

St. Francis of Assisi Primary School

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20th July 2020

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

As anticipated, the guidance and advice for Department of Education 'Return to School' arrangements continue to be updated as the current situation with Covid-19 evolves.

At present the guidelines pertaining to 1m social distancing remains in place and will dictate any return to school arrangements for September. Unfortunately, many schools will not be in the position to cater for full classes and alternate arrangements may need to be put in place.

Primary 7 2020/21: As per department directives our **Primary 7** pupils for the 2020/21 school year will return to school on Monday 24th August. Starting times and teaching arrangements may vary and parents should be aware that this is a settling in period for our pupils and teachers and may not be a 'normal' school week. Details to follow.

Irish Medium Education: The staff and governors are delighted to confirm that there will be a new Irish Language Rang 1 class opening in the school this September, in which the Reception and Primary 1 curriculum will be delivered through the medium of Irish. This is an exciting new development for the school, and we look forward to working alongside Naíscoil an Chéide and the appropriate authorities in securing the development of an Irish language stream in future years.

Primary 1, Rang 1 and Reception Induction Sessions: It is hoped that we will be in the position to host **Primary 1, Rang 1 and Reception Induction Sessions** in the week beginning Monday 24th August, with perhaps smaller groups of children and parents coming in for an induction morning one day each that week. The class teachers will talk parents through important information relating to school life and issue relevant documentation to be filled out and returned. Pupils will spend the time in their classroom familiarising themselves with their surroundings. Teachers will be in a better position at this stage to outline any changes to a typical school day in Foundation Stage classes and to inform parents and guardians of our plans. Details of dates and times will follow when confirmed.

Data forms: Data Collection forms for Reception/P1 pupils were posted with welcome certificates in late June. If parents have misplaced these data forms the document can be downloaded from the Home Page on the school app/website. Any outstanding data forms must be returned to the school asap.

Free School Meals:

Families eligible and who are already in receipt of FSM: Should already have received a prepopulated form from the Education Authority early July. If you have not already returned this form, please do so asap to ensure your claim is updated in time for the new school year.

Newly registered pupils: The Education Authority have updated the Free School Meals application process, requiring those eligible to either complete an online application or return a new paper form for the 2020/21 school year.

Apologies to any Primary 1 parent who has already filled out the previously distributed form in the welcome pack. Those forms will not be accepted. If you have already applied using that form you must **resubmit your application** either online or using the newly updated form, which can be found on the link below.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants/apply-for-free-school-meals-uniform-grants>

School Uniform:

Uniform is readily available in all local clothing outlets. All pupils including our new Reception, Primary 1 and Rang 1 children will be wearing the school uniform as per listed below. There are no changes to school uniform for Rang 1 pupils.

Plain navy trousers/skirts (white socks or navy tights worn with skirts)

Plain white shirt (short sleeved is preferable for younger pupils to best access structured play resources)

School Tie

Green school crested v neck jumper

Plain navy crested coat (optional)

Plain black shoes or trainers (strictly no coloured soles or coloured sports marking)

PE Uniform:

Plain navy shorts or unmarked track bottoms

Plain unmarked white polo shirt

Suitable sports trainers / footwear

Return to School Arrangements:

Unfortunately, it is difficult at this time to confirm teaching arrangements for September. At present, we continue to explore all options which will allow **the maximum number of pupils possible** to return to school at any one time.

In the interest of allowing parents/guardians time to make appropriate childcare and working arrangements please be assured staff will, in consultation with governors review all relevant guidance and advice in early August and will inform parents of return to school arrangements forthwith.

Hoping all our school families are enjoying a happy and safe summer break.

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Mrs F Hughes

Principal