



Parents and Carers

SCHOOL RESTART ARRANGEMENTS

I trust that everyone with you is well. I had hoped by this stage in August I would be in the position to give you clear, definitive guidance about the return to school for your child.

You are most likely aware that the Minister for Education (Peter Weir) recently stated he wants a full return for all children but schools await official notification, clarity and guidance from the Department of Education.

I wrote to you at the end of June at which stage we had planned for a part time return to school inline with DENI Restart guidance. I am sure we are in a place to meet either scenario of a full return or blended approach.

As already shared with you, if we must have a blended return, we will operate a 50:50 approach with half our children from each class (in protective bubbles) attending school Monday & Tuesday and the other half attending Thursday & Friday. In this arrangement, the days pupils are not in school they will engage in online learning at home through either See-Saw or Google Classroom. In this scenario, school will be closed each Wednesday to allow for a through clean for teachers to prepare online learning.

I MUST STRESS A BLENDED RETURN IS A CONTINGENCY PLAN.

Regardless of which return model we must use, there will be a number of new measures the Board of Governors, Senior Leadership Team and Staff will put in place to reduce the risk to our children, staff, parents and community. They include;

- staggered drop off and collection arrangements
- Allocated entrance and exit gates
- Social distancing lining up
- Staggered break and lunch times including play time
- Procedures for entering and exiting the premises
- Safe storage of books, stationery etc

A number of school policies will also be updated to reflect the new school day and Coronavirus implications.

I have attached to this email a detailed booklet focused on the return, it has also been placed on the schools website and shared via our school app. I ask that you read this information fully and carefully as this will answer many of your questions.

As you know the Minister of Education has instructed schools to return on the week beginning Monday 24th August. **Therefore all Primary 7 children will return to school on 24.08.20** (a separate note with more information for P7 parents will follow shortly). During the week commencing 24.08.20 we will invite children who may struggle with the transition back to school to visit us with a parent, see their classroom, meet their teacher and put their anxieties to rest.

During this week, Primary 1 and Primary 2 teachers will also meet individually with all children together with one parent from each family.

Pupils from P2-7 will restart school on Thursday 27th August as per our Holiday List. Please note all children will go home at the earlier time of 12.00pm on Thursday 27th & Friday 28th August.

New P1 pupils will have their own Restart arrangements with 1-1 visits to school during the week commencing 24th August and therefore P1 pupils will start school from Tuesday 1st September - a separate letter outlining all details will follow shortly.

I hope I am in the position to give clearer guidance in the coming days. If there is no notification from the Executive or DENI by 10th August, I will write to each family individually with more details about our planned Blended Return. Please note we have taken into consideration family groupings.

I once again ask that you carefully read the attached Restart Information Booklet.

All members of staff here in Ashgrove are very much looking forward to seeing all our pupils and new little ones at the end of August.

Kind regards

Robert Smith
Principal

