August 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Earlier in July I issued a plan for the reopening of school in August/September to all parents and guardians. The plan was based on the guidance document, ‘New School Day’, issued by the Department of Education in June which relied on 2m social distancing restrictions being in place. In a recent statement the Education Minister informed schools that all pupils will attend school full time in September as social distancing restrictions have been relaxed where a child’s education may be compromised. Schools are required to put in place a number of measures to mitigate against the potential transfer of Covid19. These measures can include: **regular handwashing, social bubbles to restrict pupil contact with other year groups, staggered openings, and staggered lunch times.**

After carefully considering the statement made by the Education Minister it is our intention to re-open school fully in August with Plan A as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| Plan A |
| **Whole school back.**   * ‘Bubble’ system in operation. (to meet with current legislation on social distancing). * Staggered admission/dismissal times. * School dinners delivered to the classroom. Children will eat their lunch/dinner in the classroom to remain in their bubble. * Playground zoned to allocate specific play areas for children. |

**No Breakfast Club, After-School activities or Homework Club (This will be kept under constant review)**

**Planned Return Dates week beginning 24th August**

**Children will attend school until 12 noon during the week of 24th -28th August.**

**Children will attend full time the following week beginning Tuesday,1st September.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Groups | Days |
| Nursery | Induction –Information sent directly to Parents. |  |
| P1 | Induction –Information sent directly to Parents. |  |
| P2 O’Loughlin | Group 1 A - GR  Group 2 GU-W | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P2 Clifford | Group 1 A - L  Group 2 McC - Z | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P3 Francis | Group 1 A - Z  Group 2 K - W | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P4 Johnstone/Dyas | Group 1 A - Har  Group 2 Hav - S | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P4/5 Polley | Group 1 C - J  Group 2 K - Q | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P5 Lamrock | Group 1 A - L  Group 2 Mc - Z | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P6 Coyle | Group 1 B - J  Group 2 K - W | Tuesday & Wednesday  Thursday & Friday |
| P6/7 Morrison | P7  P6 | Monday - Friday  Thursday & Friday |
| P7 Bradley | P7 | Monday - Friday |
| ASC | Information sent directly to parents |  |
| LSU | Information sent directly to parents |  |

This first week back is to gradually welcome and reintegrate our children back into school.

We will take it very gently and establish the “new normal” for our children.

We have endeavoured to facilitate family groups **as far as possible** by using alphabetical order.

**If you have returned from holiday, please ensure that you inform us and follow quarantine regulations for that particular country.**

Please note that with the early return to school this year, we have had to adapt our holidays. (Please refer to school holiday list)

**Arrival at school:**

Please take note of the staggered arrival times

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8.45am | Families (i.e. more than 1 child at school)  LSC & ASC  Nursery children – to Nursery playground door |
| 9.00am | P2 – P7 children with no siblings at school |
| 9.15am | Primary 1 children – drop off outside classroom door |

**School gates will remain locked until 8.45am each day.**

There will be 2 options:

1. Academy Road: Member of staff present.

Socially distanced drop off.

Only 1 parent/guardian should come to the school gate.

In order to minimize congestion around the school gate, we would ask you to park a little bit further away and walk your child to the entrance.

If it is possible to walk to school, we would recommend that you do.

Parents/Guardians MUST remain with pupils until they have gained access to the school grounds. We would request that parents/guardians do not enter the school grounds, except at home time. (Exception will be made for Primary 1 parents/guardians who will be asked to accompany their children to the external door of the classroom at 9:15)

1. Drive and Drop:

Cars drive in main entrance from 8:45, follow the arrows for the one-way system and drop children off at the drop off area next to the canteen. Mr Bradley and other staff will then direct children to their designated bubble area in the playground. Children will be supervised by their teacher until it is time to enter school.

