



"We work together, We play together, We pray together."

19th August 2020

Dear P1 Parents

Hopefully you and your families are all well. We are almost ready to welcome all of our children back to St Patrick's. The latest guidance provided by the Department of Education has indicated that our plans sent to you on the 3rd of July are still relevant, meaning we will welcome some of our classes back on Monday 24th July, with all classes being in school from Tuesday 1st September. There is a lot of information in this letter, but it is essential that you take time to read through it all. These are very strange times for us all and we appreciate your patience and co-operation.

Starting school is a huge milestone for all children and we hope they are looking forward to coming in to 'big' school. This year is even more special as we have so many changes for us as a staff. Thankfully the P1 children will be starting this routine for the first time and as we know from experience, they will get used to it very quickly. It is vital that you talk to your children about coming into school and the need for everyone to use hand sanitiser and to wash their hands when they are told. The risk of Covid 19 infection is still there and we must all do our best to ensure the safety of our children, staff and families. We want everyone to feel safe and then we will be able to teach and the children will have an opportunity to learn. School has been cleaned thoroughly during the summer and will be cleaned throughout the school day. A deeper clean will take place on at least two evenings per week as well.

Our aim is for each class to have as few opportunities as possible for mixing with other classes once they are in school - the protective bubble strategy guidance from DE. This requires separate drop off and pick up times. We appreciate that these may present some challenges for you, but we must insist upon them at this point. Children may only be dropped off at the turning circle and picked up from there in the afternoon. Hopefully if things improve we will be able to go back to our usual routine at some stage in the future.

St Patrick's PS New School Day
Start of term is 24 th August for some classes.
No Breakfast Club, nor After School Provision until further notice
Drop off at turning circle from 8:40-9:20am each morning – children must not exit car until directed to do so by supervisor at turning circle. When P1s start their first proper day of school, they may be dropped off here.
Staggered pick up times to limit interactions. Outlined below as first week differs from rest of September.
New Attendance Patterns: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protective bubble strategy• Maximise full use of school building• Each class bubble allocated their own entrance/exit point and class toilets
Social distancing and increased hygiene measures introduced throughout the school <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hand sanitiser at each entry/exit point to be used before entering building• Children must wash hands for 20 seconds after entering building (start of day and after each playtime)• Regular hand washing during the school day (Soap dispensers in each classroom)• Individual pupil resource packs that will remain in school at all times – including consumables such as pencil, rubber etc.• School dinner/lunches eaten in classroom to maintain protective bubble• Staggered break and playtimes to maintain protective bubble• Classrooms sanitised daily



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Week beginning 24th August is the beginning of our new school year. So that we can safely ensure the establishment of new patterns and the protective bubble strategy we require a staggered start for classes. Primary 1s will have an induction week, during which they will be allocated specific times to come in and see their new classroom and Miss McMullan & Mrs McDowell. We will let you know of how this will work in August. Take some time to note the details in the table below.

Monday 24 th – Friday 28 th August	P1 Induction week	Children and 1 parent will be invited in to meet Miss McMullan and Mrs McDowell. Times may be booked via our website for your convenience. We'll let you know closer to the time.
Monday 31 st August	School Closed	August Bank Holiday
Tuesday 1 st – Friday 4 th September	P1s first days 😊	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop off from 9:20am to allow rest of school in and leave time and space for P1s • P1 pick up at 12 noon
Mon 7 th – Friday 25 th September	P1 'normal' September days <u>Children may come in with older siblings from now on.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop off from 9:20am • P1 pick up at 12 noon
Mon 28 th September	P1 begin full day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop off from 9:20am • P1 require packed lunch or order school dinner. Menu to be distributed when school reopens. • P1 pick up 1:40pm

In preparation for your children returning to school we have a little check list:

