

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians,

As we draw near to the end of this school term, we would like to thank you for your continued co-operation and understanding of the many changes and routines which are now in place to keep your children and our staff safe during this global pandemic.

We know things have not been easy for parents, but you have risen to the challenge and have brought the standard of co-operation between home and school to a whole new level.

There has also been a massive collective effort across the school to meet these new challenges and we cannot speak highly enough of the work that all staff, teaching and non-teaching, have put in this term under tremendously difficult circumstances.

We ask for your continued vigilance and co-operation with regard to keeping your children at home if they are showing any symptoms of COVID 19 – a new and persistent cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste and smell. We also require those of you coming in to the school grounds to wear a face covering and maintain 2 metre distancing at all times. We will continue to encourage effective hand hygiene and other measures with the children in school.

The Education Minister, Peter Weir has said there were “no plans to close schools early.” Therefore, the school will remain open next week as planned.

**We are, however, conscious that a single case of Covid-19 in any school bubble from 11<sup>th</sup> December onwards will mean that up to 30 children and three adults would be required to self-isolate for 14 days, thereby including Christmas Day, with no visitors allowed into their homes.**

This is a situation which concerns us greatly, particularly at the end of a year when families are looking forward to a much needed catch up with extended family members, many of whom they will not have seen for some time.

In light of this very worrying prospect, and in response to the many queries we have received about the school's closure dates, we would like to explain how we plan to manage the next two weeks.

Home Learning opportunities will be provided through the Seesaw platform from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December if you have decided to protect your family bubble by keeping your child at home. **We would like to assure you that your children's attendance record will not be affected.**

We also understand that some of you may be returning to work this Friday and have no other option but to send your children to school next week. In order to facilitate anyone in this situation, we would like to assure you that school will function as normal for any child in attendance from Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> December, until Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December.

**We would further like to assure the parents of any children planning to take the Transfer Test, that revision packs will be sent home on Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> December. This work will be in addition to the activities provided in class or on Seesaw.**

There will be further seasonal activities for the children to complete at home during the last few days of term on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. The school will remain open for these two days but as there will be no School Meals on either day, the children who need to come in will finish at 12 noon on both days.

As always, our priority is the health and safety of your children, our staff and the wider school community. We hope that, despite all of the anxiety and uncertainty, you and your family have a wonderful, safe holiday.

Take care, keep safe and have a very Happy Christmas.

Mr D O'Neill  
School Principal

Cllr Brian Heading  
Chair of the Board of Governors