

OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Principal: Mr Tomás Mc Kee



4th January, 2021

Reference: Term 2 Reopening Arrangements

Dear Parents/Guardians

I hope you have had a peaceful Christmas and on behalf of all staff and governors I would like to wish all families the best of luck and happiness for 2021.

I write to you in response to the Minister of Education's statement on 31st December regarding the delayed reopening of schools and our arrangements for Home Schooling and Supervised Learning.

We had hoped that all children would return to school as normal on 5th January but the Department of Education has instructed that schools can take the first day of term to prepare for the revised arrangements. Home Schooling and Supervised Learning will commence on Wednesday 6th January until Friday 8th January.

We will offer **Supervised Learning** for Vulnerable Children and children of Key workers (please see DENI guidance attached to this letter). Please email tmckee362@c2kni.net if you need to avail of Supervised Learning in school. This will involve children being supervised in their classrooms and completing the same learning activities that have been set for Home Learning. The Education Authority has advised that school transport will run as normal and dinners will be available (*January Menu is on our website*). There will be no Breakfast or 123 clubs while we provide Supervised Learning, however children in P1, P2 & P3 with older siblings in P4, P5, P6 & P7 will be supervised in class until 3pm. During the period of Supervised Learning school will be opened for children from 8.40am until: **1pm for Reception; 2pm for P1-P3* and 3pm for P4-P7** (*P1-P3 children with older siblings in P4-P7 will be supervised in school until 3pm).

Home Schooling learning activities will be provided via Seesaw for all classes. P6 & P7 teachers will also host Zoom meetings with the children on Wednesday 6th (P6 @ 9.15am & P7 @ 10am) and Friday 8th January (P6 @ 11.15am & P7 @ 12 noon – login codes will be communicated via Seesaw) to explain and review learning tasks. We are mindful that Home Schooling is difficult for parents and we will not over burden children with school work. Two activities will be set each day via Seesaw for children to complete. Guidance will be posted on our school website on how to upload your child's work so that the class teacher will be able to mark or respond to their work. A link to information on some of the special features of Seesaw will be uploaded on to Seesaw. All children will be encouraged to read or be read to and one activity will be set on Maths Seeds (P1) and Athletics (P2-P7). Children are able to complete Live Maths activities on Athletics after completing tasks set by their class teacher. Children with access to Nessy should access this program daily for at least 15 minutes. Please contact your child's teacher via email (addresses are below) if you have any queries or concerns. Teachers will mark children's work and respond to queries and emails during normal school hours.

Teacher's email addresses:

Reception/Primary One: Ms Loughran: nloughran844@c2kni.net

Primary Two: Mrs Dillon: kdillon751@c2kni.net

Primary Three: Mrs Comiskey: kcomiskey765@c2kni.net

Primary Four: Mrs Mc Cloy: amccloy737@c2kni.net

Primary Five: Mrs O'Hara: kohara636@c2kni.net

Primary Six: Mr Mc Cusker: rmccusker298@c2kni.net

Primary Seven: Mr Mc Kee & Mrs Maxwell: tmckee362@c2kni.net and amaxwell453@c2kni.net

P7 Children sitting examinations in January. To support our pupils who will sit Transfer Assessments this month we will offer a full day, 9 am – 3 pm, of transfer work in school on Thursday 7th January. All parents of Primary 7 children who wish for their child to attend our Transfer Support Day should email tmckee362@c2kni.net to confirm attendance. All Primary 7 children will complete set learning activities as outlined for all classes above however we will continue to review how we can support children preparing for external transfer assessments. Please contact me if you have any queries, comments or suggestions. Thanks.

I would encourage all parents to ensure that their child(ren) complete all set activities. Teachers will contact parents on Thursday or Friday if their child(ren) do not respond or complete the tasks this week. It is every parent's responsibility to support their child(ren) with their learning during these difficult times. Teachers will be available to support children with their learning via Seesaw and will strive to set work that is appropriate to each child's ability.

For those children who will be coming to school for **Supervised Learning** It is vitally important that if your child(ren) displays any **symptoms of COVID19** (*continuous cough, high temperature, loss of smell/taste*) they **MUST** not attend school or travel on school transport. Children must also not come to school if a member of their household or someone with whom they have had a close contact is being tested for COVID19. It is preferable that a child misses one or two days rather than a whole group of children or adults having to isolate for 10 days. Parents must contact the school if a member of your household tests positive for COVID19 as this could have implications for our staff, other children and their families. Staff members have also been given the same advice. We were very lucky that none of our class bubbles had to isolate during the first term. This was down to our whole school community working together and displaying excellent vigilance. Hopefully we will continue to display the same attentiveness in the coming days, weeks and months.

If a child displays COVID19 symptoms in school we will isolate the child in a designated area (child will be supervised by an adult) and contact parents. You must then follow PHA guidance. Please ensure that your contact details are up to date and you have plans in place to deal with such an event. Hopefully this does not occur but it is better to be prepared.

Please contact the school if you have any further queries regarding Home Schooling and Supervised Learning. Hopefully school will return to face to face teaching for all children next week although it is very possible that Home Schooling could be extended. A letter will be posted on our school website at the end of the week to outline our arrangements for next week as soon as the situation is clarified.

Take care and all the best,

Tomás Mc Kee

Tomás Mc Kee

Principal

DENI Guidance on Vulnerable Children & Key workers

The definition of **Vulnerable Children** as set out in the cross-departmental Vulnerable Children and Young People's Plan 2020 is: (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-cross-departmental-covid-19-vulnerable-children-and-young-peoples-plan>)

- A child who has an assigned social worker because he or she is a child in need, in need of protection (or on the child protection register) or is a looked after child.
- A child in need includes young carers, children with disabilities, and children living in families where there is domestic abuse, substance abuse, and / or mental health difficulties.
- A child who is receiving support from, or has been referred to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- A child who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), a child who is accessing EOTAS, or a child who normally accesses Education Nurture Units.
- A child who is 'on-the-edge' of receiving support from children's social services.
- A child who is in need, including in need of protection, but whose need is not known to statutory services.
- A child who is not known to statutory or voluntary and community support services but who is vulnerable because their family is under increased pressure due to Covid-19 related circumstances.
- A young person who was previously a looked after child, whether or not they are receiving support from statutory services.
- A child who has been placed for adoption.
- Asylum seeking and refugee children and children whose parents have no recourse to public funds.

Key workers are defined as:

- Health and Social Care. This includes doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, home carers and staff required to maintain our health and social care sector;
- Education and childcare. This includes pre-school and teaching staff, social workers, youth workers and those specialist education professionals who will remain active during the Covid-19 response;
- Public safety and national security. This includes civilians and officers in the police (including key contractors), Fire and Rescue Service, prison service and other national security roles;
- Transport. This will include those keeping air, water, road and rail transport modes operating during the Covid-19 response;
- Utilities, and Communication. This includes staff needed for oil, gas, electricity and water (including sewage) and primary industry supplies to continue during the Covid-19 response, as well as key staff in telecommunications, post and delivery, banking and waste disposal;
- Financial Services - This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure);
- Food and other necessary goods. This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution and sale, as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (e.g. hygiene, medical, etc.);
- Retail. This includes those workers who have been working throughout the pandemic in food retail, for example, and will now extend to those working in other retail businesses permitted to operate by the Executive from June 2020;
- Other workers essential to delivering key public services such as the National Crime Agency; and
- Key national and local government including those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the Covid-19 response.