

WOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL – 30 June 2020 News For Parents



Hello Everyone! I would like to thank all parents who have been working hard with their children at home over recent months to help them to continue to learn and make progress. We all know that home schooling is challenging and especially when you are juggling home life and/or working from home. I am extremely proud of how everyone has worked together – staff, children, parents/guardians and the wider community. We are all ready for a break over the summer to re-charge our batteries! If you can please continue to encourage your child to read independently or read with you over the holidays this would be helpful.

I want to reassure you all that preparations are being made for the return of all pupils into a safe school environment. You can be confident and assured that the health and wellbeing of all of our pupils is our main priority alongside restarting their education. We have finally received the notification from the Minister of Education that we can prepare to re-open our school on Monday 24 August to welcome P7 pupils initially for a morning session 9 - 12 noon (Monday to Friday) if safe to do so, and then on 1st September for the remainder of the school. We welcome the reduced 1 metre social distance guidance for children, as social distancing in a small school is always going to be difficult. **We hope to be able to accommodate all of the children, 5 days a week.** I will write to you with further details on new school procedures and the return to school specifics in August based on the ever-changing advice from the EA and Department of Education.

P7 Prize Day – We plan to invite our P7 Leavers back to school on Wednesday 26 August 2-3pm to say goodbye to each other and staff. They will also receive their prizes in a socially distanced way. If you are shopping over the summer for your child's new school uniform please do not buy a tie as we have bought a tie for each P7 leaver and will present them on this day. **Children may also bring in their old school t-shirt if they wish to have it signed by staff/pupils.**

P1 Induction: Given the current situation, we will not be able to have our usual induction for new P1 pupils. Parents will be invited to come into school on Tuesday 25 August in two groups to meet the class teacher. The children will stay with Mrs Gardiner for a one hour "Get to know each other" session. Parents will be invited to join Mrs White and Mrs Milliken in the school hall for a short talk about what parents need to know for September and how to help their P1 child with homework etc. Texts will be sent to all P1 families with more details of timings etc.

Be Prepared for School - When school does re-start, we will be asking parents to send their child with as much stationery etc. as possible to avoid the sharing of equipment in class. A list will be issued on the school website, in due course, of what your child should bring to school. It will be posted in the class that they are moving into in September. It will include a mini bottle of hand sanitiser, tissues and stationery to be named and kept for personal use in school. Additional hand washing and cleaning will take place throughout the day to help manage the risk of infection.

A protective bubble strategy will be implemented for all year groups following the guidelines so that class groups are self-contained where ever possible. New classroom layouts have been agreed for all year groups to help promote safe practice. P5 pupils and Mr Stewart will be using the school hall to be able to accommodate the whole P5 class and comply with DE guidelines.

Parents and other visitors will not be allowed into school without an appointment. Once they enter the building they will be required to sanitise their hands and comply with social distancing rules during all meetings with staff. We are available, as always to discuss any issues you may have on the telephone or can be contacted via school email.

P1 & new pupils' parents will have permission to walk their child into the classroom on the first day or two but we will have to keep the number of people entering the building to a minimum to comply with social distancing rules.

We will continue to operate a healthy break system from 1 September. This will cost £6.60 per child for September. We have split break and lunch times to reduce contact with others in school. If your child is not taking the school healthy break they should bring a fruit snack or some other sort of low sugar snack. No sugary cereal bars or bags of crisps please.

We continue to be a "NUT FREE" School so please check the labels of all food items sent to school.

Transport- We are awaiting information from the EA regarding transport in September.

School Meals – Menus will be a little more restricted due to the fact that meals will be served to children in their classrooms from 1 September.

School uniform - It is expected that all children will come to school in full uniform as usual with black shoes. Cuddy's Magherafelt is our uniform stockist. Grey long shorts are available as an alternative to grey trousers. PE lessons will continue but in a limited format complying with guidance received. Initially trainers will be needed but no changing into PE Kits other than shoes. We will keep you informed as things change. Girls may bring in navy shorts to pull under their grey skirts for PE lessons.

