



EBRINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

March 2021 Newsletter

Full School Return

It is hard to believe that we have come through the period of a year since our first school closure. When first communicating with parents re: Covid on 16 March 2020, I'm sure it is fair to say how none of us were sure what was coming.

It has been absolutely wonderful to welcome back all our pupils from Nursery-P7 this week. There has been such a buzz in school these past few days-a buzz which has been sadly lacking for too much of the past year. The playground is once again full of fun and the classrooms have become a hive of activity.

I look forward to continued family and community support as we look to move through the summer term with limited interruptions.

Parking

Foyle College continue to kindly give permission for Ebrington to use the shale pitch for parking. This has been a wonderful 'resource' to access during this past year, and we thank them for it. To be clear, ALL parking in the morning and afternoon should be on the shale pitch unless you are a blue badge holder/ have previously contacted school with the request.

A **small** number of cars have started to go against the one-way traffic flow system in operation. I'm sure you appreciate this could result in a serious accident. I ask everyone to please have patience and follow the routines, no matter how close you may be parked to an exit.

The extended school day in Foundation Stage (P1 & P2) has led to a higher volume of traffic at 3:00pm pick up time. There is, however, still adequate parking for the number of cars. Please be sensible in where and how you park and work together to keep everyone safe.

Thank you to all who have been following the guidelines.

School Meals-SchoolMoney App

This week, the office staff have been inundated with making calls to parents who have failed to book school dinners for their children, particularly many free school meal pupils. Can I please remind you that it is the parent's responsibility to ensure you log in and book the meals in good time, whether paying for them or entitled to free school meals. The office staff have many other responsibilities in school, and this should not be one of them! Thank you



Social distancing on site

We continue to have a considerable number of parents coming on to the school site well before pick up and standing in groups. I know the last year has been difficult for us all socially, but could I remind you that socially distancing and wearing a face covering are our two main risk mitigation factors for parents on site.

We currently have additional outdoor time organised for the classes, and we have found this week that parents are standing in these activity zones well before the end of school.

Congratulations

Huge congratulations to Mrs E Oliver, classroom assistant in P3A, who has been blessed with the safe arrival of twin boys.



PTA Easter virtual competition

A HUGE thank you to the PTA members for taking on the organising of our virtual Easter hamper competition. We have had a great response to this and intend to have the draw on FB tomorrow, Thursday 25 March @ 2:00pm

Parent Interviews

It **was** our intention to manage parent interviews this week for all pupils P1-P7, based on every pupil being back to remote learning, as previously stated by Education Minister.

The announcement for all pupils returning this week, which we are so grateful for, obviously had a major impact on these plans.



While we are still not able to hold face to face interviews in the large numbers as previously, we need to manage these either via telephone call or Zoom. This then creates further issues in school, as we have only three external lines that can be used at one time and have limited wireless connectivity/ broadband width for running Zoom for all class teachers at the same time.

Our only way forward for this will be to manage parent interviews by telephone after the Easter break. As many of the staff live a considerable distance from home, it will therefore mean closing school early 2-3 afternoons to allow staff to travel home and make necessary calls.

I am aware that some parents have been emailing teachers directly, requesting updates on their child's progress in certain rooms since the return to school. Please remember, you have been involved as one of the 'primary educators' during lockdown and home schooling. Teachers had been in regular contact through SeeSaw and Google Classroom, giving lots of feedback during lockdown. With the demands of face to face teaching, it is neither viable or feasible for staff to be engaging in the same way remotely, as they now have all the daily planning, preparation and feedback to engage with.

We will be in touch on our return, week beginning 12 April, with further details of how these interviews will be organised and managed.

On behalf of all the staff, I would like to wish you all a Happy Easter, and look forward to seeing all our pupils back for what will be a busy summer term.

