**BACK TO SCHOOL**

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to welcome all our pupils back full-time for the new term. We will be following DENI, EA and PHA guidance to ensure our school is as safe as possible for all our staff and pupils. It is extremely important that you DO NOT send your child to school if they have COVID-19 symptoms: i.e. a new or continuous cough, a high temperature / fever, loss of taste or smell. If anyone becomes unwell during the school day, they will be isolated until collection and sent home and advised to follow the guidance for households with possible coronavirus infections. As a school community, we must all do our best to keep the school free from this virus and our children and staff safe. DENI has produced restart guidance for parents and this is available on the school website. We also sent this out on the School App last week.

It is very important that you download the SchoolApp to keep updated with new information.

In writing this letter, I am pre-empting the queries you as parents have, but if I have missed anything, do not hesitate to contact school, or email me [amolloy164@c2kni.net](mailto:amolloy164@c2kni.net)

1. Are children back full time or part-time?

Children are back at school full-time.

1. When does school begin?

* P7 begin school full-time on Monday 24th August from 9.30am-3pm on Monday to Thursday and from 9.30am to 12noon on Friday the 28th of August. Staff will meet the children in the Church carpark and will walk them to school. There is to be no drop offs at the front of the school.
* P1 induction takes place during the week of 24-28th August. P1 parents will receive the dates and times that their child should attend. If you have a query regarding this please email me [amolloy164@c2kni.net](mailto:amolloy164@c2kni.net)
* School is closed on MONDAY 31st August for the Bank Holiday
* Term begins on Tuesday 1st September for P1-P6

1. Will the school kitchen be open to provide school dinner?

YES. The school kitchen will be operating from Tuesday 1st September.

**P7 children need to being their own snack and packed lunch during the week of August 24th.**

Morning Club will be available from 8.30am at a cost of £10 per month. Money should be sent for the month in a **sealed** envelope- clearly labelled with the child’s name and class on it. This must be paid on the 1st day of each month. You need to email me by Monday 24th of August if you wish to avail of this service.

Initially the kitchen will be open for dinners only. Children should bring a healthy snack from home for break time.

**Please note currently there is no choice of meals. There will be one hot meal on offer.** The dinner menu will be available on the school website and emailed to you in the next few days.

Dinner money must be sent on Monday even if dinner is only required one or two days a week. This is to reduce the risk of handling cash. All envelopes will go to the office to be checked and counted so money should be correct as no change will be issued. A cheque made payable to St. Paul’s Primary School is also acceptable. Please put the following information on the envelope: name of child, class and class teacher, days dinner is requested, amount enclosed.

1. Do the children wear school uniform?

Yes, full school uniform must be worn. Black school shoes must also be worn. Government guidance suggests outdoor learning as much as possible so children **must** have a warm waterproof coat with a hood. P1, P2. P3 and P4 will be using the Forest school as much as possible so they will need wellies and if possible a waterproof suit. It is recommended that children should wear a clean uniform every day. We have some donated uniforms so if you would like a spare set email me re this. These are available on a first come, first served basis. The children will not change for PE. PE will take place outside and children will only be required to change their shoes and put on trainers. As in previous years ALL items of uniform must be named. It would be helpful if children had a pair of trainers they could leave in the school all the time.

1. What time do children come to school and be collected at?

DENI strongly advises that we stagger arrival and pick up times to ensure parents are not at risk whilst gathering at home-times. We have arranged drop-off and collection times for your child/ren and these will be communicated via the SchoolApp before the end of the week.

Please ensure you check your child’s temperature and that they wash their hands prior to leaving home.

Drop off point for all children will be the Church carpark. A member of staff will walk your child to the front door of the school building. Your child will be brought straight to their classroom where they will wash their hands immediately.

Like last year your child will be walked down to the Church carpark at a staggered time.

You will be informed of times of drop offs and collections later.

1. Will they be able to bring a pencil case and a school bag?

Pupils are not allowed to bring anything from home to school daily apart from their coat, a reusable, clear water bottle with child’s name on it, a snack for break and a packed lunch if they do not wish to buy school dinner. Snacks should be healthy, and where possible in a disposable bag. Please have your child’s name on their lunch bag/box.