- School uniforms should be worn as normal and washed regularly throughout the week.
- PE uniform may be worn on PE days which will be sent out soon.
- Schoolbags are not required for September.
- Pencil cases not required – children will have resource packs provided in school.
- Each child will need a 12 pack of twistables that stay in school and a barrel pencil sharpener (label with child's name).
- We will provide hand sanitiser, but if your child has any skin issues you may prefer to send in their own, that stays in school (label with child's name). Any donations of sanitiser, tissues, wipes etc would be very gratefully received. The Education Authority has limited the amount we can order at any one time.
- A mini pack of tissues for each child to be kept in their resource pack.
- Can your child/children wash and dry their hands independently? Still time to practise.
- Does your child know that they should cough or sneeze into their elbow, or tissue if they have one?
- Children may bring their own labelled water bottle to school. These must be taken home and thoroughly washed each night.



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- We will provide a snack for your child. Please let Miss McMullan know of any dietary requirements when you meet with her.
- Please do not send in any birthday cakes, buns etc as we cannot distribute these to the children.
- Arrangements for reading books and homework will be distributed within the next two weeks. There will be no written homework to be returned until then.
- School Meals will be available from Tuesday 1st September. Payment must be made via School Money. You will receive a text with your log-in details before then. P1 children will not have school lunch/dinner until they stay in for the longer day.

Note - Should your child/children appear unwell or display any of the symptoms of Covid-19 they must not come to school. If this happens during the school day we will isolate in a specific area of school and ring immediately for you to come to school. Please ensure all contact details are up to date.

Symptoms include:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature), or;
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), or;
- **anosmia** - the loss or a change in your normal sense of smell (it can also affect your sense of taste) (Source: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-overview-and-advice>)

As per DE guidance we must request that parents or carers do not enter the school building unless by prior appointment. On day one for P1s we hope you can walk with your child to the P1 cloakroom door, where you'll be able to help them in on their first day. A wee chance for a photo perhaps. If you have any issues or concerns please contact us immediately. Mrs Cope will be happy to help if you phone the office.

It is essential that we have the correct contact details for you. It is also vital that we have at least three contact numbers for your child in the event of an emergency. Some of you have only provided us with one contact number.

All communications from school will be via Seesaw, our school website and the NI Schools App. We will also be using the School Money system for payments from this point forward. Any difficulties with these, contact Mrs Cope and she will guide you through it. A Parents' guide is available on our website. Don't worry, we'll keep you posted on all of this as we move forward.

School meals are available for all P1 – P7 pupils from Tuesday 1st September at a cost of £2.60 per day or £13:00 per week. If you wish to avail of school meals, please ensure that payment is made via School Money by the evening before a meal is required. If you feel that your child is eligible for free school meals, please pick up a form from the school office and complete as soon as possible. Free meals cannot be administered in school until the correct forms have been completed and we have been informed by the Education Authority. Further information is available on our school website regarding this.

P1 snack and milk costs £6 per month. P2 milk costs £3 per month. (Snack is not provided in P2.)

We encourage all children to eat healthy break from Monday – Thursday and Friday is treat day. Children are not permitted to have chocolate, sweets, biscuits, etc on these healthy days.

Due to some children having severe nut allergies we are a **NUT-FREE** school. This includes peanuts, Nutella, peanut butter, Snickers, M&Ms, some varieties of cereal bars (check labels) etc. We will have to monitor this



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very closely and would appreciate your co-operation. Children should only eat what is in their **own** lunchbox and any uneaten food must be taken home. This is extremely important at this time.

Once again, please consider all of the information in this letter carefully. There are a lot of changes to our school day and we will need everyone to know how the day starts and finishes if it is to run as smoothly as possible. There may be times when things don't go as planned, but we will aim to do our very best each and every day to ensure the health and safety of your children and our staff. The normal excitement of a return to school after the summer has been replaced by many emotions, but try to encourage your children to be excited and enthusiastic about seeing their friends and their teachers again, to be excited and enthusiastic about showing us how interested and clever they are and to look forward to starting school in St Patrick's. We are excited about welcoming them and look forward to the busy weeks ahead!

M McGrath