

# Ebrington Primary & Nursery School

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Principal: Mr B F Guthrie, BA Hons ED PQH

1 January 2021

Dear Parent/ Guardian

Firstly, Happy New Year to each member of our school community. I hope that you and your family have been able to enjoy some quality family time over the Christmas break and that, like myself, you are hopeful of some positive times to come in 2021.

As we now prepare to start the Spring 2021 term, I want to outline our initial school RESTART plans, based on the 11th hour U-turn by our Minister for Education and DE on how and when schools would return. I am again saddened that school leaders received this information via social media and BBC News at the same time as the general public, leaving little time to implement changed plans. Guidance arrived in my 'inbox' at 13:57 this afternoon. Whilst it may not have been unexpected, given the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, the timescale before the start of the school term may well have caused uncertainty and frustration for many families.

As announced by the Minister, school will reopen for the majority of children on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January. A small number of pupils whose parents are key workers, or vulnerable pupils, will be able to come to school for part of next week for 'supervised learning' only-no direct teaching will take place, as teaching staff will be fully engaged with online learning.

You will know from our holiday list that school was due to reopen to all pupils on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January. However, the Department of Education have granted teaching staff the first day of term that school should have restarted on for planning and preparation for 'remote learning'. Therefore, online learning for all pupils and the provision for vulnerable pupils and those of key workers will begin on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January.

I also wish to confirm that our Nursery unit will be open for all Nursery pupils from Tuesday 5 January, as directed by the Department of Education. School meals will be supplied by the Foyle Hub Catering team, as usual, and should be booked for Nursery pupils online accordingly.

Teaching staff will be available between their contracted hours of 8:40am and 4:00pm, should you need any support. Work will be provided at intervals during the day from 9:00am onwards through the online learning platforms used within school-SeeSaw and Google Classroom. All work must be completed and returned no later than 12:00 noon on the following day. Any emails sent outside staff hours will be dealt with the following day.

If **both** parents are key workers (one if a single parent with sole custody) and you have no alternative options, please fill in the attached form and submit it no later than 6:00pm on Sunday evening (3<sup>rd</sup> January)

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqG3m2cr1u\\_JHsops3lHZUzIUmtJNTkFXMjZFOVZJRIUwVDdPMzZLQzZPWC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-yeCOETeDkaBkAVAK4mNqG3m2cr1u_JHsops3lHZUzIUmtJNTkFXMjZFOVZJRIUwVDdPMzZLQzZPWC4u)

Those children who have a statement of Special Educational Needs do not need to complete this form, but should email the principal 'bguthrie493@c2ken.net' by 6:00pm on Sunday evening, outlining whether or not you intend your child being in school next week.

Any child who the school deems as falling into the vulnerable category will be contacted directly on Monday.

Schools have been asked to remain closed next week for a reason. Please only avail of this option if you have exhausted all other alternatives.

With regards our Primary 7 pupils, I have no further information in regards to the AQE tests, the first due to take place on Saturday 9th January but hopefully further information will be forthcoming soon and I will keep those families updated when I receive any information. What I would say to the pupils at this stage is to keep calmly focussed-I know lots of hard work has been put in by pupils (and parents also, I'm sure)

Further details of the reopening of school will be sent out during the course of the week. We are constantly reviewing our provision, practice and policies in light of any updated guidance we receive from the Department of Education & Public Health Agency.

Kind regards

B Guthrie