



School Closure due to Covid-19 Pandemic

You will be aware that due to the deteriorating nature of the epidemic and the risks to public health the Executive announced that all schools in Northern Ireland will close until at least Half Term in February, because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This now includes Nursery, which is closed from today. The Department have stated that after unprecedented levels of positive Covid-19 tests since Christmas, and the pressure this applies to our health service, it is critical that we all must consider the public health and scientific advice.

The safest place for our children at this time is in their own home.

The Education Minister stated that "All Primary schools are required to provide remote learning at home to their pupils rather than face to face teaching in school."

Holiday reminder- Half Term Holiday Monday 15th- 19th February

Online Learning

P1-7 Will continue to use Google Classroom. Their daily activities will be posted on their class page with links to teaching videos and resources. The staff will also be using Google Meet to bring the whole class or small groups together for a well-being check in or to explain something on occasions. Please remember to upload your completed work and then 'hand in' so the teacher knows you have completed your work and it is ready for marking. If you have a problem getting your child logged on to Google Classroom at any stage, please contact your child's teacher or phone school.

Nursery

Remember that for nursery pupils your daily activities are on the website, under **Pupils Area-Home Learning** (remember the password is apple18).

Collection of Packs Friday 8th January

Each teacher has put together a pack with resources for their pupils (N-P7) to use alongside their online learning. Please keep these resources safe as the teachers will refer to these over the next five weeks, please do not just work your way through a booklet without direction. Some classes have also received text books and reading books have also been sent home. Please look after these carefully and return all school books when you come back to school.

The nursery staff will also have wellies and waterproofs if you wish to take them home to use over January.

Below is a timetable for collection, it has been arranged according to your surname. Please drive around to the front door and a member of staff will pass you your family packs, there is no need to get out of your car. If you cannot attend tomorrow, please email your child's class teacher and we can arrange a more suitable time. If you are walking, please come to the front door. Remember to wear a face mask.

Family surname beginning with	Collection Time
A-F	10.00am
G-L	10.15am
M-P	10.30am
R-W	10.45am

P7 AQE

In view of the temporary cessation of face-to-face teaching announced on 4 January, the AQE Board have agreed that to enable the assessment to take place in the current circumstances, the assessment will be reduced to a single paper to be held on **Saturday 27 February**, provided it can take place in public health circumstances then prevailing. We very much appreciate the pressure that these children and their parents have been under. Mrs Allen will continue to provide support online for these pupils. If you have any queries either contact Mrs Allen or myself.

Supervision in School for Vulnerable Children and Key Workers' Children

We have been advised by the Department of Education and the Education Authority that staff should be working remotely, teaching their classes, however, they will attend school to support vulnerable children or key workers' children. The Education Minister expected there to be a very small uptake of places but this has not been the case across primary schools. Further discussions are taking place with regard to this, so the following information may change.

Our school remains open for '**Supervised Learning**' for Vulnerable Pupils and the children of Key Workers **ONLY**. You have already been provided with the definitions for these groupings in the letter dated 1st January (this is available to view on the school website) or at www.deni.gov.uk.

The Department of Education have been very clear that **this is not face to face teaching** and these pupils will do the same activities that all pupils in their class will be doing at home.

Given the government's current stay at home message, parents are reminded that this provision **should only be considered when all other childcare options have been exhausted**, to facilitate parents getting to their workplace. This should be used for the minimum amount of time and days necessary.

The staff, as always, are willing to help those parents with a genuine need for childcare but we also have to continue to protect the safety of the school staff and our whole school community.

Supervision of the children will be provided by the classroom assistants in the school hall throughout the period of closure, as long as staffing levels permit. Teachers will be preparing, teaching and evaluating the work from their whole class remotely each day. Pupils will have access to an iPad to obtain their daily tasks. Parents of supervised children will still have to submit the daily work to their child's teacher for them to assess it.

This group of pupils will be a 'bubble', so please be aware that if we get a positive case within the bubble, all of the children and staff will have to self-isolate.

Please do not send your child to school for supervision if they or someone in your house is unwell or have Covid 19 symptoms.

Parents who have pupils who fall into these categories and wish for them to attend school for supervision must register in advance by emailing their request for the following week to myself jmcmillan521@c2kni.net by **10am each Friday** stating your **child's name, class, reason for requiring provision, the key worker or vulnerable category, confirm that you are required to attend your workplace and the days/times you require supervision.**

This supervision will be from 8.50am to your child's normal finishing time, unless you wish to pick them up earlier. You will then be contacted before **Monday** to confirm your child's place for that week.

A reminder also, that all parents must wear a face covering at drop off and pick up times and adhere to social distancing guidelines.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

As a result of school closures due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the Minister for Education and Minister for Communities has agreed to make payment to families who have been assessed as eligible for free school meals for the period of the closure.

SCHOOLS NI APP

Please ensure that you all have downloaded the Schools NI app and check it regularly for messages. Please ensure that you have allowed notifications, this can be turned on in settings and will ensure that you see your message notifications on screen.

I appreciate that given the increasing levels of transmission of the virus, there is much anxiety in our community and I wish to thank you for your continued patience, support and cooperation as we work through these very challenging times. I wish you and your family well for the coming weeks and hope that you stay safe.

Keep sending us lots of photos of what your children are up to. Updates will be posted regularly on the school website. Please remember if you need any help, contact any of the staff by email.

J McMillan
Principal