



St. Mary's Primary School

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

Telephone No: 028 7184 1237

Principal: Mrs A Devine

7th September 2021

Dear Parent/ Person with Parental Responsibility,

I hope all the boys and girls are happy to be back at school. It is great to see all the smiling faces! I would like to especially welcome our Primary One pupils and extend my thanks to the Pre-school staff for all the hard work they did last year in our Pre-school Centre. We hope they enjoy their big P1 adventure. I have every faith that our wee P1s will settle into their P1 environment as they are in the very capable hands of Ms Coyle, assisted by Patricia.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to you all for your patience and understanding to date. I know how difficult it is not being able to come and go as freely as you once did when leaving your children to school and when collecting them at home time. Thank you for adhering to the measures we have continued to put in place and for not gathering at the school gates each morning and home time.

COVID 19

Please see revised guidance attached. PHA issued new guidance for schools on Friday. I would ask that if your child presents with Covid-19 symptoms that they take a PCR test and **NOT** a lateral flow test. To book a PCR test parents must log on to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test Pupils should not be at school if they have a new continuous cough or a high temperature and/or loss of taste or smell. It is imperative that we **all** work together in our approach as I know that we all want what is best for our pupils, staff and for you as parents.

P.E

P.E. lessons will resume for all pupils week beginning 13th September. Pupils will be allocated a time slot and **all** pupils are asked to wear their P.E. gear to school on the day they have P.E.

Please see P.E. days below:

P1 – Monday & Wednesday
P2 – Tuesday & Thursday
P3 – Tuesday & Thursday
P4 – Monday
P5 – Wednesday
P6 – Tuesday
P7 – Thursday

TYRONE DAY

As you are aware Tyrone play against Mayo on Saturday at the All Ireland Final! Pupils may wear red/white, P.E. gear or Club/County Colours to school on Friday 10th September. We wish the Tyrone Team all the very best on Saturday and hopefully Sam will be coming home!!!

SCHOOL TRANSPORT:

Many of our pupils use a dedicated school transport, either EA buses or Translink, and these services will continue as before.

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 by bus will be directed to and from buses by staff in order to minimise contact between pupils in different classes.

Pupils travelling home will be seated in class groups in order to minimise unnecessary contact between class groups.

The following is a list of Dos and DON'Ts issued by the EA 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 so safely.

Catch it- bin it- kill it! Carry tissues, cover coughs and sneezes,

Leave space between other users when queueing, 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 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.

DINNER MONEY:

Pupils taking dinner money should bring the payments for these in a plastic money bag or sealed envelope. These should contain the **EXACT** payment as change cannot be given and should have the details clearly written on the envelope/money bag. Dinners cost £2.60 per day.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Pupils wear their school uniform every day unless it is their designated P.E. days and they wear P.E. gear to school. Thank you!

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR CHILD IS LATE IN THE MORNING OR IF THEY HAVE LEFT DINNER MONEY/LUNCH/SNACK AT HOME BY MISTAKE?

As you are aware pupils have specific entrance points to access their classroom(s). If however, you are unavoidably delayed, please telephone the school on 02871 841 237 and you will be informed as to when your child can enter the school. We need to know if your child is late so that we can amend the Class Register. Pupils who are late must not simply enter the school through a different door with another class. Likewise, if your child has forgotten his/her lunch and if you wish to leave it out to school, please phone the School Office and a member of staff will collect dinner/snack or dinner money from you.

HOW WILL CHILDREN SOCIALLY DISTANCE?

I'm sure you understand that although we will try to encourage social distancing in school, it will be next to impossible to maintain this in many of our younger classes. Each class will therefore be treated as a "protective bubble" and will operate independently of any other class. Pupils will not mix together at break or lunchtime.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS ILL?

Please follow the guidelines listed above in relation to COVID-19 symptoms.

We would ask that you do not send your child to school if they are feeling unwell. If your child presents with any sickness during the school day we will make contact with you and ask that you phone the school on your arrival to collect your child and we will bring your son/daughter to you.

If your child **shows** any symptoms of COVID-19, your child should be tested and the school must be kept informed. If your child is ill or absent from school for any reason, please inform our secretary. The reason for your child's absence also needs to be stated as we have to supply the Department of Education with statistical information for pupil attendance each day.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION AND SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

The Sacrament of the Eucharist will be celebrated on **Saturday 18th September @11am** in the Sacred Heart Chapel, Derry Road for our current P5 pupils.

MUSICAL TUITION

Musical Tuition from EA will resume for our P5-P7 pupils on Friday 10th September. Please ensure your child brings his/her instrument to school if they have been given one.

EXTENDED SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Mr McCullagh, our Extended Schools Co-ordinator is planning our Extended Schools Programme for our pupils in P4-P7. Information will follow shortly as to the times and dates.

NUT ALLERGIES

We have some pupils with **SEVERE** nut allergies. We would request that you do not send **ANY** foods **containing nuts** to school e.g. Nutella, peanut butter sandwiches, any type of nuts, snickers, tracker bars etc. Please refrain from sending foods **containing traces of nuts**. We would appreciate your support on this matter.

MILK MONEY

Milk will resume for Term 1 from **Monday 20th September until Friday 22nd October**. If you would like your child to avail of school milk please send **£4.80** to school with your child, with their name clearly marked on the envelope on or before **Thursday 16th September**.

CLASS TEACHERS 2021/2022

P1	Ms Coyle
P2	Miss Mayse
P3	Miss Brolly
P4	Mrs Barr Hegarty
P5	Mr McCullagh
P6	Mrs Duffy
P7	Mr Haughey

Please note Miss Kenny decided to take up a position in Belfast last August. As a result, Miss Mayse will cover the P2 pupils until paperwork is finalised for the P2 position. We would like to wish Miss Kenny all the very best on the next stage of her teaching journey and thank her for all her hard work and for the dedication she gave each day during her time at Cloughcor.

HOMEWORK

Reading will resume for pupils in P2-P7 this week (6th Sept).

Reading, spelling and written homework will resume for classes in P3-P7 on Monday 13th September. P2 pupils will have reading and written homework week beginning 13th September.

We are all so very excited to have our pupils back at Cloughcor and we hope that they will settle back into their school routine. As a parent, I can fully appreciate the fears you might have in the months ahead due to the spiralling rise of COVID cases in our town community.

As a school, we are doing our very best to keep your children and our staff safe. I don't have any control over how or what our parents do on a daily basis, all I can do is urge you all to follow the guidelines so that we can keep our school open! It is so very difficult to access substitute teachers and classroom assistants at present and we have only started this Academic Term!!

Please don't send your child to school if your child has Covid-19 symptoms. You must complete a PCR test **not** a Lateral Flow test. If your child tests positive the Class bubble along with staff members will be asked to take a PCR test. I would ask that parents send a screenshot of both the negative/positive results to adevine835@c2ken.net so that I can provide you with the dates for your child to take his/her Day 2 and Day 8 PCR tests. Your child can only return to school on receipt of a negative test result. If you decide not to book a PCR test, then your child should isolate for 10 days and should not attend school.

DATA COLLECTION SHEETS

Data Collection Sheets will be sent home with your child in the next few days. I would ask that you look at the details make any changes and return the form to the school as soon as possible. It is vital that we have your up-to-date contact details in order for you to receive all text messages and in the event of us needing to make contact with you.

I really don't want to start this school year full of doom and gloom but I need you to work alongside me! Please follow the PHA guidance so that our school can function and so that our children can get the education they deserve and need. I know that you want life to resume as "normal" but these are not "normal" times. Please note, if you have any concerns you can phone the school and I will do my utmost to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Andrea Devine
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

