



# St. Mary's Primary School

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

**Telephone No:** 028 7184 1237

**Email:** adevine835@c2ken.net

**Principal:** Mrs A Devine

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Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Parent / Person with Responsibility,

I hope to find you all safe and well.

## **General Thanks**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome your child back to school after our Mid Term break and to thank you for your continued support as always.

We have returned to school with protective “bubbles” in place as before for each class in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Classes will have separate breaks and lunchtimes as before and hygiene procedures will be carefully followed. We will be trying to minimise the touching of hard surfaces therefore, where possible, doors and windows will remain open during the day. It is important that ALL contact details are amended if there have been any changes to telephone numbers, home addresses etc.

Helen will continue to provide school dinners as before. We would ask that you put £2.60 for the day or £13 for the week in an envelope or money bag clearly labelled with the child’s name, amount. **CHANGE WILL NOT BE PROVIDED.**

**Following guidance provided if your child exhibits any COVID-19 symptoms or if he/she feels unwell his/her temperature will be taken and parents will be contacted immediately and your child, along with any siblings will be sent home. A test should be booked and your household should isolate until the results come through.**

## **YOUR CHILD AT SCHOOL**

- Pupils are asked to wear their school uniform except for a **WEDNESDAY** wherein pupils are asked to dress in **P.E. /Sportswear** to facilitate the washing of school uniforms mid-week.
- Pupils **WILL NOT** require their own stationery. Pupils may bring plastic lunch boxes as before or they can keep their break/lunch in a disposable bag. We would ask that his/her name is clearly marked on his/her lunchbox and on return home the lunchbox/plastic bottle **SHOULD BE WASHED**.
- Schoolbags **WILL NOT** be required and we ask that you **DO NOT** send any other personal items to school with your child.

We **ALL** have a role to play in keeping everyone in our school safe and in helping stop the spread of COVID-19. We would ask that you continue to encourage regular hand washing at home. Please explain to your child the importance of covering his/her mouth when coughing and sneezing.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO:

- Please don't send your child to school if they have COVID-19 symptoms or if you suspect a member of your household has COVID-19. You are advised to isolate, get tested as soon as possible and to notify the school as soon as possible.
- Please DO NOT gather at the school gate
- Please don't allow your child to share food/drink with friends.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

- DO let us know if your child will be absent due to COVID-19 symptoms. You can email me on [adevine835@c2ken.net](mailto:adevine835@c2ken.net)
- Do encourage your child to socially distance, if possible
- Do encourage good hand hygiene.
- DO notify the school using the email address provided in the event of you or your child testing positive for COVID-19.
- Please ensure parents wear masks when at school gates or when entering the school building.

## DROPPING OFF AND COLLECTION

Class teachers will be in the classroom to greet their class each morning from **8.45am-9.05am**.

Pre- School/P1 pupils are asked to walk to their classroom doors by themselves so that footfall on site remains limited using the Pre-School/Primary One entrance.

P2/P3 pupils will enter school grounds via the P2/P3 entrance doors at the side of our big playground as before. Class teachers will be there to greet the pupils. Again, parents are asked to let their child/children come in to school by themselves. I know that this may be difficult but we are trying to reduce footfall around our school building.

P4-P7 pupils will go directly to their mobile classrooms each morning where their class teacher will be there.

Pupils are asked **NOT** to be on site before 8.45am (please see guidance from Ciara regarding Pre-School pupils as they start at 9.15am)

We would ask that **NO** other adult enters the school grounds unless they have arranged a meeting at the School Office and if you need to go to the School Office, we would ask that you sanitise your hands on entry and wear a face mask/shield.

Adults are asked to adhere to social distancing regulations as well as the PHA guidance of not gathering in groups. Activity will be monitored by school staff and may be subject to change if health and safety of our school community is deemed of any concern.

We would ask that parents do not enter the school grounds without an appointment.

## STARTING TIMES AND HOME TIMES

**P1- P2 pupils-** 8.45am-2pm

**P3-P4 pupils-** 8.45am -2.50pm

**P5-P6 pupils-** 8.45- 2.55pm

**P7 pupils-** 8.45-3.00pm

## SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Many of our pupils use a dedicated school transport service, either EA buses or Translink. P4-P7 pupils will remain on site until 3pm if they are using the Translink bus service and the bus will leave our school shortly after 3pm to be at the designated drop off locations at the usual times. Translink Bus times are as follows:

### **Strabane to St Mary's PS Cloughcor**

Curlyhill Road (Glen Road)	08.40
Dock Street Bus Shelter	08.50
Strabane, Glenside	08.55
St Mary's PS, Cloughcor	09.05

### **St Mary's PS Cloughcor to Strabane**

St Mary's PS, Cloughcor	14.05	15.05
Ballymagorry	14.10	15.10
Strabane, Glenside	14.15	15.15
Strabane Academy Gate	14.17	15.17
NW Regional College	14.18	15.18
Dock Street Bus Shelter	14.20	15.20
Curlyhill Road (Glen Road)	14.25	15.25

