

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



1st March, 2021

Reference: Phased return of some pupils in March 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

I write to you to outline our arrangements for the phased return of Reception to Primary 3 children to school and the continuation of remote and supervised learning for P4-7.

Last week, the Minister of Education informed schools that Reception to Primary 3 children would be returning to school on 8th March until 19th March. In response to his statement we have amended our St. Patrick's Day holidays to maximise the number of days that the children will be in school. We have reduced our St. Patrick's Day holiday, to one day rather than three. We have moved the other days to Holy Week so that everyone can enjoy a two week break over the Easter holidays. Since, the Minister's letter, there has been some speculation in the media that the return to school for Reception to Primary 3 children could be extended until the Easter holidays, which will hopefully be the case. Unfortunately, remote and supervised learning will continue for Primary 4 to 7 children until at least the Easter break, but hopefully all classes will be allowed to return to school after the Easter break.

Over the course of March our teachers will continue to host live Zoom lessons with some classes. We have agreed a schedule for these live activities to ensure that we do not put extra pressure on parents working from home. Teachers will post the details of these lessons on the class Seesaw pages. We will continue with our Thursday fitness class until the Easter break and we would like to thank Kevin Curran for hosting these classes. For Primary 4-7 children we will continue to use both paper packs and Seesaw for the remainder of the term. Our **next Paper packs (for P4-7)** will be ready for collection on **Friday 5th March from 2-3pm** and will be organised into family groups as normal. These packs will be the final ones for the term and will run until Friday 26th March. Please ensure all reading books are returned and follow agreed COVID19 protocols: come to school on your own, wear a face covering, sanitise on entering the school, follow the one way system (packs will be in the school hall) and be mindful of social distancing when arriving to collect the packs from school. If this time is not suitable please call the school on Friday to make alternative arrangements. Thank you.

The arrangements for Reception to Primary 3 children returning to school on Monday 8th March and those children of Key workers and vulnerable children (DENI guidance is attached) who cannot be safely cared for at home are as follows:

1. **School will open at 8.40am** and all children should leave their *bags (please ensure all reading books are brought back to school)* in their cloakroom and go to their designated play area. We are not permitted to offer a Breakfast Club as the Department of Education has informed schools that they must be paused until at least 12th April.
2. **School transport and dinners will be available** for all children who are in school from 8th March. Please ensure that dinners are paid in advance and via ParentPay. Some amounts are outstanding

from before Christmas and we would greatly appreciate if these bills could be settled as soon as possible.

3. All children must **wear full school uniform** as normal, and please ensure that all items are labelled.
4. Homework for P1-P3 will initially focus on reading, phonics or spellings and mental maths activities.
5. 123 Club will be available for all P1-P3 children. Please email the school (info@ourladys.tullysaran.ni.sch.uk) to make a booking or call the school office and pay via Parent Pay.
6. **Parents/Carers leaving or collecting their children from school must wear face coverings** on the school grounds and ensure that social distancing guidelines are followed. Adults should not be gathering at the school gates and please remember to drive and park safely around the school grounds. The area in front of the GAA grounds should be used to park and walk your child(ren) down to or from school. Please be respectful of local residents' properties and do not turn in peoples' driveways. **Collection times are as follow: Reception: 1pm** from the front foyer; **P1: 1.55pm** from the front foyer; **P2: 2.05pm** from the Primary 2 door at the rear of the school and **P3: 2pm** from the front of the school. *(Please note: our front doors have been upgraded and are now programmed to open automatically so please be mindful of this if entering the school building)*
7. **We will have a non-uniform day on Tuesday 16th March, to celebrate St. Patrick's day.** Primary 6 and 7 children will also participate in a live Zoom call and we encourage all children to wear something green. All funds will go to support 'The Blossom Children & Young People's Centre, Craigavon Area Hospital'. Our Primary 7 pupil, Luca Donnelly, is running, cycling, hiking or walking 3km every day from 7th to 20th March to raise funds for this worthy cause.
8. **School will close on Wednesday 17th March for St. Patrick's Day.**
9. *All Reception to Primary 3 children will return to school on Thursday 18th March. School will also be open for P4-7 children that require supervised learning.*
10. We will post a **Home Schooling gallery on our website on Wednesday 24th March**, so please email your photos to Mrs Mc Cloy (amccloy737@c2kni.net) by Friday 19th March. Our February gallery was excellent. Thanks to everyone who sent in a photo and special thanks to Mrs Mc Cloy for putting the gallery together.
11. Learning (face to face, remote and supervised) will continue to be provided, as per DENI guidance, for all children until Friday 26th March.

Please contact the school office if you have any questions regarding these arrangements. We look forward to welcoming our Reception to Primary 3 children back to school. I am certain that they will be delighted to return to school and see their friends again. We are mindful that it will take the children some time to get back into the routine of school and we will ensure that they are given the opportunity to get outside and engage in wellbeing activities. On Monday 8th March, all children will be able to participate in a Zoom 'Relax kids' sessions with Barbara Mellon. These sessions have been organised by O'Connells GAC, Tullysaran, and we are very grateful that they have been offered to our school. Please also contact your child's teacher via email (addresses are below) if you have any queries or concerns. Teachers will 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

I must remind all parents/guardians, of children coming to school, that It is vitally important 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 have been very lucky from the beginning of this school year that none of our bubbles have had to isolate. This has been due to our whole school community working together and displaying excellent vigilance. Hopefully we will continue to display the same attentiveness as we come out of this third lockdown and look forward to better days when all of our children will be allowed to return to school.

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 the phased return of Reception to Primary 3 children, remote or supervised Learning. Parents must email, tmckee362@c2kni.net to request supervised learning for P4-7 children. Once a place has been allocated parents should email me on a Thursday to confirm the days that supervised learning will be needed for the next week. Children cannot attend if a space has not been allocated however we will facilitate emergency requests as long as a reason is provided.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation with these matters and we look forward to Reception to Primary 3 children returning to school next week and to all children returning to school for the third term when we will be able to enjoy all the special occasions that occur during the final term.

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.