**Area will be supervised by staff.**

**A one-way system will be in operation**.

**Parents/guardians will NOT gain access to the school building**.

**Should your child have been unwell within the last 24 hours, it is imperative that they DO NOT attend school until fully recovered in order to minimize risk to others.**

**Home time**

Please take note of the staggered departure times

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 2.15pm | Primary 2 |
| 2.40pm | Primary 3 – Primary 5  LSC & ASC |
| 2.50pm | Primary 6 & Primary 7 |

**Primary 1 will all go home at 12 initially**.

**Younger children can remain in class until 2:55 to wait for older siblings**.

**Please note that our Rainbow Club will not be in operation as we cannot mix our bubbles.**

At home time, parents/guardians are asked to remain outside the school grounds until the designated pick-up time for their child(ren). At your designated time, you will be invited into the main playground to wait for your child. Parents/guardians must adhere to social distancing guidance whilst waiting within the playground for your child to be dismissed by their teacher. An area inside the gate has been marked out for this purpose**. Once you have collected your child/children, please leave the school grounds promptly.**

**Class ‘Bubble’**

Each class will be known as a ‘bubble’. Each bubble will be its own separate entity and will not ‘mix’ with other ‘bubbles ‘as far as is practically possible. This will include break and lunch times, and the adult support within the bubble. School meals will be delivered to, and eaten within, each classroom.

**In-school Hygiene**

Pupils will be supervised washing their hands, regularly, throughout the school day. In addition, classrooms are equipped with sanitizers, paper towels and cleaning products which the class teacher will use on surfaces throughout the day. Alongside this, school has increased the daily hours of its cleaning staff to ensure a more robust cleaning regime.

Children are required to wear their school uniform daily. PPE is not necessary. Please ensure that children wear a freshly laundered uniform daily.

**Suspected case of Covid-19**

Should a child present with any of the following 3 symptoms (as identified by the Public Health Agency), they will be removed from their ‘bubble’ and taken directly to the designated isolation room (Parent/guardian’s Room) where they will be supervised until a parent/guardian collects them.

* **Elevated temperature**
* **Continuous cough**
* **Change in taste/smell**

After each use of the isolation room, a deep clean will take place.

**Equipment required**

On the first school day, each child will be asked to bring in a named pencil case with the following items:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Necessary Equipment** | **Other Essentials** |
| 2 pencils  Rubber  Sharpener  Colouring pencils  Ruler  Glue stick  Scissors  Tissues for the classroom  Packet of wipes for the classroom  **Please note that not having these items will impact on your child’s learning.**  **There will be no sharing of items. This stationary will stay in school.** | Water Bottle  Mid-morning snack  Lunch box (if not having school meals)  Coat (This is essential as children will line up every morning in the playground regardless of the weather)  Lunchboxes should be machine washable / sanitised daily.  **NO SCHOOL BAGS, PE BAGS OR ANY OTHER ITEM should be brought to school until further notice** |

**Supporting our pupils:**

It is difficult to ascertain the range of experiences each pupil and family have dealt with during the last 12/13 weeks. Therefore, as a school, we have decided to embed a foundation of pastoral support across and within all year groups when school re-opens. This will encompass a significant part of the School Development Plan for Term 1. We will be working on a restorative curriculum within the first term with a focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Pastoral Care.

**Pupils with Medical needs**

Parents/guardians of pupils with medical needs will be required to provide detailed information about each individual circumstance which will become part of an individual risk assessment. This will be drawn up in consultation with staff, parents/guardians and other external professionals, as necessary.

**Policy adaptations**

The school’s Positive Behaviour Policy, Intimate Care Policy, Remote/Blended Learning Policy & Child Protection Policy will be reviewed in response to Covid-19 and uploaded to our website. In addition, the school has devised a catalogue of risk assessments in line with EA recommendations.

Our plans for school reopening are resultant of the Covid-19 pandemic. In these unprecedented times, we all need to work together to ensure the safety of our school community. These plans may change and will be kept under constant review. In the meantime, we trust we can rely on your support as we move towards a ‘new normal’.

Although this has been an extremely challenging time for us all over the last few months, I trust that you and your family continue to stay safe. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and wish you all a safe and restful summer break. We look forward to welcoming all our pupils back to school next week.

Kind regards,

M Ramsey

Principal