



# Ebrington Primary & Nursery School

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Principal: Mr B F Guthrie, BA Hons ED PQH

10 February 2021

Dear Parent

As we approach the end of our final week of remote learning before the half term break, I trust that this letter finds you and your family well and I thank you again for all that you have been doing to support your child/ children at home.

I would like to remind you that the upcoming week, 15-19 February, is our half term break. This means that there is no requirement to upload work to SeeSaw or Google Classroom. It gives everyone-pupils, parents and staff, the opportunity to take a break from home schooling/ remote learning/ supervised learning and gives the chance to 'recharge' those batteries. This has not been an easy half term for any of us, and it has been very different to the first school 'lockdown' (mid-March-June 2020), when we had good weather, longer days and could enjoy the outside a lot more.

Ebrington PS & NU continued to stay open throughout the first lockdown to support key worker families, when many schools were closed. We had a challenging Autumn term, where we had a number of bubble closures based on positive Covid cases-at one point having 130 pupils and 14 staff absent. We made significant changes to our management of remote learning, with staff taking on two roles-teaching pupils in school, as well as supporting those self-isolating at home. There was significant staff professional development in the use of ICT, without any additional time available for this.

This term, since 'lockdown' and school closure was announced, we have continued to engage fully with our pupils with regards to both remote learning and supervised learning. Teaching staff have had to completely change their ways and patterns of working to deliver daily lessons to pupils while, for many, also cope with the challenges of home schooling their own children, or manage pre-school age children. Our non-teaching staff have so willingly taken on the role of supervised learning facilitators and have been doing a tremendous job to support those pupils that have come in to school. To all the staff, I am extremely grateful and extremely proud of their efforts.

To you, as parents, I am also extremely proud for the way the vast majority of you have taken on the role of 'home tutor', supporting your child's learning needs. I know this has not been an easy task for many and I am sure there may have been times when relationships have been a little strained-remember, I am a parent of two school age children also! What I would say on this is-you can only do your best. Try to do what can be done, but if it is getting too overwhelming for your child/ ren, then leave it and come back another time.

To our pupils, I am extremely proud of how you are managing the current school closure. I know many of you would just love to be back in school with all your friends and the staff. I can tell you, the staff feel exactly the same-we would much rather have you all in school! The standard and quality of work that I am seeing on both the SeeSaw and Google Classroom platforms is excellent. It is wonderful to see a

continued high level of engagement from so many and it is wonderful to see the continuation of new learning taking place.

We have had a large increase in the number of parents seeking a place in school for their child/ ren, due to struggling with aspects of remote learning. I feel I need to take this time to remind you that school is 'closed', and should only be accessed as a **LAST RESORT** for key worker/ vulnerable families. **We currently have 20% of our school population in-that equates to 80 pupils.** While the Department of education refuse to put a 'safe cap' on pupil attendance during this 'closure', at a meeting of the Ebrington PS & NU Board of Governor in mid-January, governors discussed safe levels of attendance with regards pupil/ staff ratio, etc. **We have now reached that point of maximum safe level in school.** The more pupils that access school while it is 'closed', the larger the footfall, the more increased the close contact becomes along with the higher risk of positive cases. This puts more pupils, staff and households at risk.

If you have been accessing the supervised learning provision in school, could I please ask you to consider only accessing it when there is a real requirement as a '**LAST RESORT**'. I thank all those that are using it in this manner.

I so look forward to welcoming back all our pupils. I so hope that it will remain to be Monday 8 March when we have our pupils back. If it is not our date of return, then please remember we can only do what we can do at a particular given time-both at home and in school.

I hope everyone enjoys the half-term break and look forward to seeing you all back in school soon.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Guthrie', written in a cursive style.

Mr B Guthrie