**Update to Parents and Carers August 17.08.2020**

We have had a great start to the year. Thank you once again for your support and patience in these challenging times. The children are really settled and managing well with the hygiene, one way systems, and keeping their distance from adults.

**Access to the school**

Although busy the P1-3 drop off and collection are working well in Zones 1-3 and most adults are ensuring 2m distance between them. We will continue with the 8.50 am start. Thank you to our P2-3 parents who are dropping off and leaving the area quickly, it is definitely helping to settle the children.

P4-7 Blue zone is working very well, children are arriving close to 9 am and this means they are not hanging about or blocking paths required for our wee ones. Once your child is safely on the school grounds we are pleased that so many of you are leaving the area quickly, this allows access sand distancing to be maintained.

We are extremely grateful to our neighbours on Constarry Road for their understanding. Please ensure you don't stand on their grass and move quickly from their doorways.

Also, at this time the train station car park is relatively empty and we are pleased that parents who have no option but to drive are using this and walking up, it has helped with congestion.

A big thanks too, to the children who are now walking to school where possible. We also have bike racks in the playground so children cycling is also a good idea. Helmets can be stored in school.

**Collection at 2.50pm and 3pm**

Please do your very best to make sure you arrive on time at the school to collect your child. It is important that we keep the flow of children moving.

**2m distancing and facemasks**

Collection and drop off can be very busy but please remember to maintain a distance of 2metres from others. If this is not possible, government advice is to wear a face mask. We are doing our very best in school to keep everyone safe and want to ensure our children have a consistent message of the importance of social distancing/mask-wearing.

**Parking**

If you need to drive to collect children please park as far away from the school gate as possible and ensure that you drive extremely slowly.

**During the day**

We are directing the children to wash or sanitise their hands frequently across the day.

We are reminding them if they cough or sneeze to do so into the crook of their elbow and to dispose of any tissues immediately into the bin.

Holy Cross is normally cleaned in the evening, the nursery in the morning. We now have a cleaner on-site during the day to wipe and clean contact points (door handles, surfaces, walls, etc.), empty bins, clean desks, and clean toilets.

**If your child takes unwell at school**

Please do not send your child to school if they are unwell. If your child takes unwell during the day we will phone you and ask that you collect them.

If a child has any one of symptoms which could be COVID related (high temperature, new persistent cough, loss of taste or sense of smell) your child will be moved from class and asked to wait in a designated space, supervised by a member of staff (with social distancing) until you arrive to collect them. We will ask you to contact NHS 111 who can then arrange for your child to be tested. This happens usually the same day and the results are back on the same day or the following working day.

All children sent home with a symptom that could potentially be COVID will be recorded in school and the information sent to our Education COVID Team. The school will update the team when a negative or positive test is confirmed.

In the event of a positive test, we will contact our Education team and NHS. They will advise us of our next steps.

As per current government guidance, while waiting for the test results your child should not attend school. Siblings should not attend school or nursery until a negative result is confirmed.

We are carefully following Health Protection Scotland's advice on COVID and would urge you to keep up to date with official government information online or by following the First Minister's briefings.

Under normal circumstances, it is quite common for children to have coughs and sniffles or have sore throats, etc., especially as we move into colder weather. These 'normal' coughs and sniffles will still be with us so please, if we ask you to collect your child try not to worry. We are following government guidance to help keep everyone safe and well.

**Face masks**

The government's advice is that children are not required to wear face masks in school or on school transport. If your child wishes to wear a face mask that is absolutely fine but we would ask that no mask has a scary print on it which could upset younger children (shark teeth, monster or roaring dinosaur ones)

**Annual Flu vaccinations**

These are planned for the 19th of November. NHS information will be sent out this week. This information is confidential and the school does not see it.

**Annual Data checks, photo permissions**

Please return these as soon as possible. If anything changes across the school year you need to let us know immediately. When lockdown happened in March there were several incorrect/out of date emails, mobile numbers, etc. which caused a delay to information being sent out.

**Children's resources in school**

We are currently asking that your child brings only their school bag with the lunch box/snack inside it, if applicable. No toys are books at the current time. This is being reviewed regularly.

**Reading books**

In the coming weeks, your child may bring home a reading book, when this is returned to school it will be wiped down and placed in a box for 72 hours before being stored in our cupboards.

**Homework**

Most homework will be put onto your child's 'team' online. We will send out details to P1 parents. Everyone else should have their child's Sumdog and Glow login details. There is information on our website to remind parents and carers how to access online learning. If you've lost this, we can reissue logins.

We will provide a jotter for homework for your child to record their learning where appropriate. The jotter should stay at home for the time being.

**PE and PE kits**

At present, the pitches across the road are closed to us but we have contacted Culture NL to see when we will be allowed access again. All PE needs to be outdoors so, once we finalise PE days P4-7 children can come to school wearing their PE kit. This will minimise the amount of time changing in school, especially when time is already taken up with enhanced hygiene practices. In colder weather, your child could wear their jacket outside or a hoodies/zipper type jacket and jogging trousers if required. PE will still take place in light/moderate rain. Please remember no football or team stripes, please.

**Break times**

In light/moderate rain children will be outside at playtime. They will get wet, so please make sure their jackets have hoods. We are encouraging children to be as active as possible and fresh air during this time will help them stay healthy and keep active. If the rain is pouring from the heavens they will be inside, so don't worry.

**Parent Council**

In the coming week or so we will send out information from our Parent Council, so keep an eye out for that.

**NLC Services**

There is no doubt that COVID has put huge pressure on some families. Please go to the NLC website if you are needing support or advice regarding; housing, finances, mental or physical health. There is a host of resources and information available.

If we can help or signpost you to the correct support please give me or Mrs Shaw a phone.

**Sacramental preparation**

I will be meeting with Fr Sullivan and teachers shortly to work out how we safely organise Holy Communion and Reconciliation. Confirmation has been moved to S1 for this year.

And finally…

From the bottom of my heart, I must thank you for your support on our return. Our children are blessed to be looked after by such great people and at times like these how you care for them really shines through.

I'd like to thank our fantastic staff. They have all worked over and beyond to ensure a happy, safe return for the children. They are, without a doubt, the best in the business!

We are trying our best but if there is anything you need clarity on or feel would help, we are happy to hear from you.

Keep safe everyone,

Mrs Murphy