St. Joseph and St. James' Primary School

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24/06/20

Dear Parents,
Please find in this correspondence:

1. The press release from the NAPP Principal's group regarding the reopening of our school on 24th August 2020.
2. Consultation for parents regarding the potential two models we are considering for our 'Restart Programme'

Press Release from Newry Primary Principals

As a group of Primary Principals of local schools, we have had a series of meetings to discuss the way forward and laterally the implications of the Department of Education publication, 'Northern Ireland Re-Opening School Guidance: New School Day', issued Friday 19th June 2020. With due regard given to the pastoral care of our pupils, staff and indeed the parent body we have reached a consensus which we would like to communicate with you:

- ***Schools in our area will reopen on Monday 24th August for an induction week which will focus on the pastoral needs of our pupils, their health and wellbeing and the enhancement of a 'reconnect' between pupil and school, helping our pupils settle back into the new school day and the changes to their school environment. Specific details regarding dates and times will be provided by your child's school in due course.***
- ***Various patterns for reopening are being discussed. Schools will communicate with you their most viable options. However, as Principals we are aware that the situation remains fluid and subject to change, if for instance, social distancing requirements are amended.***
- ***Arrangements regarding staggered arrivals/collections may be necessary and details will be communicated to you on an individual school basis. All parents will be asked to remain outside school buildings to reduce footfall and the potential spread of the virus.***
- ***Pupils are asked to wear a fresh school uniform every day. This may alternate between their formal uniform/school tracksuit.***
- ***School bags or other items from home should not be brought into school. Packed lunches should be in disposable packaging.***
- ***No guidance has yet been issued to schools with regard to nursery provision, transport or school meals. Details will follow.***
- ***We as Principal's and our school staff will be reinforcing the good practice that you are undertaking at home, to educate your children in the necessary measures for minimising the spread of the virus, e.g. 'Catch it, Bin It, Kill It', thorough handwashing, maintaining social distance etc. we trust that this good practice will continue.***
- ***It is your responsibility to access and follow school communications e.g. Website, school app etc. Please ensure that you regularly access those platforms employed by your child's school.***

Please be aware that this information is subject to change in light of evolving DE Guidance. As a group we will continue to meet over the summer to explore how the needs of our pupils will be met and yet remain compliant with Department of Education and Public Health Authority

Guidance. We appreciate your ongoing support and we look forward to working in partnership to ensure our schools remain a place of comfort and nurture for all.

Consultation for parents

Dear Parents, this is an opportunity to seek your views regarding the two potential models we sincerely hope we do not have to use, as part of our 'Restart Programme' for the new academic year.

Ideally we would relish returning to normal, where all our pupils will be able to attend school for a full day. However as a school it would be imperative we have a provisional plan in place, if the one metre distancing rule remains in place.

We must emphasis at this stage that all information is subject to change with the ongoing fluidity of the situation and DE Guidance. I must stress at this juncture that we have to be ever cognisant of the financial constraints we face, which do dictate the models we can offer.

ALL ARRANGEMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Model 1: Blended Learning Approach- Two full days each week

- Each class, P.3 – P.7, will be split into two cohorts, A and B taking cognisance of family groups.
- P1 and 2 pupils will be in attendance each of the four days.
- Cohort A will attend school on Mondays and Tuesdays, full days.
- Cohort B will attend school on Thursdays and Fridays, full days.
- Wednesdays will be for cleaning the school between cohorts and preparation time for teachers.
- There will be staggered arrivals and staggered exits.
- A weekly pack of activities will be sent home with each child to consolidate and reinforce their learning at school that week.
- Additional activities will also be available on our website.
- Guided reading will be re-established. (Bug Club and Accelerated Reader)
- Homework will be published via Seesaw and all pupils would post their work completed at home, for marking to their class teacher virtually via Seesaw
- Teachers will provide via Seesaw a weekly overview of the learning for each week with additional links to support pupils as best we can. This will also be accessible via the Home Learning area on our website. Parental support would be essential to ensure pupils complete work the three days they are not attending school.

Model 2: Blended Learning Approach – Half day basis over a two week rolling programme

- Each class, P.1 – P.7, will be split into two cohorts, A and B taking cognisance of family groups.
- Cohort A on week 1 will attend each morning 9.00-11.30
- Cohort B on week 1 will attend each afternoon 12.30-3.00
- Week 2- Cohort B will attend in the morning slot with Cohort A in the afternoon slot
- There will be staggered arrivals and staggered exits.
- Deep cleaning will take place 12.30-1.30 each day and each evening after 3.00p.m
- Initially we propose this for four days Monday to Thursday, in order to promote and build upon pupils' stamina, whilst they readjust to a more regular routine. After a series of 4 weeks (September), we would intend on offering this over the five days Monday to Friday, on a two week rotational basis.
- Activities will be published via Seesaw in support of the work covered in school

- Guided reading will be re-established (Bug Club and Accelerated Reader)
- With this model there is less onus on parents to ensure the plan for teaching and learning is covered by yourself each week, as each child will have daily contact

Can I please invite you once you have viewed the two potential options, to please email me on cwadsworth679@c2kni.net , indicating which model you prefer. The closing date for collating your views will be by noon on Monday 1.7.20

May I thank take this opportunity to sincerely thank you all and our very hard working team of staff for your unbelievable support over the last few months, as the newly appointed Principal of St. Joseph and St. James's P.S. I feel very fortunate indeed to be part of such a warm and welcoming community.
I wish you and your family a safe and peaceful summer break and I pray St. Joseph and St. James continues to watch over our wonderful school community at this time.

Yours in partnership

C. Wadsworth and the staff of St. Joseph and St. James's P.S.