Refunds for EA Music lessons, swimming lessons and afterschool activities that did not happen will be refunded to parents in due course, by the latest end of September. Thank you for your patience.

Medical Needs/Allergies – It is a parent's responsibility to update the school regularly on their children's medical needs and complete the medical request forms available from the school office before the beginning of each school year, and as things change throughout the school year. If your child needs extra care or medication given in school you must make an appointment to meet with Mrs White and complete the Medical forms necessary. No medication can be administered in school without written instruction from a parent and in some cases a medical professional. Staff will be in school to meet with parents to discuss medical needs, where required, from Monday 24 August unless your child is in P7. If your child is in P7 and has any medical needs, please notify staff ASAP via email and an appointment can be arranged for the week commencing 17 August. All medication must be checked by parents to ensure that it is in date and clearly named with your child's details before bringing it into school. If you have concerns about your child's health or feel they are in the vulnerable category you should speak to your GP and/or named medical professional for more advice before approaching school staff.

Early Bird Club 8.15am-8.45am This club will cost £1 a day/ £5 per week payable on the day or can be paid in advance. Cheques are acceptable and should be made payable to Woods Primary School or payment can be made by vouchers. This club will be held at the bottom of the school hall and will involve sitting reading a book or chatting quietly to friends initially while the restrictions are in place. On dry days the children may go with the assistant to play outside.

School Opening Hours – School doors will open to all pupils at 8.45am and all pupils are expected to be in school and ready to commence lessons at 9.10am. Please do not arrive early as social distancing must be adhered to at all times, therefore you will not be able to stand in the porch area. We have added an extra 10 minutes to help with social distancing entering school. Pick up times will remain the same initially as it is felt that our spacious school site with help. However, this will be dependent on parents practising social distancing at drop off and pick up times. This will be evaluated and if it is felt that social distancing is not happening and groups are gathering, we will have to consider staggering drop off and pick up times as a safety strategy recommended by DE.

PARENTS MUST NOT DROP OFF CHILDREN BEFORE 8.45AM AND LEAVE THEM UNATTENDED UNLESS THEY PLAN TO PAY INTO EARLY BIRD CLUB. WE WANT TO KEEP ALL OF OUR CHILDREN SAFE!

P3 Hours – Children in P3 will be going home at 2pm every day until half term.

123 Club – This club will be running for those parents who really need to make use of it. It will not be in the same format as usual due to restrictions. Where possible the children in this club will play and do activities outside, but no outside coaches will be brought into school initially. When the weather is wet the children will be in the classroom and the surfaces will be cleaned prior to them entering the room. Running this club will be a challenge for us this term but we know it is a great help to working parents and for those parents whose children need to be collected at different times from school.

P4-7 After school Clubs 3-4pm – These clubs will not run in September but we will aim to follow the guidance and re-start the timetable ASAP.

Temporary Staff Needed – If you are available for temporary work and interested in working as a cleaner or classroom assistant in our school please email us and let us know.

As always all queries should be emailed to info@woods.magherafelt.ni.sch.uk these will be answered up until the end of 1 July and will resume from 10th August.

It is still 8 weeks until 24 August so much may change and I will be in touch before then. I hope this information will be useful and help to reassure you.

In the meantime, I wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable summer. I very much look forward to welcoming your child/children back to school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs White
Principal

School Holidays 2020/21 (All dates Inclusive)

Autumn Term

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| Half term Break | 26-30 October (5 days) |
| Christmas Holiday | 21-31 Dec (9 days) |
| | 1-4 Jan (2 days) |

Spring Term

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| Half term Break | 15-19 Feb (5 days) |
| St Patricks Day/Half Day | 17 March |
| Easter Holidays | 29, 20, 31 March (3 days) |
| | 1-9 April (7 days) |

Summer Term

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| May Holidays | 3,4 May (2 days) |
| | 27, 28, 31 May (3 days) |
| | 1 June (1 day) |

Please note these are provisional and there may be small changes for staff training etc.