryadmission@eani.org.uk)

If you are unable to apply online, paper applications will be available on request from the Education Authority. If you would like to discuss possible school preferences for your child, please don't hesitate to contact the school nearer the time and Mr Haughey or I will be happy to support you. Our P7 pupils will find a Prospectus from Holy Cross College in their packs and I have shared virtual tours of possible post primary schools on our school Facebook page.

### **Online Safety**

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February marked Internet Safety Day and some teachers invited their pupils to design posters reflecting how we can keep safe when using the internet. Our pupils will be using the internet more during this period of school closure so I would ask that you keep an eye on what your child may be viewing or accessing. We all have a role in ensuring our



children are safe and that they are aware of their digital footprint. I have outlined five organisations which can help provide you with support if you are concerned.

Internet Matters: supports parents and carers in keeping children safe online.

Net-aware: provides support for parents and carers from NSPCC

Parent info: supports parents and carers in keeping your children safe online

Thinkuknow: provides advice from the National Crime Agency to ensure safety online

UK Safer Internet Centre: provides advice for parents and carers.

### **myON**

I made reference in my last correspondence to you about access to reading material. I have since sourced and purchased myON.. myOn is a digital library with thousands of ebooks for children to choose from. These books are linked to your child's age and can be tailored to their interests. These digital books will allow you and your child to read books together during this home learning period. The website allows your child to interact with books by highlighting sections, annotating with virtual post notes and listening to text. Part of the website has a news section where there will be current child-friendly news articles for your child to access. If you are worried about internet access you can download 20 books at a time to your device for your child to read offline at any time. Pupils in P1-P7 can access this valuable resource.

### **How to access myON**

1. Click on the link or enter the web address:

<https://www.myon.co.uk/>

Click on myON Login

2. Select St Mary's Cloughcor
3. Enter your child's username and password (these are case sensitive)
4. You are now in the digital library

**Your child's username and password have been provided and can be found on the front cover of PACK 3.**

P4-P7 pupils can read books linked to their Accelerated Reading targets and can complete quizzes. The usernames and passwords they have for Accelerated Reading will be the same for access to myOn.



I hope you can appreciate that Staff are in the process of receiving training in this resource so it is new not only to staff but also to our pupils! I hope you find it useful as it was extremely expensive to purchase, so please utilise it!

On behalf of all the Staff here at Cloughcor, I would like to wish you all a safe Mid Term Break. I will be in touch via Teachers2Parents text messaging service, school website or through our school Facebook page with further developments or announcements. We will see you online Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February!

Keep safe!

Yours Sincerely,

*Andree Devine*

**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

