

ST. MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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10th June 2020

Dear Parents,

I trust that you and your children continue to keep well. As you are most likely aware, there is a continued lack of clarity around arrangements for a return to school. The staff of St Mary's are working hard to prepare as best we can and to make the transition back to school and into new classes as easy as possible for the children. A priority is to keep families informed as best we can about plans.

The return will be in a phased approach, most likely prioritizing the current Year 6 group as they move to P7. There will be a blended approach to learning, with pupils possibly initially attending school 2 days per week and completing remote learning on other days. There will be staggered start and finish times, to avoid large groups at entrances. There may be for example, designated groups of children arriving at 8.45, 9 and then 9.15am. Pupils will be met by staff at entrances and in so far as possible a one-way system will be in place.

Upon return to school, pupils will bring as few items as possible back and forth from home, probably only snack / lunch. They will each be given their personal, labelled tray of resources to be kept in school. You will be asked to send a small hand sanitizer, packet of tissues and a reusable water bottle with your child on their first day back.

I have uploaded a **parent survey on the school website** to gauge parental feeling about the return to school. The password is Newtownbutler. This survey will be open between 10th and 17th June and I would greatly appreciate your response. If you have specific concerns, for example you wish to request the first or last available drop off time, or if due to work commitments, you would prefer your child to attend on certain days, please send an email to the info account and we will take it into consideration. Please be aware however that there will be many issues which need to be considered, such as transport arrangements, family grouping and Special Needs, therefore it may not be possible to fulfill all requests.

Your child's teacher when school reopens will be as follows:

P1 Miss Clerkin

P2 Mrs Leonard

P3 Miss McGuigan

P4 Mrs Soraghan

P5 Miss Mallen

P6 Mrs Grew

P7 Mr Sludden

Your child's new teacher is currently consulting with their current teacher. An 'All About Me / For My New Teacher' questionnaire is being issued to pupils this week via Seesaw. This is so that next year's teacher can learn more about your child and how they are feeling about their return to school. You are asked to return this as soon as possible. The new teachers will be made co-teachers on Seesaw for the last couple of weeks of June. They will make contact through Seesaw, to share some transition activities, tell them about routines in their new class and share photographs and videos of their new classroom.

On a very positive note, Fr Kevin plans to celebrate an End of Year / Leavers' Mass at 10am on Friday 26th June. Afterwards at 12 noon we are asking that the families of P7 join a cavalcade in their cars to drive around the town and local area. We ask that all members of the school and wider community, if possible, wave, clap and cheer as they pass. We really want to celebrate this wonderful group of pupils. We are so disappointed that their final terms in St Mary's were cut short and we will miss them greatly. We do hope that we will have an opportunity for them to return and celebrate with us in the future but for now we want to acknowledge their many achievements in Primary School and wish them well for the next part of their life journey through Post-Primary Education. We have arranged an ice-cream van to provide a treat for the pupils and their families after they have driven around the town and local area.

Not to forget P4 who are also very disappointed that their Holy Communion has been postponed. Their families are also invited to come along for an ice-cream treat at 1.30pm.

I have no doubt that you will understand we are trying to plan ahead with as much certainty as possible, however some of these arrangements could be changed in keeping with Department of Education or Health advice. Our priority is to work together to ensure that your child returns to a safe and happy school environment and the whole staff are looking forward to the day when we can open our doors again to our wonderful pupils. In the meantime please remember that you can contact your child's teacher through Seesaw, or for more general queries email the info account.

Take care and God bless you and your families,

P Kelly

Principal