The children should bring stationery to school on the first day of school. This will stay in school and be used only by them. They will need a pencil, a rubber, colouring pencils and a short ruler. All items should be named. They should also bring a small packet of tissues and a small hand sanitizer to keep in their own personal space in school. Again, please add a name.

If any child requires inhalers etc. please inform the class teacher and bring it in on the first day of school. Please make sure it is clearly labelled with administration instructions

A school bag will not be needed as they will not be taking home books yet.

1. What happens when the children are dropped off at school?

We are operating a one-way system in school. All children will enter the school building via the main door. On arrival to school, children will go immediately to wash their hands in their classrooms. Please remember parents are not permitted to accompany their children in to school. Staff will be supervising to ensure children know exactly where to go.

1. Will school buses be available?

Yes, school transport is available for those who have been approved to travel on EA transport, however DENI insist this is available as a last resort and parents should only avail of this if they have no other option. If you do decide to send your child to school on the bus, masks should be worn, children should sit in family groups, or in their class bubble, and they should face forwards for the duration of the journey. At the end of this document you will find details on how to apply for transport.

1. Will the children be given homework?

Initially, there will be no homework. Homework will be set via Google Classroom. Your child’s teacher will provide you with more detail on this in the coming weeks.

School will be putting many health and safety measures in place to keep our school community as safe as possible.

* The school has been deep cleaned in preparation for the new term
* No parents or visitors will be allowed into the school building
* Handwashing facilities are available and hand sanitizer is at all entrances to the building.
* Each class and the associated staff will be regarded as a ‘Bubble’

These class ‘bubbles’ will go for lunch together and play in designated areas in the playground together.

* Although social distancing has been relaxed for children to allow a full-time return to school, it is not relaxed for adults and the 2m rule still applies. Some staff will therefore need to wear PPE such as visors, masks, or aprons when social distancing is not possible, for example when they are receiving one to one support with their learning, or receiving medical attention or first aid.
* All touch surfaces will be cleaned frequently throughout the day
* Children will not gather in large groups outside their class bubble for assembly or nay other whole school event/.
* Books must be quarantined for 72 hours after use and before marking.

If any child is particularly vulnerable and has been in receipt of a shielding letter, please let me know as soon as possible to ensure a full risk assessment is completed before they return to school.

If any family has been on holiday in any of the areas that request a quarantine period, please let me know.

**FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND UNIFORM CLOTHING ALLOWANCE**

Should you wish to apply for Free School Meals and Uniform, the following website [www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to/fsm/](http://www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to/fsm/) will provide all you need along with criteria and the process. If you think you are eligible please apply as eligibility for Free School Meals entitles you to other benefits such as uniform allowance, free music tuition, and so on. It also benefits the school financially.

**Eligibility**

**Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) can apply if your son or daughter is in full-time education and if you are in receipt of one of the following benefits: -

* Income Support;
* Income Based Jobseeker’s Allowance;
* Income Related Employment and Support Allowance;
* Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit;
* Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit with an annual taxable income of £16,190 or less;
* Universal credit and have net household earnings not exceeding £14,000 per year.

Or:-

* if you are an Asylum Seeker supported by the Home Office Asylum Support Assessment Team (ASAT); or
* if your child has a statement of special educational needs and is designated to require a special diet.

**TRANSPORT APPLICATIONS**

Applications for transport assistance to all schools, primary and post primary should now be completed online via the EA website at [www.eani.org.uk/transportapp](http://www.eani.org.uk/transportapp)

Eligibility for transport assistance to mainstream schools is based on the distance from the pupil’s home to the school at which they have been offered a place or currently attend. The qualifying distance is two miles or more for Primary, measured by the shortest available walking route door to door.

All transport applications **must** be made online through the EA website. [www.eani.org.uk/transportapp](http://www.eani.org.uk/transportapp)

Please note the online transport application process for Year 1 and Year 8 September 2020 application is now open.

* **You are not required to reapply each year unless there is a change in circumstances.**

Thank you very much for your cooperation as we adjust to these new recommendations. We are doing our best under difficult circumstances. The health and well-being of your children is of the utmost importance to us and we will continue to do our best that the return to school will run as smoothly as possible.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs A Molloy