



Memo Number 1 to Parents 4th September 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcome back! We got there and, thankfully, the return was about as smooth as we could have hoped for. All the planning and preparations were worth it. The most uplifting part of this week was the smile and enthusiasm on the faces of the children as they entered in the mornings. Even those who were a little nervous managed a smile, it was a joy to watch. We will continue to monitor and review all the new procedures and try to improve as the weeks go on. Compliments also to you the parents who co-operated with all the new procedures and requests, it really was a true demonstration of **'We are All in this Together'** and it worked.

A few items of note:

1. Drop Off Time from Next Week On (Monday 7th September):

The staggered Drop Off times in the mornings (8.45 – 9 a.m. for one half of the school and 9.00 – 9.15 a.m. for the other) was for the first week only in an effort to avoid group gatherings etc. From next week on, **all the children will come to school between 8.45 a.m. and 9.00 a.m.** (With the exception of Junior Infants who are asked to arrive between 9.00 a.m. and 9.10 a.m. next week) The procedure will be the same whereby the children will go directly to their rooms where their teachers are supervising.

Once again, we ask that you do not arrive to the school before 8.45 a.m. to avoid back up of cars or group gatherings. Staff are now parking their cars at the far side of the church to facilitate more space for parents dropping off and collecting near the school gates. Church-goers have been asked to park in St. Mark's or further up the road, also to facilitate parents. However, it is still essential that you 'drop off' and move on to avoid a hold-up of traffic.

Parking further away from the school and walking the rest of the distance is still very much encouraged.

Children cycling also continues to be encouraged.

2. Staggered Finishing Times:

Staggered collection times of 2.30 p.m. and 2.40 p.m. will remain in place until the Mid-term break in October and we will review that procedure at that time.

3. Class Level Teacher/Parent Email Communication:

We have decided that, for this year, we will set up an email communication forum for Parent/Teacher communication, given that face-to-face communication will be kept to a minimum for Covid purposes. This will be similar to the email system that we put in place during the School Closure last year, except for different purposes.

This forum is specifically for short, day-to-day passing on of simple messages, examples of which might be:

- if your child will be absent
- if a child has to arrive late to school

- to request a phonecall or meeting with the teacher to discuss any concerns, issues, queries and to arrange a time and date
- if somebody other than the usual designated person will be collecting your child (Infants to Second Class)
- if a teacher needs to be aware of some information about the child or needs to be watchful of the child for a particular reason on the day
- if the child has forgotten something coming to school
- if some part of the uniform cannot be worn for some reason
- if homework could not be completed for a domestic reason (October on) etc.....

Email communication is **not** to be used for:

- raising concerns, issues or discussing problems within the classroom/school yard or regarding your child
- addressing Management issues

If you need to discuss concerns, issues or queries with the class teacher, please arrange a time to speak to the teacher by phone, or in person if necessary, using the Class level Email System. When doing so, please indicate to the teacher, in general terms, the nature of the issue to be discussed. Alternatively, make an arrangement through Eileen in the office by ringing 021 4873459. In order to minimise close contact, it is advised that issues could be discussed by phone initially if possible. If this is not possible or effective, face-to-face meetings can take place. Please wear a face mask for all such meetings and sanitise your hands upon arrival and leaving the school. You will also be required to complete a contact tracing form.

Teachers will also use the email system to send short, day to day messages home that do not require a discussion.

Teachers will access this email system between 8.00 and 8.45 a.m. in the morning and 1.40/2.40 and 4 p.m. in the afternoons. They will do their best to respond if a response is necessary during these times. However, there is no guarantee that a teacher will always be able to do this, therefore, if your message needs immediate or urgent attention, please ring Eileen in the office and she will pass on the message at her earliest convenience.

Your child's teacher will initiate the email system with an email to their parent group shortly.

4. The Wearing of Face Masks for Primary School Pupils:

In relation to queries regarding face coverings and primary school pupils: Other than one or two pupils who have a particular medical condition that specifically requires the wearing of a face mask (please consult with the school in advance, if this is the case), the Road Map for Return to School from the Government states the following:

In line with the Public Health Advice, the use of face coverings/masks by pupils in primary school should not occur

5. Follow Through if a Pupil goes home from school with Covid Symptoms:

If a pupil presents with Covid symptoms and has to go home from school, or if you keep your child at home because of Covid symptoms please follow through with a call to your GP regarding a Covid test. Please observe all public health recommendations and please do not return the pupil to school until advised by your GP or public health personnel.

If a child goes home from school unwell with symptoms that are not Covid related, the same follow through is not required. In general, pupils should not attend school when unwell.

6. Letter from the acting Chief Medical Officer, Dr Ronan Glynn, to Parents:

Also attached with this email is the above letter from Dr. Ronan Glynn to parents regarding the Return to School.

7. Return of Swimming Money:

Pupils who paid for swimming lessons last (school) year and couldn't avail of them due to the School Closure will be reimbursed shortly.

We do not know what the future will bring, nobody does, but for now, we are concentrating on the present. We are savouring the fact that we have our pupils back with us, we are enjoying the buzz of teaching and learning again and we are so happy to be working as part of team and a whole school community once more.

Karen O'Sullivan (Principal)