Whilst the wearing of face coverings for pupils under 13 is not mandatory, the Dept. of Education strongly recommend that all pupils using school buses do so in cases when it is deemed to be appropriate. Issues to consider include the age of the pupil or medical issues that could make wearing a mask distressing. Pupils arriving and leaving the school bus will be directed to and from buses by staff in order to minimise contact between pupils in different classes. Assistants may direct pupils to sit with his/her class where possible. **Pupils have been positioned in class bubbles on the bus. A daily register is taken as to who uses the bus daily in the event of your child being deemed a close contact of a confirmed case. I would ask that parents avoid getting on the bus and if you have to get on the bus you really should be wearing a mask.**

The following is a list of DOs and DON'Ts issued by the Education Authority that pupils can use to help keep themselves and other passengers safe.

#### **DO:**

- Wash hands before using transport
- Use hand sanitiser when available
- Wear a face covering if you can do safely
- Catch it- Bin it- Kill it! Carry tissues, cover coughs and sneezes.
- Leave space between other users when queuing, getting on and getting off the bus
- Stay back from the driver
- Remove all belongings and dispose of any rubbish safely.

#### **DON'T**

- Don't travel or attend school if you are displaying COVID-19 symptoms or are part of a family advised to self-isolate.
- Don't share personal items
- Don't eat or drink on board – unless for medical reasons

Try to follow these rules as strictly as possible

#### **MEDICAL/DIETARY NEEDS**

If your child has developed any medical or dietary needs that we are unaware of, please contact the school so that we can keep your child safe whilst at school. We would ask that pupils **DO NOT** bring **ANY** foods containing **NUTS** to school as we have pupils with **SEVERE NUT ALLERGIES** and want to reduce risks.

#### **COVID-19 SYMPTOMS**

Testing is only available for individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 or if you have been advised by the Public Health Agency Contact Tracing Service to have a test.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A new, continuous acute cough- this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if your child usually has a cough, it may be worse than usual);OR
- A high temperature /fever- this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- A loss or change in sense of smell or taste.

If an individual **DOES NOT HAVE THESE SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS**, they **DO NOT REQUIRE A TEST**. We have been informed by the Education Restart- New School Day guidance that pupil/parents should only book a COVID-19 test only if they have one or more of the symptoms above or if advised to do so by PHA.

We are aware that at this time of year, it is common for colds, sore throats and viral infections to circulate. In many cases, children will be well enough to attend school and continue their learning with little interruption to their education. In other cases, for instance where they have a heavy cold, they may need to take a day or two off to recover.

We have been advised that if a pupil or staff member **DOES NOT HAVE SYMPTOMS** of COVID-19 but has other cold- like symptoms, they do not need to be tested and do not need to self-isolate. The individual can attend school but only if fit to do so.

Additionally, where a pupil displays gastrointestinal symptoms, such as vomiting or diarrhoea, they should NOT attend school until they have been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days-48 hours. If your child develops a temperature after the 48 hours of sickness, he/she **SHOULD NOT ATTEND** school and further advice is to be sought from your GP.

**GUIDANCE STATES THAT WHERE A PUPIL/PARENT HAS COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AND IN THE EVENT OF YOU REFUSING TO BOOK A TEST, PUPILS SHOULD NOT RETURN TO SCHOOL FOR 14 DAYS.**

#### **HOMEWORK/READING BOOKS/ACCELERATED READING TARGETS**

I know that this has been a difficult year for you and for your child but some class teachers have expressed their concerns regarding pupils not doing home works, folders being lost, reading books not coming back in to school. Teachers have expressed their concerns about pupils not reaching their accelerated reading targets in P4/P5/P6 and P7. As a school we were very proactive during lockdown and we invested in an online digital resource MyON for your child to use. We have advised pupils to only read the books they can take a quiz on, so please ensure that your child is reading books which allows them to gain the necessary target points.

Please encourage your child to complete his/her homework. We will be unable to supply reading books to pupils who regularly forget their reading books as we are unable to replenish reading materials. Thank you!

#### **SCHOOL CLOSURE**

School will be closed for all pupils on **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May**. School will reopen on **Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June** for all pupils.

#### **CONFIRMATION**

Confirmation will take place on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June** for our P7 pupils at Sacred Heart Church, Derry Road. Pupils are asked to log on to Leckpatrick Parish website to view the Mass. Pupils are then asked to be at the Sacred Heart Church for Noon for the Anointing of Chrism. Parents, child and Sponsor only per family. Thank you!

#### **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**

Primary 4 pupils will celebrate their First Holy Communion on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 11.00am at Sacred Heart Church, Derry Road.**

If I can help or support you in any way, please do not hesitate to phone or email me on the e mail provided.

Kind Regards,



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#### **SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**